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Matthew Arnold and Goethe

JAMES SIMPSON

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Matthew Arnold and Goethe

To the late Professor Kenneth Allott

MATTHEW ARNOLD
AND GOETHE

by

JAMES SIMPSON

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J. S., Liverpool 1978.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Historical Background: Goethe and England 1775-1850

For many years now editors and critics have suspected that Arnold's intimate acquaintance with the huge mass of Goethe's writings exercised a considerable influence both on his intellectual development generally and on the formation of his ideas on specific questions related to poetry and literature. This hypothesis was suggested not only by the frequent references to Goethe scattered throughout Arnold's works, but also by his own admission of indebtedness. In a letter to Cardinal Newman of 28 May 1872 he wrote:

> There are four people, in especial, from whom I am conscious of having learnt—a very different thing from merely receiving a strong impression—learnt habits, methods, ruling ideas, which are constantly with me; and the four are—Goethe, Wordsworth, Saint-Beuve, and yourself.[1]

The publication in 1952 of Arnold's note-books and reading lists confirmed that his reading of Goethe was a life-long interest.[2] Such distinguished Arnold scholars as Lionel Trilling, Kenneth Allott, William A. Madden, and David J. DeLaura have made a number of stimulating suggestions concerning Arnold's relationship with Goethe, but their comments were made only in a general way while pursuing other lines of inquiry, and as yet no full-length study devoted solely to this subject has appeared.[3] The lack of any such work obviously represents a gap in Arnold scholarship, inconvenient to editor and critic alike, and it is the purpose of this study to go some way at least towards remedying the situation.

The task, however, is hazardous. Arnold spoke of his debt to Goethe, but in the same breath he mentioned three other influences, and elsewhere Emerson and Carlyle were cited as influences in a similar context.[4] The note-books, too, are a sobering reminder that Arnold's thought was fed from innumerable sources and that a mind as independent and eclectic as his was not to be dominated by the influence, no matter how powerful, of one man. There is no easy way of avoiding that kind of misrepresentation, endemic in 'influence studies', in which exclusive, or nearly exclusive, attention is devoted to a single 'source'. Such exclusiveness necessarily brings with it the danger of exaggerating that source's importance. A dutiful critic will consult other known sources too, of course, but in doing so he is likely to find his efforts rewarded by ever diminishing returns. Moderation, tact, and a healthy scepticism with regard to his own occupation are perhaps his best safeguards.

Before entering upon the main investigation, however, it should be profitable to put Arnold's interest in Goethe into a wider cultural and historical perspective. By giving an account of the English view of Goethe in early Victorian England one is in a better position to understand Arnold's particular response to the German poet. This historical background is itself a much-neglected field of study. Although nothing more ambitious than a rough sketch can be attempted here, it is a subject which initially will seem to take us some distance from Arnold himself. The view of Goethe which prevailed in England when Arnold first began to read his works was the outcome of a long and complex process of 'discovery'. With some account of this process completed one can then profitably turn to the immediate context of Arnold's relationship with Goethe—his family's connexions with Germany, his obscure student years at Oxford—and thence one is inevitably drawn into the better-charted territory of his young manhood, and the mature years of his middle and later life.

The growth of Goethe's reputation in England has its roots in the late eighteenth century. Before 1780 very little was known about German literature in England, and the main barrier to a better knowledge was, of course, the linguistic one. James Mackintosh of the *Edinburgh Review* wrote in 1813, 'Thirty years ago, there were probably in London as many Persian as German scholars'.[5] The success enjoyed in England by Goethe's novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* is, therefore, all the more remarkable. Three years after its publication in Germany in 1774 there were already three different French translations and it was through one of these, that of a Monsieur Aubry, that the novel reached England. In the course of the next twenty years five more English translations appeared, though none was of any merit.[6] To say that Goethe's novel achieved popularity is true, but it might be truer to say notoriety. The guardians of the public morals, not slow to detect any publication with an 'immoral tendency', seemed unable to find anything in *Werther* but an attempt to defend the practice of suicide. So sensitive was the question of the novel's morality that almost all its translators felt impelled to justify the honourableness of their intentions. John Gifford, for example, thanked the critics for their 'fervent zeal for the enforcement of morality' but assured them that their fears were misconceived and that 'could the following work have been possibly construed into an apology for suicide, the present edition of it would most certainly never have appeared'.[7] The novel's success had little to do with the literary merits for which it has since come to be valued. It was read as an example of the kind of 'sentimental' literature which had been in vogue since the publication of Richardson's novels, *Pamela* (1741) and *Clarissa* (1748). Had Goethe written further sentimental novels they would certainly have been received avidly, but he did not and so, for the British public, Goethe remained simply 'the author of *Werther*'.

Not only did Goethe's novel fail to stimulate any curiosity about the author, but it also did nothing to direct public attention to the peculiar blossoming of a national literature in Germany. The beginnings of English awareness of German literature can really be said to date from 1788, for it was in this year that Henry Mackenzie (1745-1831) delivered to the Royal Society of Edinburgh an address entitled 'An Account of the German Theatre'. In 1788 Mackenzie was an established literary figure, the author of an enormously successful novel *The Man of Feeling* (1771), and his word carried weight. Mackenzie, who knew the German theatre only through French translations, was particularly impressed by Schiller's *Die Räuber*, but his comments on Goethe are less than flattering. He complains that the action of some of Goethe's plays is 'libertine and immoral'. 'From the author of *Werter*', he adds, 'this does not surprize'.[8] These reservations, however, did not deter him from learning German or from publishing in 1792 a translation of Goethe's play *Die Geschwister* (1776). Walter Scott, who was among the audience at Mackenzie's lecture, recalled that the paper 'made much noise, and produced a powerful effect'.[9] It was evidently seminal. In 1790 a new magazine entitled *The Speculator* was established in London by 'N. Drake and another' with the declared intention of keeping its readers informed about German literature, and certainly it is very difficult to account for the sudden burst of interest in German drama in England in the 1790s, without reference to Mackenzie's lecture and the new magazine.

The suddenness with which this interest in German drama manifested itself is quite remarkable, but although Schiller's and Goethe's *Sturm and Drang* works, *Die Räuber, Kabale und Liebe, Fiesko, Don Carlos, Götz von Berlichingen*, were among those translated during the decade 1790 to 1800, the true nature of the enthusiasm for German plays is revealed by the popularity of the works of August von Kotzebue (1761-1819), who was the only German dramatist to be produced successfully on the English stage. There is no record of any play by Goethe being performed, and the only plays of Schiller to be acted publicly were adaptations of *Die Räuber* and *Kabale und Liebe.*[10] Translators and producers were clearly interested only in the 'sensational' type of play–the sentimental, the Gothic, or the violent. Needless to say, this was material sure to outrage the very same moral sensibilities which had taken such a dislike to *Werther*, and in 1799 Hannah More published her widely read and highly influential work, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, in which she attacked the current popularity of German plays. Mrs More saw German literature as part of a grand design to undermine the principles of Christianity on which the strength of the nation was founded, and she made this stirring appeal:

> Those ladies who take the lead in society are loudly called upon to act as the guardians of public taste as well as public virtue, in an important instance. They are called upon to oppose with the whole weight of their influence, the irruption of those swarms of publications that are daily issuing from the banks of the Danube;

> which like their ravaging predecessors of the darker ages, though with far other arms, are over-running civilised society . . .[11]

Nor was Mrs More's voice alone in protest, for to some the dramatic productions of Germany appeared dangerously republican in sentiment.

After 1796, when the English government's negotiations with France broke down, the country lived in a constant state of crisis and alarm at the prospect of impending invasion. Anything foreign was an object of suspicion, and a magazine entitled *The Anti-Jacobin Review* conducted a scurrilous campaign against all German writers. Its basic objection to them was that their political sympathies were 'jacobinical' and that their plays had 'an evident tendency to excite discontent among the lower classes of society, by representing *obscurity* and *virtue, rank* and *vice*, as close and inseparable associates'.[12] But the magazine also attacked the moral character of German writers: 'the greater part of the Literati are men of profligate lives and abandoned characters. Their works . . . are replete with licentious imagery, voluptuous descriptions, and scenes grossly indecent and immoral'.[13] Goethe was the object of a particularly malicious slander when a letter was printed, supposedly from an English reader in Germany. The correspondent informed the magazine that the author of *Werther* publicly kept a mistress 'devoid of beauty, delicacy, and fidelity' and described him as 'avowedly a man of pleasure' with 'not a single grain of morality in his composition'.[14] Just as the public acclaim of German writers had been indiscriminate so now was the condemnation. The whole of the so-called 'German school' came under attack, but it is significant that the accusations of immorality were always directed against Goethe. Schiller's reputation in this respect remained untarnished. As early as 1800, therefore, the myth of Goethe as an immoral writer was firmly established and, as we shall see, it persisted under varying guises far into the nineteenth century.

After 1800 the flood of translations and reviews in the periodicals ceased abruptly. It is of course possible that this abrupt cessation and the *Anti-Jacobin* campaign were both concurrent reflections of the inflamed patriotism generated by the political situation, but it is more likely that the attacks were at least partly responsible for bringing the heated enthusiasm for things German to its sudden end. Certainly, whatever the reason, Goethe and German literature were almost completely forgotten in England for the next thirteen years.

There were, of course, a few individual men in England who had a far better knowledge of German language and literature than most of their contemporaries. Such men were William Taylor of Norwich and Henry Crabb Robinson. Taylor was born in 1765 of a wealthy merchant family. At the age of sixteen he was sent to Detmold in Germany where he learned the language at first hand from a Lutheran pastor and he acquired there an interest in German literature. He returned home in 1782 and after nine years in business he had accumulated sufficient wealth to enable him to retire and devote the rest of his life to his literary interests. He translated Lessing's *Nathan der Weise* in 1791, Goethe's *Die Geschwister* in 1792, and *Iphigenie auf Tauris* the following year. Regrettably Taylor was an unambitious man and his translations, which were privately printed, circulated only within a close circle of friends. From 1793 until 1824 he contributed a large number of articles on literary subjects to periodical journals such as the *Monthly Review*, the *Critical Review* and the *Monthly Magazine*, and he collected many of these for publication in a three-volume work entitled *Historic Survey of German Poetry* (1828-30). It was given a damning notice in the *Edinburgh Review* by Carlyle who justly calls it 'a mere aggregate of Dissertations, Translations, Notices and Notes'.[15] But the importance of a man like Taylor is not to be judged solely by his efforts as a translator or critic. He is important too because of his contact with other people. After 1811 financial difficulties restricted Taylor to his home of Norwich where he gathered around him a circle of young friends. Among these was Sarah Austin (1793-1867) whose work *Characteristics of Goethe* (1833) was the first book of Goethe criticism to appear in English. It is quite likely, although there is no conclusive evidence, that Mrs Austin's interest in German literature was first inspired by Taylor. If this were the case, it would add significantly to his importance, since Mrs Austin's work, as will become clear in a later chapter, has particular relevance to Arnold's knowledge of Goethe. (see below pp. 102-06).

Like William Taylor, Henry Crabb Robinson was also a Norwich man. Born in 1775, he did not enjoy much formal education and on leaving school was articled to an attorney. In 1796 he moved to London where he worked in an attorney's office, but in 1798 he received a legacy of about a hundred pounds per year which set him free from the drudgery of work which he detested. In the same year Robinson met Taylor who encouraged in him a growing taste for German literature and strengthened his desire to visit Germany. In 1800 Robinson left England for Germany where he remained for five years. He was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of the Brentano circle at Frankfurt soon after his arrival in Germany, and in 1801 he accompanied Christian Brentano on a walking tour which took them to Jena and Weimar, where he met Goethe briefly for the first time. The following year he and Brentano registered as students at Jena, and it is from this time that Robinson's lasting interest in German literature can be dated. But, as F. Norman has shown in his monograph on Robinson and Goethe, the Englishman's range of ideas about the German poet was extremely limited.[16] Robinson was not endowed with any great ability as a critic or interpreter, but while possessing little individual talent of his own he associated and corresponded with some of the most brilliant men of his age. His tombstone records the names of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Blake, and Flaxman among the men he had known, and it might have included Southey, Landor, and half a dozen eminent Germans. Little of Robinson's enthusiasm for Goethe seems to have communicated itself to Wordsworth, however, whose dislike of the German poet is well known. According to Wordsworth, who knew little of the language and not a great deal of Goethe's writing, the German poet lacked 'religious sentiment' or 'moral sense' and a second-rate man could not be a first-rate artist.[17] Even Coleridge, whose knowledge of the German language was much superior to Wordsworth's, set Goethe far below Schiller.

As we have seen, after 1800 public interest in works of German literature had greatly diminished, and England's isolated position in the Napoleonic wars was partly to blame. But by 1813 England's position in the wars had improved greatly and the alliance with Prussia fostered a more favourable climate for the reception of German literary productions. Crabb Robinson was not the man to awaken England to the achievements of German culture, however, for not only were his talents no match for such a task, he was also unknown to the general public. In both these respects he was unlike Madame de Staël, whose *De l'Allemagne*, banned in France by Napoleon, was thereby assured of success upon its publication in London in 1813. It is undeniably a brilliant work even to a modern reader disconcerted by Mme de Staël's fondness for sweeping generalizations about national and racial characteristics. The perceptiveness of her judgements make the work a far better guide to German literature than Taylor's *Historic Survey*, and in contrast to Taylor she recognized in Goethe the supreme literary genius of her age. She wrote enthusiastically of his poetry, of *Götz von Berlichingen, Egmont*, and *Werther*, and in fact clearly shows her preference for the *Sturm und Drang* productions over the less 'ardent' works of his mature years. Her judgement on the first part of *Faust*, of which several extracts in prose are given, is interesting in its ambivalence:

> Whether it be considered as an off-spring of the delirium of the mind, or the satiety of reason, it is to be wished that such productions may not be multiplied; but when such a genius as that of Goethe sets itself free from all restrictions, the crowd of thoughts is so great, that on every side they break through and trample down the barriers of art.[18]

De l'Allemagne perhaps tended to perpetuate the kind of prejudice that already existed about Germany as a land where the Gothic imagination could naturally disport itself in old towers and battlements, but whatever its limitations it came appropriately and usefully at a time when English interest in German culture was at its nadir. By pointing to Germany as the intellectual centre of Europe and by her sympathetic treatment of German authors, Mme de Staël allowed a fresh current of thought to pour into England; she made England aware, as Arnold might have said, of a major tributary to the mainstream of European thought, and widened the country's intellectual horizons. Her work was widely read, not only in the year of its publication, but for many decades afterwards. Writing in 1855 G. H. Lewes commented that it still remained 'one of the best books written about Germany'.[19]

In a sense, however, Madame de Staël's book also marks the end of an era, for before 1813 the French had had an important role as intermediaries in introducing works of German literature into England. After 1813 this was less and less the case, for the study of the German language became, in Carlyle's words, 'almost expected as a natural item in liberal education'.[20] It is true that the first English translation of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, which appeared in 1824, had been made from a badly translated French version by Aubert de Vitry, but what is striking is the way the periodical reviews reacted to this. The early translations of *Werther* had also been taken from French editions, but none of the reviews had then thought the fact worth mentioning. The anonymous translator of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* failed to acknowledge that he had used de Vitry's version, but it did not escape the attention of the critics. He was sharply censured for the deception, and the *Westminster Review* called his work a 'pseudo-version' and 'no translation at all'.[21] John Gibson Lockhart in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* was even more scathing and described it as 'one of the most audacious and impudent pieces of quackery, by which the public confidence has of late years been insulted'.[22]

Of all Goethe's works the one which was to become the best known in England and to exercise the profoundest influence on his reputation was *Faust:erster Teil* (1808). Until *De l'Allemagne* appeared with a few extracts from the play in a prose translation very little was heard of it in England, but Mme de Staël's publisher, John Murray, must have considered that sufficient interest in *Faust* had been aroused to justify bringing out a full translation, for in 1814 he offered Coleridge one hundred pounds to undertake the task. Coleridge was apparently willing but thought the sum inadequate, and although he negotiated with Murray for a time, he never in fact began work on the translation. Before 1820 any Englishman who could not read German was unlikely to know much of *Faust*, but in that year an English edition of Retzsch's famous illustrations, the so-called 'Outlines', was published. Moritz Retzsch (1779-1857), the German artist and engraver, had first published his *Umriße zu Goethes Faust in 26 Blättern* in Germany in 1816 and the 1818 edition was imported into this country.[23] Such was the success of these illustrations that the year 1821 saw the publication of an enlarged rival edition, *Faustus: From the German of Goethe. The greater part of Part One, translated in verse and connected by a prose narrative. With 27 Illustrations in Outline by Moritz Retzsch*. It may have been due to the interest aroused by the 'Outlines' that Murray finally realized his intention of publishing an English version of *Faust*, for in 1823 he brought out a verse translation by Lord Francis Leveson Gower. Unfortunately neither the translation which accompanied the 'Outlines' nor Lord Gower's is particularly distinguished, and both gave further currency to the belief that Goethe was a dangerous and immoral author. It is rather surprising to find that the scene which caused the greatest offence was the *Prolog im Himmel* where Mephistopheles and God are portrayed in conversation together. The *Prolog* had been omitted from the 1821 volume of engravings because it was considered 'repugnant to notions of propriety such as are entertained in this country'.[24] Gower, who also omitted the scene, professed to find in it 'a tone of familiarity on both sides which is revolting in a sacred subject'.[25]

Gower was severely taken to task for the shortcomings of his work by Abraham Hayward in the preface to his own prose translation of 1833, a version which, to judge by the frequency with which it was reprinted, remained the most widely read for many years. Hayward's was the forerunner of a flood of *Faust* translations, for in the course of the 1830s and 1840s there were close on twenty renderings of the first part. As a writer in the *Westminster Review* commented: 'Faust, by common consent, seems to be the established *pièce de résistance* for all who would display their ability to render German into English'.[26] But in spite of Hayward's vigorous repudiation of the charges of indecency and profanity levelled against *Faust*, and his claim that Gower's translation had been responsible for 'fixing a stigma on the moral and religious character of Goethe' and for 'giving an immoral tendency to the poem he professes to purify', the considerations which had moved Gower to make his omissions obviously carried weight with other translators.[27] John Stuart Blackie, for example, omitted the *Prolog*, and since he was a figure of some literary eminence, the effect of his 1834 translation can only have served to compound the common prejudices against Goethe. Furthermore, the omission of the *Prolog* naturally helped to create an unbalanced view of *Faust II*. In spite of Carlyle's enthusiastic acclaim of the 'Helena' fragment in the *Foreign Review* in 1828, the second part of *Faust* found little favour in Victorian England. Even the sympathetic G. H. Lewes expressed his dislike, considering it 'far inferior to the *First Part*, and both in conception and execution an elaborate mistake'.[28]

After the appearance of *De l'Allemagne* British periodicals once again began to devote space to reviews of German literary works, but about Goethe their attitudes were often sharply divided. In 1816 the *Edinburgh Review* published a scurrilous attack on his character under the guise of a review of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. The critic, Francis Palgrave, commented that 'the principles and morality of the German writers, in general, do not appear well calculated to advance the welfare of society' and followed this with a string of abusive remarks about Goethe personally—egotistical, vain, affected, and, inevitably, licentious.[29] This review did not pass without comment, however, and Lockhart, writing in the rival journal, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, censured its 'empty arrogance' and 'offensive irreverence'.[30] The publication in 1824 of both the *Memoirs of Goethe* and Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* naturally called forth many articles in the periodicals, but one is frequently astonished at the way in which petty national jealousies interfered with a just appreciation of Goethe's merits. The *European Magazine*, for example, found the idea that he might be an author of great stature 'wild and ridiculous', and a critic in *Blackwood's*, while conceding to Goethe a position at the head of German literature, smugly reflected how far that left him behind our own Shakespeare.[31] But for sheer rancour and malice no article compares with De Quincey's savage attack on Goethe's morals. He considered all the women characters in *Wilhelm Meister* to be evidence of 'depraved taste and defective sensibility', likened German novels to English brothels, and implied that Goethe was an 'obtuse old libertine'.[32] However, the last years of the decade 1820 to 1830 saw the foundation of several journals distinguished by their enlightened attitude towards European authors, the *Foreign Quarterly Review* (1827), the *Foreign Review* (1828) and *Frazer's Magazine* (1830), and it was in these journals that Carlyle's remarkable essays on German literature were first published.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) first learned German in 1819 after his interest had been stimulated by *De l'Allemagne*. His translations of the *Lehrjahre* and the *Wanderjahre* were published in 1824 and 1827 respectively, and it was in 1827 that the first of his essays on German literature began to appear. Carlyle was the first reviewer of Goethe's works to show himself to be a 'critic' in the modern sense of the word, but it must be admitted that the picture of Goethe he presents is a distorted one. There are several reasons for this. In the first place Carlyle was really interested only in *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister*. He paid little attention to the works of Goethe's *Sturm und Drang* period, virtually ignored the classical dramas *Iphigenie auf Tauris* and *Torquato Tasso*, and was silent about Goethe's work as a lyric poet. Secondly, Carlyle's presentation of Goethe was strongly conditioned by the unpleasant reputation Goethe had already acquired as an immoral and irreligious author. Carlyle was at great pains to correct this false impression, but in doing so he was in danger of going to an opposite extreme and making Goethe appear a saint. The course of Goethe's life is surveyed as a passage from the 'scepticism' of *Werther* to the 'faith' of *Wilhelm Meister*, and Carlyle's view of Faust overlooks his greatness, seeing in him only a misguided and miserable creature. Goethe's generous humanism disappears and the effect of Carlyle's essays is to leave the reader with the impression that Goethe's beliefs were far closer to orthodox religion and morality than was in fact the case. The magazine articles on Goethe and German literature were later included in his *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays* (1839) and were highly influential. They are frequently mentioned by other writers on Goethe in the periodicals of the 1840s and were described as 'unquestionably the most important work on German literature in our language'.[33]

In disregarding Goethe's work as a lyric poet Carlyle was simply following the tendency of the time. In 1833 E.C. Hawtrey, headmaster of Eton College, published a selection in German of about eighty of the shorter lyrics, together with eight songs from *Faust*, and it is interesting that his endeavour in choosing the poems was 'to make a selection against which no scruple could be raised in a moral point of view'.[34] Some of the lyrics in the volume were given in English translation, but it was ten years before anything else was published which might have suggested Goethe's range and stature as a lyric poet. In 1844 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* began a series of his poems in translation, but even so it was still true in 1853, when E. A. Bowring published *The Poems of Goethe* in the Bohn Library series, that in England the short poems were 'nearly unknown'.[35] One of the surprising facts concerning Goethe's reputation in England, however, is the relative popularity of his epic poem *Hermann und Dorothea*, which was translated into English three times within only a few years of its publication in Germany in 1797. The extent of the early Victorian popularity of the poem can be estimated from the fact that it was translated four times between 1839 and 1949, and while its success never of course approached that of *Faust I*, it is striking that whenever the poem is mentioned in magazine articles about Goethe, the comments are invariably favourable.

After Goethe's death in 1832 his reputation in England grew steadily, and much secondary literature relating to him, such as the volumes of correspondence, reminiscences, and criticism which were published in Germany, were reviewed by the magazines here. The correspondence with Schiller had already appeared in 1828-29 and the correspondence with Zelter, Frau von Stein, and Knebel followed in 1833-34, 1848-51, and 1851 respectively. Dr Riemer, Goethe's personal friend and editor of the Zelter correspondence, published an account of his own conversations with Goethe in *Mittheilungen über Goethe* (1841), and in 1846 he edited a small collection of letters entitled *Briefe von und an Goethe*. The best known collection of conversations, however, was that of J. P. Eckermann whose *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens* were published in three volumes, the first two in 1837 and the third in 1849. These were well known in England long before they were translated into English in 1849—a writer in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* commented in 1841 that the Eckermann conversations needed no recommendation 'as they are doubtless in the hands of all German scholars'.[36] The first of these posthumous tributes to appear in English was Sarah Austin's excellent *Characteristics of Goethe* (1833). It is not an original work of criticism but, as she freely acknowledged, a compilation of various writings on Goethe which she had translated and to which she added an introduction and notes. Her main sources were J. D. Falk's *Goethe aus näherm persönlichen Umgange dargestellt* (1832) and the text of a speech on Goethe given by Kanzler von Müller before the Academy of Useful Sciences at Erfurt in 1822. The work is both intelligent and persuasive in its advocacy of Goethe, and she defends him from several accusations. On the question of his coldness to the issues of German nationalism, she points out that his large and comprehensive understanding made partisan politics repugnant to him. But this neutrality did not signify egotistical self-concern or indifference to the welfare of mankind. He was sceptical about the value of political activity because 'he thought it a pernicious illusion to look for healing to sources whence he was persuaded healing could never come'.[37] This same large understanding made it unthinkable that he should indulge in over-simple moral judgements, but he was not therefore immoral, and Mrs Austin defends Goethe from the charge that his works were pernicious in effect.

How necessary such defence was can be seen from Wolfgang Menzel's history of

German literature *Die deutsche Literatur* (1834). Of the many works on Goethe published in Germany shortly after his death, this was the only one to have any significant influence in England. Menzel was a long-standing opponent of Goethe, and the work contains a vituperative attack on his character. It would be impossible to sum up the whole range of Menzel's criticisms, for virtually every sentence of the section on Goethe is an accusation of one sort or another, but the root cause of his hostility seems to have been his belief that Goethe was not a 'national' poet. He evidently found Goethe's cosmopolitanism and his silent acceptance of the French occupation during the Napoleonic wars particularly infuriating. But probably the most damaging accusation in English eyes was Menzel's claim that Goethe had prostituted his art by beautifying weakness and vice, that his works had a deleterious moral effect and that they were destructive of religion. Such accusations found ready acceptance in mid-nineteenth century England. The *Deutsche Literatur* was eventually published in an English translation in 1840, but the original German work had circulated here from about 1835. It was reviewed twice in the periodicals of the time and both writers showed the work some measure of sympathy, conceding that there had been too much 'overheated enthusiasm' for Goethe, and that in the main Menzel's strictures were 'painfully true'.[38] The emancipated G. H. Lewes rightly found Menzel's work despicable, but he had to admit that in England its accusations had won 'a circulation independent of his book'.[39] Although the credibility of Menzel's attack had been weakened by its unconcealed malice, echoes of his views are heard for many years. Even an intelligent and informed article on Goethe such as 'Göthe's (sic) Festival' in the *Edinburgh Review*, 92 (1850) could be highly critical of the moral tendency of his works, and for the very reason urged by Menzel, the supposed beautification of vice.

One consequence of Menzel's attack on Goethe's character, together with the fact that most of the articles on Goethe in the periodicals were occasioned by the publication of correspondence, conversations, or reminiscences, was that critical attention was deflected from Goethe's imaginative works to the figure of Goethe himself. Even *Faust I* was rarely the subject of genuine critical discussion. By the 1840s there were already so many translations of the play available in English that new ones were virtually ignored, and one hears little of the work except for perfunctory expressions of reverence for its 'sublimity' and 'grandeur'. In general the Goethe criticism published in the literary journals does not reach a high standard, but at least malicious slanders of the kind that had greeted *Wilhelm Meister* on its appearance in English in 1824 were no longer current. Despite the concern which many people felt at what they considered the moral laxity in Goethe's writings, it was generally admitted that he was the most important literary figure of his age. As an imaginative writer he was known in the first instance as the author of *Faust*, and then as the creator of *Werther, Wilhelm Meister*, and *Hermann und Dorothea*, but his name also signified an intellectual power detached from the preoccupations of the day and devoted to the development of its own powers. In 1848 a reviewer in the *Athenaeum* wrote:

> In the present day it can no longer be necessary to discuss the claims of Goethe to a place amongst authors of the highest rank. He has ascended to it with the step of irresistible power,–and is now established there with the sanction of cultivated Europe . . . the largest, clearest, most universal mind of his time.[40]

Many people troubled by an uneasy feeling that Goethe represented a force hostile to traditional religion might well have wished to temper the enthusiasm of this acclaim, but few, if any, would have cared to express absolute disagreement.

Arnold's 'discovery' of Goethe was, therefore, no fortuitous occurrence. For an educated young Englishman interested in *belles lettres* it was virtually impossible to be unaware of Goethe. True, his reputation had not yet steadied to universal esteem, but a large party were claiming him to be the most important cultural phenomenon of his age and the greatest imaginative writer since Shakespeare and Dante. Translations of his works were frequently appearing and his name was regularly mentioned in the pages of the literary journals. Under these circumstances it is hardly conceivable that Arnold could have 'overlooked' or ignored so eminent an author. There is some evidence to suggest that he may have known something of Goethe even before his removal from Rugby to Oxford in 1841.

Dr Arnold's first acquaintance with things German began in the year 1825 when he was at work on his history of Rome. Through his friend Julius Hare he became aware of Niebuhr's monumental scholarship in the same field, and it was to study Niebuhr's work that Dr Arnold first began to learn German.[41] Hare (1795-1855) was himself an enthusiastic student of German literature. He had spent much of his youth on the continent and in 1804-05 had stayed at Weimar where, as he was to recall years later, he had seen Henry Crabb Robinson. Hare had an impressive library of German books, and was particularly fond of Goethe, so it is not improbably that Dr Arnold heard of the poet from Hare.[42] In any event he would have encountered Goethe's name through Niebuhr himself, as the third volume of the *History of Rome* contains a panegyric on the Weimar poet.[43]

But Dr Arnold had other connexions with Germany too. European tours during the free summer months were becoming a regular feature of his life, and although Germany was not on the itinerary of his tour to Northern Italy in 1825, his interest in the country was aroused. In a letter of 1828 to Augustus Hare (the brother of Julius) he expressed a desire to visit 'Leipsic, Dresden, and Prague, to worship the Elbe and the country of John Huss and Ziska.' In 1830 he did, in fact, visit Germany and actually met Niebuhr briefly at Bonn. He had not originally planned this visit, but on returning from Italy the travellers heard that revolution had broken out in France. To avoid any possible danger, therefore, they decided to return via the Tyrol, Württemberg, Baden, and the Rhine Valley. The Arnold family's links with Germany had, however, already been consolidated, for in the summer of 1827 during his stay at Rome Dr Arnold met the Chevalier Bunsen who was Niebuhr's successor as Minister to the Papal Court. The encounter led to a lasting friendship, and, although the two men did not meet again until 1838, there was an unbroken exchange of letters between them. In 1835 Bunsen sent Dr Arnold a copy of his own collection of German hymns, some of which Dr Arnold attempted, without success, to translate. In June of the following year Bunsen's son, Henry, came to England and lived with the Arnolds for two years before going to Oxford to study and eventually take orders in the Church of England. In October 1838 the Chevalier, his wife and son stayed for a short time at Rugby. An important consequence of this friendship seems to have been an expansion of Dr Arnold's awareness of German literature and scholarship. His reading of German certainly did not stop at Niebuhr's *History of Rome*, but there is good reason for believing that he was mostly concerned with theological rather than literary works.[44]

Matthew was certainly fortunate in having a father who recognized the importance of modern languages. Dr Arnold had introduced German into the curriculum of Rugby School in 1835, but it was studied only in the Upper School and then for a mere hour a week. Its purpose was explained by Dr Arnold thus:

> With regard to German I can speak more confidently; and I am sure that there we do facilitate a boy's after study of the language considerably, and enable him, with much less trouble, to read those German books, which are essential to his classical studies at the University.[45]

Matthew entered the fifth form of Rugby school in 1837, but had had private tuition in German before this date. Dr Arnold had engaged Mr Herbert Hill, a nephew of Robert Southey's, to prepare Matthew and Thomas for Winchester, and an entry in Mrs Arnold's domestic journal under 18 October 1835 records an incident in 1832 as follows:

> The infant of 1822 [i.e. Matthew] has just come to tell me how pleasantly and easily he has been reading German with Mr Hill.[46]

It would be unwise, however, to take this as proof that Matthew had a fluent reading knowledge of German. In 1832 he was a nine-year-old boy, doubtless eager to please and impress his mother. In fact, it is probable that he never mastered German as he learned to master French. In 1848, when trying to improve his German in preparation for a visit to Switzerland, he wrote to his mother, complaining that German 'almost breaks my heart, because I cannot get to read it like French, though I work at it with fury'.[47] The truth of Matthew's statement is borne out by certain errors, some of them elementary, in his translations from German authors in the so-called 'German Note-Book' of 1847. It seems safe to assume that with constant practice his reading knowledge of German gained in fluency over the years, but his ability to speak the language, probably never very adequate, certainly became weaker towards the end of his life.[48]

It is unlikely that Matthew had read anything of Goethe in the classrooms of Rugby, for the teaching there was aimed simply at giving the boys sufficient grounding in the grammar for them to be able to continue learning the language on their own. An author of Goethe's complexity would hardly provide suitable reading material, apart from other considerations. Nevertheless, Dr Arnold himself seems to have had some knowledge of Goethe, for in a letter of 1836 to Justice Coleridge he discussed the school curriculum in the following terms:

> Shakespeare, with English boys, would be but a poor substitute for Homer; but I confess that I should be glad to get Dante and Goethe now and then in the room of some of the Greek tragedians and of Horace; or rather not in their room, but mixed up with them.[49]

As I have already indicated, Dr Arnold's interest in Goethe may have been first awakened by Julius Hare, Niebuhr, or the Chevalier Bunsen. But possibly more important than any of these in stimulating his interest in German literature was the ubiquitous Henry Crabb Robinson.

In 1834 Fox How near Ambleside became the permanent holiday home of the Arnold family. Since Rydal Mount was 'next door' the aged poet Wordsworth became their neighbour and friend. Crabb Robinson had known Wordsworth for over twenty years and customarily spent the Christmas and New Year with him at Rydal. Robinson was as enthusiastic an admirer of Goethe as he had ever been, and twenty years of friendship with an equally resolute opponent of the German sage had done little to diminish the admiration of the one or the hostility of the other. Ever since his residence in Weimar in the early years of the nineteenth century Robinson had conducted a verbal campaign on behalf of Goethe and had not missed a single opportunity of recommending him to all who might conceivably be interested. His loyalty did not go unrewarded. Goethe sent him a token of his esteem and was in due course thanked for his regard when Robinson visited him personally in 1829. They spoke of the reputation enjoyed by German poets in England, Robinson read some Byron and discreetly attempted to promote the cause of Wordsworth. Although Robinson had written very little on Goethe, he was nevertheless widely known in England as a 'Goethe expert' and his opinions were frequently solicited by others (Sarah Austin, William Whewell, and John Mills, to name but three) who were more actively engaged in translation or criticism.

It was through Wordsworth that Robinson and Dr Arnold first became acquainted with each other at Christmas 1835. Early in the New Year Wordsworth and Robinson dined at Fox How and one of the topics of conversation, as one can well imagine, was Goethe. Robinson made the following record of the event in his diary.

> An agreeable afternoon, though the main subject of conversation was one on which I have no pleasure in hearing Wordsworth talk, Goethe, whom he depreciates in utter ignorance. Dr Arnold seems to be aware of the real objections to Goethe's moral character and is likely to overrate their importance.[50]

Robinson's intuition appears to have been accurate for Dr Arnold had serious reservations about *Faust I*. Although he thought that the play as a whole was saved from being 'a piece of Devilry' by Margaret's redemption, he felt that the Prologue was blasphemous; and in this, as we have seen, he agreed with most Englishmen of that time.[51] The two men met frequently during the January of 1836, but there is no record of their having spoken of Goethe again. Dr Arnold did not meet Robinson again for almost another three years, since the latter did not spend a winter holiday at Rydal again until the Christmas and New Year of 1838-39. The friendship was renewed and visits were once again exchanged. F. Norman points out that Robinson's diaries record three separate occasions when Robinson read poems of Goethe with 'Miss Arnold'–presumably Jane, the eldest of the Arnold children–and on one of these occasions the Doctor himself was present and 'took an interest'.[52]

This leads us to some interesting speculations. Since Crabb Robinson was reading Goethe's poems with Jane, it must be reckoned as a distinct possibility that, even before his departure to Oxford, Matthew had encountered at least some of Goethe's poetry. This is of particular interest since it would mean that Arnold became familiar with Goethe's shorter poems at a time when, as I have shown, Goethe's activity as a lyric poet was almost completely disregarded in England. One is led to speculate whether the editions which were used at these poetry readings belonged to the Arnold family or to Crabb Robinson. The latter alternative would seem the more probable, but one ought not to forget that the headmaster of a 'rival' public school, Edward Craven Hawtrey of Eton, had published a selection of Goethe's shorter poems in 1833 (see above p. 9), and that this selection had been made with a view to excluding those poems against which any moral objections could be raised. Almost certainly, therefore, Dr Arnold would have known of Hawtrey's little volume, and it would have been ideally suited to his purposes. He had expressed the wish to introduce a little 'Goethe and Dante' into the teaching of literature at Rugby, but he was a man who would have been reluctant to introduce anything of which the moral tendency could be said to be uncertain or dubious. This is not to suggest that Hawtrey's selection may have been used for teaching purposes at Rugby–where the emphasis was naturally placed on acquiring facility in the language–but simply that Dr Arnold could well have acquired the book for his own use and that of his older children.

Although Crabb Robinson saw little more of the Arnolds before the Doctor's death in 1842, he remained a friend of the Arnold family and often visited Mrs Arnold whenever he was staying with the Wordsworths at Rydal. To the end of his life Robinson remained the enthusiastic advocate of Goethe's cause. Walter

Bagehot's essay on him contains a delightful account of the literary breakfasts he used to give at his house in Russell Square for the young men of University College, London (of which he was one of the original founders). As Bagehot puts it: 'There was little to gratify the unintellectual part of man at these breakfasts and what there was was not easy to be got at', but anecdotes were never in short supply and these often had to do with Goethe and Schiller. A. H. Clough, who became Principal of University Hall in 1849 and used to be one of the invited guests on those occasions, was sometimes accompanied by the dauntingly elegant young secretary of Lord Lansdowne–Matthew Arnold. 'Old Crabb' as he was known to the young men, had the unfortunate habit of forgetting people's names and hence, to refer to them, he resorted to epithets of almost Homeric distinction and length. Clough was known as 'That admirable and accomplished man. You know whom I mean. The one who never says anything'. Matthew warranted an even fuller title:

> Probably the most able, and certainly the most consequential, of all the young persons I know. You know which it is. The one with whom I could never *presume* to be intimate. The one whose father I knew so many years.[53]

Fittingly enough the very last entry in 'Old Crabb's' diary relates to Matthew:

> 31 January 1867–During the last two days I have read the first essay on the qualifications of the present age for criticism. The writer resists the exaggerated scorn of criticism, and maintains his point ably. A sense of creative power he declares happiness to be, and Arnold maintains that genuine criticism is. He thinks of Germany as he ought, and of Goethe with high admiration. On this point I can possibly give him assistance, which he will gladly–
>
> But I feel incapable to go on.[54]

Robinson died on 5 February. Arnold, who had seen him and heard him speak of Goethe only a short time before the last entry was written, wrote to his mother to inform her of the loss of an old family friend.[55] But if Crabb Robinson did play any significant role in introducing Goethe to Arnold, it happened at a very early stage in the poet's career. In 1867 he needed little 'assistance' on this point. For more than twenty years he had been as eager an admirer of Goethe as Robinson himself.

Perhaps, therefore, when Matthew Arnold went up to Balliol in October 1841, Goethe was already rather more to him than the obscure author to whom Byron had dedicated *Werner* and *Sardanapalus*, and fragments of whose own play, *Faust*, about which one heard so much, had been translated by Shelley. Arnold's years at Oxford must have been a time of rapid intellectual development, but they are nevertheless a time about which even now comparatively little is known. Matthew's brother, Thomas, has left an interesting record of the poet's student years in his own autobiography:

> He was cultivating his poetic gift carefully, but his exuberant versatile nature

> claimed other satisfactions; his keen bantering talk made him something of a social lion among Oxford men; he even began to dress fashionably. Goethe displaced Byron in his poetical allegiance; the transcendental spells of Emerson wove themselves around him; the charm of an exquisite style made him, and long kept him, a votary of George Sand. The perfect handling of words, joined to the delicate presentation of ideas, attracted him powerfully to John Henry Newman . . . But, so far as I know, Newman's *teaching* never made an impression upon him.[56]

This statement is supplemented by the obituary which Thomas wrote for the *Manchester Guardian* (18 May 1888) in which he relates how after their father's death in 1842 Matthew 'plunged . . . in the vast sea of Goethe's art and Spinoza's mysticism' and by 1845 had 'drifted far away from orthodox Christianity'. It would seem from these accounts, therefore, that whether or not Matthew knew anything of Goethe's works before going up to the University, he only became a 'votary', and enthusiastic admirer, from about 1842. If this is in fact so, one is entitled to ask what prompted the sudden surge of enthusiasm. A variety of answers suggest themselves. Goethe was certainly 'in the air' at this time, and hence Arnold could have 'caught' his enthusiasm from any number of his Oxford contemporaries, but if, as Edward Walford's letter to *The Times* (20 April 1888) suggests, Matthew Arnold's drifting away from Christianity began even earlier than Thomas Arnold indicates, then the rather unintelligent controversy in the literary periodicals concerning the orthodoxy of Goethe's religious and moral opinions must have seemed to Matthew almost comically irrelevant.[57] Arnold's friendship with Clough began to develop after Arnold had arrived at Oxford as a student, and it is worth remembering that Clough had known some of Goethe's works–*Hermann und Dorothea* and *Werther* at least–since 1839.[58] The two young men were both members of the 'Decade', a discussion group along the lines of the Cambridge 'Apostles', and it is quite possible that Goethe's name occasionally figured in their literary debates.

But the vital clue is perhaps given by Arnold himself in the 'Emerson' essay from *Discourses in America* (1885). There he looked back across an interval of forty years and recalled the 'voices' that had spoken to his generation.

> A greater voice still,–the greatest voice of the century–came to us in those youthful years through Carlyle: the voice of Goethe. To this day,–such is the force of youthful associations,–I read the *Wilhelm Meister* with more pleasure in Carlyle's translation than in the original. The large liberal view of human life in *Wilhelm Meister*, how novel it was to the Englishman in those days! and it was salutary too, and educative for him, doubtless, as well as novel. But what moved us most in *Wilhelm Meister* was that which, after all, will always move the young most,–the poetry, the eloquence.[59]

Arnold's reading of Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* was almost certainly the decisive stimulus in the growth of his interest in Goethe. The influence which Carlyle exerted on Arnold during the early 1840s was, in fact, very great and not confined to his role as a translator and interpreter of Goethe. Both Arnold and

Clough were impressed by Carlyle's ringing prophetic tone and for a time they looked to him for spiritual guidance. In the long run, however, they came to feel that he had led them out into the wilderness, only to leave them there. The spell was eventually broken, or, to be more precise, it dissolved. In a letter of 1849 Arnold spoke of Carlyle as a 'moral desperado', and, although he still respected Carlyle at this time, his comment perhaps indicates growing dissatisfaction. Ten years later he could speak of 'the Carlylean strain . . . which the clear-headed among us have so utter a contempt for'.[60]

Many years later, when preparing the 'Emerson' lecture for his tour of the United States, Arnold again turned his attention to Carlyle and read his letters. Some of the old admiration was then restored but in 1860 his rejection of Carlyle seemed complete. In the early 1840s, however, Carlyle's peremptory command, uttered in *Sartor Resartus* (1838), was not to be ignored–'Close thy *Byron*: open thy *Goethe*'.[61]

In the 'Emerson' essay Arnold speaks of Carlyle as a translator of Goethe, but he also knew Carlyle's critical essays on the German poet. *The Critical and Miscellaneous Essays* were on Arnold's reading lists for 1847, but this was probably not his first acquaintance with a work which for eight years had represented the best and most widely-known critical interpretation of Goethe's writing available in English.[62] Indeed, if one reads between the lines of Arnold's letter to his youngest sister, Frances, in 1877 when he was working on his essay 'A French Critic on Goethe', one can see that for a time Arnold must have owed his view of Goethe directly to Carlyle. He wrote:

> On looking back at Carlyle, one sees how much *engouement* there was in his criticism of Goethe, and how little of it will stand.[63]

These are the words of a man acknowledging a past infatuation. The essay itself, 'A French Critic on Goethe', confirms this speculation. With his unfailing courtesy Arnold spoke kindly of Carlyle and told his readers how he, Carlyle,

> . . . did so much to make Goethe's name a name of might for other Englishmen also, a strong tower into which the doubter and the despairer might run and be safe . . .[64]

Nor need it surprise us that Carlyle's 'Goethe moralisé' should have been so attractive to Arnold. The Goethe whom Carlyle purveyed was in some respects ideally suited to a man who had just lost the religious faith of his upbringing. Carlyle had represented Goethe as a poet-prophet-saint who, while rejecting the creeds and dogmas of established religions, had nevertheless risen above the 'spiritual perplexities' of his time, had avoided the 'pestilential fever of scepticism', had retained his moral earnestness and found new certainties. Such a representation of Goethe must have appealed strongly to the youthful Arnold in search of a new creed to live by. When one adds to this the picture of Goethe as the disinterested lover of art, the whole and harmoniously developed man free of caste and sectarian allegiance, then one can see that the appeal must have been almost irresistible.[65]

At Oxford Arnold seemed unwilling to play the part expected of Dr Arnold's eldest son, one sent from the very seat of high seriousness, Rugby school itself. His dress was fashionable, his air flippant, his tone playful and bantering. Known to his friends as 'The Poet', he declined to take his work at the university too seriously, and to the disappointment, but not to the surprise of his friends he eventually took a Second Class. Trilling's explanation of this behaviour is convincing. He argues that the only way in which the young writer could protect his talent from the hostile environment of an Oxford indifferent to everything but the religious controversies of the Tractarian movement, was for him to affect an attitude of unconcern towards such matters.[66] Arnold could not afford to allow the fragile instinct for sensuous beauty to be consumed by the all-prevailing seriousness of the *Zeitgeist*. Arnold was not lacking in 'seriousness' as the melancholy note of his first poetic volume *The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems* eventually proved to his friends when it was published in 1849. The letters to Clough in particular reveal how troubled he was lest a poetic talent, never very robust, be stifled, as he saw happening in Clough, by an over-sensitive, tormented conscience and by intellectual probings too profound to be healthy.[67]

This is not to say that the joyful sense of emancipation from the constricted world view of orthodox Christianity which he felt at Oxford was not genuine. He revelled in the sense of new horizons which contact with European authors like George Sand and Goethe gave him. One gets a glimpse of his feelings at this time from a letter he wrote to Lord Bulwer Lytton in 1868, thanking him for the gift of the three-volume edition of his *Miscellaneous Prose Works* which had just been published:

> A thousand thanks for your magnificent present, which I shall value extremely. I am delighted to think that a good deal in it will be quite new to me; articles in the *Quarterly* which appeared without your name and which I have missed reading. Other parts of it, well-known and familiar to me, carry me back to the happiest time of my life–*The Student*, the *Life of Schiller*, came into my hands just at the moment I wanted something of the kind. I never shall forget what they gave me–the sense of a wider horizon, the anticipation of Germany, the opening into the great world . . .[68]

One also gets something of the flavour of Arnold's behaviour at this time from Shairp's recollection of him in his poem 'Balliol Scholars 1840-1843', where Arnold is depicted as 'half-a-dream chaunting with jaunty air/Great words of Goethe, catch of Béranger'.[69]

In his Introduction to the *Letters of Matthew Arnold to A. H. Clough* (1932), H. F. Lowry points out that by reading George Sand's novel Arnold could perhaps allow himself the luxury of appearing just a trifle wicked to his less emancipated friends.[70] But the same could be said of his enthusiasm for Goethe. After all, Goethe was widely thought of as a blasphemous infidel, and *Wilhelm Meister* contained things to which no gentleman would refer in the presence of a lady. Shairp's words usefully remind us that in those early days the charm of Goethe's Voice lay for Arnold no less in its poetry, eloquence and large liberality than in the refuge it offered to the spiritually perplexed. Hence, in a fascinating way, Arnold's youthful preoccupation with Goethe illuminates the intriguing division in Arnold, noted by Trilling, between an intense earnestness and an apparently flippant gaiety.

Exact details of Arnold's reading of Goethe at this time are difficult to obtain. *Wilhelm Meister* was, of course, definitely read, and one can be fairly sure that *Werther* and *Faust*, being the most celebrated of his other works, were not overlooked. The shorter lyric poems and the long epic *Hermann und Dorothea* were likewise probably among the first of Goethe's writings with which Arnold became familiar. He may well have relied to some extent on translations during his time at Oxford, not only because his German was not absolutely fluent but also because it was doubtless easier to acquire English translations than the German originals. He must certainly have known Hayward's translation of *Faust I* for he speaks of it with praise in *On Translating Homer* (1861).[71] In the same work he also refers to an anonymous anthology of hexameter translations published in 1847, which contained William Whewell's translation of *Hermann und Dorothea*.[72]

In 1847 Arnold resigned his Oriel fellowship and became private secretary to the Liberal Peer, Lord Lansdowne. From then on most of his time was spent in London, and it was probably there in 1847 that he acquired the sixty-volume Cotta edition of Goethe's works, the *Ausgabe letzter Hand* (1828-40). An element of doubt concerning the date still remains, however, for although an entry in a list of expenses at the front of his 1847 diary, which reads "Goethe £8-10" seems conclusive evidence in favour of 1847, a letter to Clough of 24 May 1848 could indicate a later date. There, Arnold told Clough–'I have got a good Goethe–the og. German–quite by accident'.[73] As the two men had exchanged frequent letters, Arnold could hardly be referring to something he had bought in 1847–unless, of course, he had forgotten to mention the fact before. But the hasty and excited manner of expression in the letter surely points to a recent event. The reference in the letter to Clough, however, could possibly apply to any of the 'secondary' works by Goethe which Arnold is known to have possessed–the six-volume *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe* (1828-29), for example, or Eckermann's *Gespräche mit Goethe*, the third and final volume of which appeared in 1848. This is perhaps the most plausible answer to the problem, as £8-10 is too large a sum to be accounted for by anything but a very considerable purchase of books.

Such then is the background to this study. From 1847 on Arnold was deeply immersed in the life, thought and works of the German poet. At that crucial time, therefore, when his intellectual opinions and habits of mind were still in the process of formation, when his poetic talent was still active, Arnold was exposed to Goethe's powerful influence. It remains now to assess the nature of this influence, the extent and importance of its operation, and to trace its effects on Arnold's own literary productions, both as a poet and as a critic.

CHAPTER TWO

POETRY AND THE POET: ARNOLD'S IDEAS AND PRACTICE: 1842-1857

Had Doctor Arnold's enemies in the Tractarian Movement been able to anticipate the religious development of the Doctor's eldest son, Matthew, they could have desired no stronger confirmation of their fears concerning the tendency of the Doctor's 'Broad Church' in difference to dogma. Dogma, the Tractarians maintained, was all that stood to protect the Christian faith against the encroaching tide of the new rationalism. As we have seen, Matthew declined to take the Thirty-Nine Articles too seriously even before his career at Oxford began in 1841.[1] By 1847 his career there was, for the time being at least, at an end; he emerged shorn of the faith of his upbringing with only a tentative kind of religious agnosticism to guide him.

A religious crisis was almost inevitable for any intelligent young man of that time aware of the new ideas that were seeping in from the Continent. The nemesis of faith was a fact of life for Clough and Froude no less than for Arnold. But Matthew's case has certain unusual features. Firstly, in comparison with his friends Arnold lost his faith at so early a stage in his development that almost nothing is known of the details. And secondly, Arnold's 'conversion' seems to have been relatively painless. There was no tormented vacillation between one form of confession and another—or if there was, no evidence of it has survived. Unlike his brother Tom, who resolved his religious difficulties by (twice) embracing the Church of Rome, Arnold was not inclined to replace a faith found untenable by one even more dogmatic. If the voice referred to in the poem 'The Voice' is indeed that of J. H. Newman, as some critics have supposed, then Arnold must certainly have felt the strength of the pull towards Rome, but it was not so strong that it could 'shake' his resolve.[2]

Loss of religious faith can never be a trivial affair for a serious-minded man, but Arnold was at least spared the pain of a rupture with family and country such as James Joyce had to endure. Arnold does not appear to have made any great secret of his views. His first two volumes of poetry were published under the pseudonym 'A', but both his friends and his family knew him to be the author. Even someone as remotely connected with the Arnold family as Charlotte Brontë, whom Arnold met in December 1850, knew that 'his theological opinions were very vague and unsettled . . .'[3] If Arnold had been in any sense a propagandist for his new position he would inevitably have become involved in a continual series of disputes, but he avoided these by affecting an unserious air of foppery which discouraged too intimate enquiries after the state of his soul. Arnold's unorthodox views cost him neither the affection of his friends nor the love of his family. He successfully steered a discreet course between open avowal and open denial of his convictions.

Whether or not Goethe played any decisive role in Arnold's early religious development must remain a matter for conjecture, but there are some clues. 'Goethe's profound imperturbable naturalism is absolutely fatal to all routine thinking,' wrote Arnold in 1863:

> . . . he puts the standard, once for all, inside every man instead of outside him . . . Nothing could be more really subversive of the foundations on which the old European order rested; and it may be remarked that no persons are . . . so thoroughly modern, as those who have felt Goethe's influence most deeply.[4]

If Goethe's influence was indeed a contributory factor in Arnold's abandonment of his father's faith, as this passage entitles us to suppose, then it is plain that the influence was, in an important sense, oblique. Goethe would never enter into a dispute about his religious beliefs and never wrote on the subject of Christianity; he was not concerned to argue a case against it. It may well be, therefore, that it was the spirit in which *Wilhelm Meister* and *Dichtung and Wahrheit* were written that first impressed Arnold rather than the specific ideas they contain. These works are, after all, pervaded by Goethe's 'naturalism' but they do not preach; they are written from a stand-point which takes it for granted that Christian revelation is not the literal and final truth. The simple fact that a man widely held to be Europe's supreme intellect accepted as self-evident that the Christian faith had no absolute claim to credibility must have spoken more eloquently to Arnold than any number of infidel biographies of Jesus. Goethe's attitude to Christianity was free of both hostility and nostalgic warmth. He was, as he described himself in a letter to Lavater (whose militant missionary zeal Goethe found increasingly irksome) 'not anti-Christian, not un-Christian but decidedly non-Christian'.[5] Had Goethe's attitude been ill-tempered or contentious Arnold might perhaps have disregarded him, but Goethe's 'polite' yet firm assurance, his 'Olympian' calm, lent such authority to his words that they could never be wholly ignored.

In Arnold's first volume of verse *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems* (1849) the loss of orthodox faith is reflected as an accepted fact, and the poems are preoccupied with the consequences. In the absence of old certainties the question 'what to believe' and 'how to behave' assume new and immediate urgency; alternative modes of thinking and acting are explored directly in the poems. Perhaps the crudest and most obvious response to the disappearance of a belief in a watchful diety who punishes sin and rewards virtue is to rush to enjoy those pleasures that were previously forbidden. In 'The Better Part', a poem Arnold wrote in 1860s, he issued a stern reprimand to those 'unbelievers' who could see no reason to forbear from sin, but as a younger man he was not quite so convinced. *The Strayed Reveller* contains two poems which explore a hedonistic response to disappointed religious faith, 'Mycerinus' (c.1843) and 'The New Sirens' (c.1844).

Mycerinus's simple faith in the justice of the Gods is shown to be in error when he is informed by an oracle that he has only six years left to live. His father, who had been a wicked ruler, had enjoyed a long life, and Mycerinus expected the same as a reward for his religious devotion and self-imposed restraint. The harsh sentence of the oracle leads him to question not merely the benevolence and justice of the Gods, but their very existence. He is left with a vision of the universe as a 'circumambient gloom' hiding 'if Gods, Gods careless of our doom'.[6] Embittered by disappointment Mycerinus resolves to spend the time that remains to him in joy and revelry. At least, so it appears to the King's subjects, but the unrhymed section of the poem which follows his dramatic monologue reminds the reader that appearances may be deceptive. It is tentatively suggested that the gaiety is merely a mask and that inwardly Mycerinus is taking stock of his soul and preparing himself for death. The poem's net effect, therefore, is to leave the reader in doubt as to Mycerinus's actual decision.

'The New Sirens' also considers the possibility of abandoning a life of responsible conduct for a life of pleasure, but more decisively than in 'Mycerinus' the possibility is rejected. The Poet who is the hero of the poem has in fact already abandoned the demanding life of rigorous intellectual effort for the relaxed, languorous ease of emotional and, it is hinted, sensual satisfaction. The arguments in favour of choosing the life of easy pleasure are strong. The Sirens remind the Poet that there are no certainties in the intellectual sphere; truth is relative, 'opinion trembles, / Judgment shifts, convictions go' (ll. 81-82). In the face of these arguments the Poet is 'dumb' (l. 89), but he suspects that they are specious. The emotional intensity with which the Sirens want to replace intellectual effort is an inadequate substitute because it is obviously transient: moments of intensity are followed by stretches of boredom, and when the resilience of youth wanes, a permanent state of *ennui* will be the result. A life-time of revelry, then, could never have presented itself to Arnold as a serious possibility, and in view of his upbringing at Rugby school this can hardly be cause for wonder. A certain parallel between Mycerinus's feigned gaiety and Arnold's notorious foppery is undeniable, but even if Hogarth's Rake did begin his progress as a dandy, Arnold at least was safe from this fate.

Hedonism in the popular sense of the word, that is, selfish pleasure-seeking, can seem a credible way of life only to the unbeliever who supposes that human morality has no other sanction than the existence of a divine judge, but this is by no means a necessary view of things. Morality can also be regarded as an Absolute beyond which there can be no higher instance. It is clear from the poem 'The Sick King in Bokhara' (c. 1847) that this latter view had some appeal for Arnold.

The poem tells of a Moollah who had cursed his mother and thereby broken the Mohammedan law; conscious of his guilt the Moollah requests the King to punish him. The King thinks him mad and refuses his request, but the Moollah is so insistent that the King is impressed and finally agrees. A. D. Culler has pointed out that the story is told in such a way as to provide the 'criminal' with every possible extenuation.[7] The Moollah was 'feverish' at the time of the curse and no harm has come of it; the Moollah's family are not seeking his punishment. The Law, which requires the death penalty, therefore appears excessively harsh and quite irrational. Yet to the Moollah, for whom morality is nothing more than strict obedience to Law, considerations of rationality are irrelevant; his crime is absolute, nothing can mitigate this, and so he has no alternative but to expiate his guilt by accepting the punishment. For the King, a restless and fretful youth, this encounter with an example of perfect submission of self to an absolute moral principle, is a maturing and sobering experience. But all this happened in Bokhara. In a country like England whose laws were made in accordance with the eminently reasonable principles of Utility, rationality was not a force that could be lightly ignored. The idea of an absolute morality had its appeal for Arnold, but it could not be made to substitute for a morality founded on religious faith. Arnold found a better solution to the problem of morality in Stoicism.

Stoicism had possessed a definite attraction for Arnold from the first. In one of his earliest poems, 'To a Gipsy Child by the Sea-Shore' (c. 1843), Arnold had mused on the child's facial expression and asked:

> Is the calm thine of stoic souls, who weigh
> Life well, and find it wanting, nor deplore;
> But in disdainful silence turn away,
> Stand mute, self-centred, stern, and dream no more?[8]

The stoic sentiment of these lines, however, involves a contemptuous awareness of superiority which betrays its Byronic origins and essential immaturity. A more satisfactory version of stoicism is given in 'Resignation'. In this poem Arnold contrasts a life of fierce resolution and activity with one of 'unblamed serenity . . . freed from passions, and the state / Of struggle these necessitate' (ll 23-5). It is the second of these alternatives that Arnold favours as more appropriate for a poet. From his high vantage-point above the agitated life of humanity, the poet is able to survey the course of mankind. Arnold could have been influenced in his admiration of emotional and intellectual detachment by a number of sources (including Lucretius, Marcus Aurelius and the *Bhagavad Gita*) but the close parallels between lines 144-169 and a passage in *Wilhelm Meister* makes it highly probable that Goethe's influence was important.[9] Arnold describes the Poet as a man set apart from others. He understands 'action and suffering' (1. 151), but he takes no part in them. He is above the strife, but his separateness is not painful since he does not envy what he sees:

From some high station he looks down,
At sunset, on a populous town;
Surveys each happy group which fleets,
Toil ended, through the shining streets,
Each with some errand of its own—
And does not say: *I am alone.* (ll. 164-169)

A very similar view of the Poet is put forward by Goethe in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre:*

> Now fate has exalted the poet above all this [the continual turmoil of life], as if he were a god. He views the conflicting tumult of the passions; sees families and kingdoms raging in aimless commotion . . . He has a fellow-feeling of the mournful and the joyful in the fate of all human beings.[10]

The supposition that Arnold was influenced by Goethe is strengthened if we note that the lines 'Beautiful eyes meet his—and he / Bears to admire uncravingly' (ll. 160-61) also bear some resemblance to the sentiment which Goethe claimed to have learned from Spinoza: 'to be unselfish (uneigennützig) in all things, but most of all in love and friendship, was my greatest delight, my maxim, my habitual practice'. The supreme form of this mental state is reached when one is able to love God without demanding love in return.[11]

But whatever its authority in ancient and modern authors, Arnold's stoicism did not please his friends. Clough spoke disparagingly of 'the dismal cycle of his rehabilitated Hindoo-Greek theosophy' and J.A. Froude was galled by Arnold's manner. He wrote to Clough:

> Only I don't see what business he has to parade his calmness and lecture us on resignation when he has never known what a storm is and doesn't know what he has to resign himself to.[12]

Froude had good reason to feel irritated, for at the time of writing the letter in March 1849 he of all men knew what a 'storm' could mean; his recently published novel *The Nemesis of Faith* had brought down upon his head all the fury of an outraged religious Establishment.

There is also some justice in Froude's complaint, but less than might at first appear. At the time of Froude's letter Arnold had endured one separation from 'Marguerite', the young French girl he had met at Thun in Switzerland in September 1848, and the second, final break was soon to come.[13] To appreciate fully the effect of the Marguerite experience on Arnold, it is important to note certain features of his earlier work. Nothing in the verse which Arnold wrote as a young man in his twenties is more remarkable than his almost obsessive preoccupation with the passage of time and the fleetingness of youth. The theme is heard many times in the poems of the 1849 volume: 'old men die, and young men pass their prime' reflects Mycerinus (l. 63); the poet of 'Resignation' does not forget 'death, which wipes out man' (l. 223); the 'Fragment of Chorus of "Dejaneira"' celebrates those who die in 'the prime / Of life' (ll. 25-6) before time robs them of their strength: the 'splendour' of the New Sirens is rejected because 'it dies away' (l. 258); 'Time's current strong / Leaves us fixed to nothing long' (l. 57-58) says Arnold in 'A Memory Picture'; and even the slight poem 'Horatian Echo', has a lament, admittedly conventional, for the approaching day 'when we must / Be crumbling bones and windy dust' (ll. 31-32). One can perhaps account for this preoccupation if one recalls that after Dr Arnold's sudden death from heart failure in 1842, Matthew was warned that he had inherited the same defect. Even if the lack of any weight of lived experience behind these lines renders them unsatisfying as poetry, they are nevertheless an important element in the make-up of the young poet.

One would hesitate to attribute Arnold's distrust of emotion and the volatile romantic temperament directly to this concern with death and mutability, but the two matters are obviously connected. In 'The New Sirens', for example, the delights of romantic love are not spurned because, in the dichotomy of thought and feeling, thought is considered to be more important, but simply because romantic love is transient and ultimately destroys the capacity to feel. The uncertainty of Arnold's attitude is revealed by the fact that the young hero of the poem has fallen under the sway of the Sirens at the same time that he is protesting against them. The opposite values of 'excitement' and 'calm' are continually weighed against each other. All the strongest arguments are arrayed on the side of 'calm', and there is even a genuine longing for freedom from turbulent feeling. The word 'feverish', for example, which is one of Arnold's favourite epithets, has strongly negative associations and is nearly always linked with the emotional agitations of youth. 'Excitement' is a form of weakness, whereas 'calm' signifies 'tranquil strength'.[14] Yet Arnold can never wholeheartedly wish for calm, since the very power of emotion which is sometimes so troublesome to him is both the source of sympathy which gives him a sense of community with other men and also his source of strength as a poet.

The dilemma is plainly visible in the letter he wrote to Clough from Switzerland at the time of his second meeting with Marguerite in September 1849:

> What I must tell you is that I have never yet succeeded in any one great occasion in consciously mastering myself: I can go thro: the imaginary process of mastering myself and see the whole affair as it would then stand, but at the critical point I am too apt to hoist up the mainsail to the wind and let her drive.[15]

Nevertheless with a 'ferocious' act of will he breaks away and 'turns towards England'. The need to master himself was now felt more urgently than ever before. The act of separation from Marguerite had been difficult, and when it was achieved his determination never again to give free play to his emotional life was greatly strengthened. In November 1849 he completed the poem 'Stanzas in Memory of the Author of "Obermann" ' which in effect confirmed the two important tendencies of his mental and moral development: the attainment of stoic detachment and the rejection of 'excitement'.

> He who hath watched, not shared, the strife,
> Knows how the day hath gone. (ll. 101-102)[16]

These lines, which recall Arnold's description of the Poet in 'Resignation' looking down from 'some high station' on the populous town, establish his preference for a poetry of objectivity and detachment to such a poetry of self-destroying involvement as he had briefly contemplated in the poem 'The Strayed Reveller'. The poem ends with the speaker bidding farewell to Obermann's 'unstrung will' and 'broken heart' but it is more than a mere character in a book that Arnold is firmly putting behind him; it is a part of his own self, his 'starting, feverish heart' which he is rejecting.[17]

Such, in brief and rather schematic outline, are the important features and tendencies of Arnold's development up to his second parting from 'Marguerite', and the question which must now be considered is the role played by Goethe in this development. The absence of any clear statement by Arnold about what Goethe meant to him, forces us to rely on the scattered pieces of evidence that can be gleaned from his letters, note-books, and poems written about this time. A rather useful clue is Arnold's description of Goethe in the 'Preface to First Edition of *Poems*' (1853, hereafter referred to as 1853 Preface) as 'the greatest poet of modern times, the greatest critic of all times'. In Chapter I, I traced the distorted English view of Goethe from its origins in the eighteenth century to its more balanced manifestations in the mid-nineteenth century. Arnold's view of Goethe as 'the greatest poet of modern times', although not shared by everyone, was nevertheless fairly orthodox, but Arnold is unique in describing him as 'the greatest critic of all times'. One's suspicion that Arnold found Goethe's 'criticism' (and what exactly Arnold meant by this remains to be seen) more useful than Goethe's poetry is partly confirmed if one observes that Arnold's two references in the 1853 Preface to works of poetry by Goethe, *Hermann und Dorothea* and *Faust*, stress their defects and comparative inferiority: the former is 'cold', Arnold says, in comparison with the *Iliad*, and the latter has only piecemeal beauty.[18]

The weightiest single piece of evidence in favour of the hypothesis that Goethe's critical writings were more important to Arnold than his poetic example is the so-called 'German Note-book'. This unpublished notebook, in the possession of A. Whitridge, is entitled 'Extracts and Considerations, June 1847'. On the inside cover is written 'Mr. Arnold Ball. Coll: 1844', but since it is known that Arnold only came to own his edition of Goethe in 1847, it is almost certain that the entries in the notebook were made after June 1847.[19] Having acquired the *Ausgabe Letzter Hand* Arnold evidently wasted no time before delving into its sixty volumes. The entries from Goethe in the German Notebook are taken from four sources—*Wilhelm Meister*, the '*Maximen und Reflexionen*', the *Tag- und Jahreshefte*, and the literary-critical essays of Volumes XLIV and XLV. In varying degrees all Arnold's entries are interesting and in the course of this study they will be looked at in some detail, but for the moment it will be useful to concentrate on two items, the critical essays 'Für junge Dichter' and 'Noch ein Wort für junge Dichter' (1832), which Arnold translated and copied out almost in full.

These short essays are basically an indictment of the romantic subjectivism of the younger generation of poets writing during Goethe's last decade. Goethe argued that because the German language had achieved a high general level of cultivation, young writers felt themselves able to communicate their thoughts and feelings easily and effectively. Unfortunately they did not realize that in doing so they had achieved very little. He conceded that these writers had skill and talent and that they were occasionally successful, but their subjectivity, which is at first their strength, is eventually their undoing. Once their 'inward youthful contentment' begins to dwindle away, it is replaced by morbid emotions and they turn into 'misanthropical hermits'. The poetic gift deserts such a writer for it resides only with a man who can 'cheerfully renounce' his 'early dreams wishes and hopes, and the satisfactions of young romance', who 'nimbly recovers himself, who can gather some fruit from every season, who allows its due time to the journey over the ice even as to saunter in the Rose Garden: who imposes silence on his own suffering . . .'.[20] The mark of a 'perfected life in its full development' is 'circumspect wisdom'. Goethe's message is clear. If the ability to write poetry is to continue beyond youth, then self-restraint, stoical renunciation and self-development are indispensable.

Goethe's essay could not fail to make a strong impression on Arnold, who, as we have seen, was by nature distrustful of the romantic temperament which he felt was peculiarly his own. In the summer of 1848 Clough was on the point of resigning his fellowship at Oriel College and was contemplating earning his living as a writer. Arnold was evidently concerned about his friend's future for he wrote to him enquiring of his plans:

> Do you know that Ld. Lovelace's son's tutorship is again open?
> Or do you indeed as you suggested mean to become one of those 'misanthropical hermits who are incapable of seeing that the Muse willingly *accompanies* life but that in no wise does she understand to *guide* it'?
> I spare you the rest about 'nimbly recovering oneself' etc. of which you will guess the to you quite alien author.[21]

The reference to Goethe's essay is, of course, light-hearted: Arnold is probably imagining his friend in a draughty garret vainly trying to eke out a solitary living with his pen. Indeed, the letter would be of little interest here but for two things. Firstly it is plain that he does not see *himself* as a 'misanthropical hermit', and secondly the date of the letter. The date–June or early July 1848–shows it to have been written before Arnold's first visit to Switzerland and his meeting with Marguerite at Thun in September.

Perhaps the most convincing 'proof' or Marguerite's reality is the striking change in Arnold's feelings towards himself and his friend after his return from Switzerland. Something had obviously happened that seriously affected him. Now it is he who is in danger of becoming a misanthropical hermit, not Clough. Their friendship underwent something of a crisis:

> I have been at Oxford the last two days and hearing Sellar and the rest of that clique who know neither life nor themselves rave about your poem [Arnold means *The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich*] gave me a strong almost bitter feeling with respect to them, the age, the poem, even you. Yes I said to myself something tells me I can, if need be, at last dispense with them all, even with him: better that than be sucked for an hour even into the Time Stream in which they and he plunge and bellow. I became calm in spirit, but uncompromising almost stern.[22]

To understand the full significance of this letter written in November 1848, it is useful to read it in conjunction with what Arnold wrote about this particular crisis of friendship some years later in 1853. Clough seemed to think he detected a degree of coldness in Arnold's feeling towards him, but Arnold was quick to deny the suggestion. He conceded, however, that

> There was one time indeed–shortly after you had published the Bothie–that I felt a strong disposition to intellectual seclusion, *and the barring out all influences that I felt troubled without advancing me.* (My italics)

Clough, therefore, seemed to Arnold, for a time at least, an influence which troubled without advancing him, and the particular aspect of Clough's character which Arnold wished to exclude becomes evident later in the same letter:

> . . . it is what I call your morbid conscientiousness–you are the most conscientious man I ever knew; but on some lines morbidly so, and it spoils your action.[23]

Whether consciously or not, Arnold seems to be recalling Goethe's essay 'Noch ein Wort für junge Dichter' which he had read before his first visit to Switzerland in 1848. Goethe advises his young poets thus:

> . . . do but ask yourself at every Poem–if it contains an actual experience, and if this actual experience has furthered you–you are not furthered, when you keep bewailing over one you have loved, and lost thro: separation, faithlessness or death.–All that is good for nothing, however much cleverness and talent you have sacrificed upon it.[24]

After the first separation from Marguerite nothing could have been more relevant to Arnold's situation than Goethe's advice to young poets. The Marguerite experience had certainly 'troubled' him, but had it 'furthered' him? What was the use of 'bewailing over one you have loved and lost through separation'? Arnold had no answer to these questions, but they were central to his dilemma. That he analysed his position in terms supplied by Goethe is proved by the fact that in his letter to Clough at the time of the crisis in November 1848 he refers to his friend's involvement with the Oxford 'clique' in unmistakably Goethean terms; 'better that than be sucked for an hour even into the Time Stream in which they and he plunge and bellow'. This is another echo of Goethe. In a letter to Zelter (6 June 1825) Goethe bewails certain features of the new age, namely its mechanical and practical aspect, its admiration only for wealth and speed. Of the new generation Goethe writes:

> Young people become excited far too early and then are swept away in the Time Stream.[25] [Zeitstrudel]

The word 'Strudel' literally means 'whirlpool', which perhaps accounts for Arnold's odd use of the expression 'sucked . . . into'. Arnold makes use of the idea of whirling motion as a symbol for the state of intellectual confusion that comes of failing to remain detached, in the poem 'Resignation'. There activity is figured as a 'dizzying eddy' (l. 277). In the essay 'On the Function of Criticism at the Present Time' (1864) Arnold recommends the 'Indian virtue of detachment' in the following terms:

> The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex.[26]

I am not, of course, suggesting that the word 'Zeitstrudel' should be regarded as a source for 'Resignation' or the later essay, but I think one may conclude that the idea of intellectual seclusion or detachment was associated, probably consciously, in Arnold's mind with Goethe. The echoes in Arnold's letter to Clough of Goethe's essays 'For young Poets' do show that he was conscious of the relevance of Goethe's advice to his own perplexed state of mind after his first separation from Marguerite in 1848.

The repetition of this parting in 1849 and the renewal of pain it must have caused could only confirm this determination to say farewell to his unstrung will and broken heart. The final stanzas of the poem 'In Memory of the Author of "Obermann" ' express this determination, but he quickly learned that the decision was easier to take in theory than to put into effect in practice. The two short poems 'Absence' and 'Courage' show Arnold torn between a desire for 'a nobler, calmer train/Of wiser thoughts and feelings'–that circumspect wisdom which Goethe had counselled–and a deep reluctance to forsake the life of passion.[27] The penultimate stanza of 'Absence' seems to accept the necessity of rejecting the 'Once-longed-for storms of love' for the sake of self-knowledge and knowledge of the world, but this renunciation of 'early dreams wishes and hopes' is anything but cheerful. Arnold 'bears' the renunciation (l. 16), but no sooner is it made than his thoughts return to Marguerite:

I struggle towards the light—but oh,
While yet the night is chill,
Upon time's barren, stormy flow,
Stay with me, Marguerite, still! (ll. 17-20)[28]

The indecision revealed in 'Absence' is evident too in 'Courage'. The first stanza admits the truth of Goethe's stoic counsel:

True, we must tame our rebel will:
True, we must bow to nature's law:
Must bear in silence many an ill;
Must learn to wait, renounce, withdraw. (ll. 1-4)[29]

Goethe had said that the young must learn to impose silence on their own suffering (see above p. 29) and to renounce. Arnold agreed, but the rest of the poem nevertheless tries to justify a kind of Byronic dynamism on the grounds that it is at least 'dauntless' and resolute, whereas his own weakness is a 'faltering course' (l. 26). And in fact this diagnosis of his own condition was not far wide of the mark. Arnold was simply not sure that the decision to suppress these troublesome elements in his temperament was the right one. At times it seemed to him that he was wise to prefer, like Tristram, 'Hours if not of ecstacy,/From violent anguish surely free', but at times he was beset with doubts.[30] The life he had chosen was one of 'Moderate tasks and moderate leisure . . . Both in suffering and in pleasure' and the circumspect wisdom of this choice is undeniable:

No small profit that man earns,
Who through all he meets can steer him,
Can reject what cannot clear him,
Cling to what can truly cheer him. (ll. 16-19).[31]

But the poem, which was written at about the same time as 'Tristram and Iseult', is called 'The Second Best'.

The great irony of Arnold's poetic development after 1849 is that his finest achievement, 'Empedocles on Etna', is a product of the very state of mind from which he wanted to be free. The experience of failure in his love affair with Marguerite had left him with an acute sense of personal isolation which he shortly universalized into a fundamental ailment of the human condition. At the first rejection of his love by Marguerite he bids his heart return to its 'remote and sphered course'; 'Back to thy solitude again', he cries and takes the rejection as proof that ' "Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone" '.[32] In the companion piece to this poem' 'To Marguerite—Continued' the problem of isolation is plainly seen as universal:

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone.* (ll. 1-4)[33]

But the frustrated desire for some bond of union to dispel the desiccating sense of loneliness produces a melancholy longing 'like despair' (l. 13), and it is this despair which is the dominant mood of 'Empedocles on Etna'.

The central problem of this play is the problem of accounting for the profound unhappiness of the hero; how it has arisen, what its causes were, whether anything can be done to alleviate it. In the first scene, before we are allowed to meet Empedocles himself, Pausanias (a sort of Wagner to Empedocles's Faust) and Callicles, a young poet, discuss the reasons for their master's gloom. Pausanias, who is somewhat unperceptive, is inclined to ascribe it to the prevalence of a school of philosophy—the Sophists—with which Empedocles is out of sympathy. But Callicles senses a deeper cause; Empedocles's mind preys on itself: 'There is some root of suffering in himself'.[34] In the second scene Empedocles arrives and addresses himself to the same question: why does unhappiness exist? Empedocles delivers a long hymn which is intended to cure Pausanias of his superstition (i.e. belief in supernatural causes) and to replace it with a morality of humanist stoicism.

Briefly, Empedocles's argument runs as follows. Man's mind is of its very nature incapable of comprehending the totality of the world; he is uncertain what he ought to believe or doubt, and therefore 'dares stamp nothing false where he finds nothing sure'.[35] Given these circumstances it is vital for man to find a morality which 'helps' him and a mode of life which does not 'degrade' him. Pausanias makes the error of looking for the cause of his unhappiness outside of himself: for example, he seems to believe that the gods are unfavourably disposed towards the present time. The source of his frustration and disappointment are in fact the result of believing that happiness is his right. Man has indeed an inborn instinct to pursue happiness and he is right to follow this instinct, but he is wrong in believing that the world exists for the purpose of making him happy. The world exists before man and imposes its conditions on him. Man must subjugate his will and accept these limitations for it is futile to attempt to escape them. Man must not seek to adjust the world to the self but rather his self to the world. Of course, even a man who thinks and acts aright is not guaranteed happiness. A chance disaster may befall him; other existences clash with his own, he finds himself curbed and restricted. It is useless for man to fall into a rage at finding his aspirations thwarted. It is foolish to explain misery by inventing gods to whom to impute human feelings, either of cruelty and malice or of kindness and solicitude. It is equally foolish to react to disappointed hopes by transferring these hopes of joy to a supposed life after death. The correct course for man to take is to moderate his desires and aspirations, to renounce hopes of an afterlife and to accept this world as the only reality. There is a positive value in such things as friendship, love, the intellectual life, which is not diminished even in times of hardship. Through the renunciation of gods and fearful superstition man can aspire to quiet strength and even to a degree of dignity.

With this bleak but faintly heartening message Pausanias is sent back down the mountain to live out his days, while Empedocles, alone, continues his ascent to death. The lesson Pausanias has heard is true so far as it goes, but it omits certain other truths which for Empedocles make life unendurable. Empedocles is troubled by a weariness of life which nothing can cure; his spontaneity of consciousness is dead, for 'something has impaired [his] spirit's strength. / And dried its self-sufficing fount of joy' (Act II, ll. 21-2). Empedocles's state seems to have been brought about by two things: firstly, the hostility of the age to 'greatness', and secondly, the tyranny within himself of the power of thought over the power of feeling. Conscious of his own superiority he feels himself 'railed and hunted from the world':

> Great qualities are trodden down,
> And littleness united
> Is become invincible.[36]

In his letter to Clough from Thun in September 1849, Arnold had complained in similar terms about their own age:

> My dearest Clough these are damned times—everything is against one—the height to which knowledge is come, the spread of luxury, our physical enervation, the absence of great *natures*, the unavoidable contact with millions of small ones . . .

Here Arnold's complaint about the 'height to which knowledge is come' is a lament for the age in which they live, but in May 1853 he wrote to Clough with a different regret:

> I feel immensely—more and more clearly—what I *want*—what I have (I believe) lost and choked by my treatment of myself and the studies to which I have addicted myself. But what ought I to have done in preference to what I have done? There is the question.[37]

What Arnold had 'lost and choked' in himself is made clear by a note in the Yale MS: '. . . the service of reason is freezing to feeling . . . and feeling and the religious mood are eternally the deepest being of man, the ground of all joy and greatness for him.'[38] So, like Arnold, Empedocles comes to see that enslavement to the 'imperious lonely thinking-power' (Act III, l. 376) can never bring happiness, indeed, that it ultimately destroys the faculty of joy. Like Arnold again he cannot see what else he could have done. There is a bitter irony in Arnold's complaint that his feelings have become cold: 'I am past thirty, and three parts iced over', he wrote to Clough in September 1853.[39] Less than five years earlier his constant theme had been a desire for 'calm', for freedom from the 'feverish time of youth'. A part of his strategy for attaining this freedom was the development of his intellectual powers by the studies to which he addicted himself; they were part of a conscious effort to subdue 'feeling'. In 1850 he told Clough:

> I go to read Locke on the Conduct of the Understanding: my respect for the reason as the rock of refuge to this poor exaggerated surexcited humanity increases and increases.[40]

Arnold paid dearly for the suppression of his troublesome emotions.

But Empedocles, the tragic victim of his own pursuit of truth, was not always the old and gloomy philosopher by the crater's rim. He was once young and before throwing himself into the volcano's mouth he casts a last painful glance back to happier years. Then his mind had been receptive not to ideas only, but to those pleasures which the smallest things can give. Like a Sicilian Wordsworth he had known

> The sports of the country people,
> A flute-note from the woods,
> Sunset over the sea;
> Seed-time and harvest,
> The reapers in the corn.
> The vinedresser in his vineyard,
> The village-girl at her wheel.

The opposite mode of life to that of Empedocles as we know him from the poem is not a life of pure sensation and feeling. It is a life of 'Wholeness' in which a happy balance is struck between intellect and emotion, a life in which individual capacities do not operate in isolation and to the detriment of others but in perfect harmony with each other. This mode of life is represented in the play by Callicles, the young Harp-player, who inhabits the lush, green world of the lower mountain slopes. He produces simple music, delightfully and without effort; his ability to make myths is evidence of the unfragmented, undivided nature of his being, for in myth the dichotomy of intellect and feeling is resolved in the higher unity of imagination. 'He fables, yet speaks truth', Empedocles says of him.[41]

Perhaps Empedocles's words are not without a touch of nostalgic regret, for he himself had once been a poet like Callicles, although he is one no longer. He 'has laid the use of music by', a lapsed poet. Shortly before his suicide Empedocles formally lays down his poetic office:

> I am weary of thee.
> I am weary of the solitude
> Where he who bears thee must abide—
> . . . the solitude oppresses thy votary!
> The jars of men reach him not in thy valley—
> But can life reach him?

The answer to Empedocles's question seems to be 'No'. Arnold had moved a long way from the Goethean conception of the poet which he had represented in 'Resignation'. There the poet was separate from the crowd, but he did not say '*I am alone*' (l. 169, *Poems*, p. 91). He suffered from no sense of isolation; in scanning life he was, in some sense, taking part in it. But Empedocles is caught in a dilemma from which there is no escape. He cannot live away from the company of other men, but neither can he live with them. One truth Empedocles was careful not to divulge to Pausanias. Empedocles made it a condition, though not a guarantee, of happiness that man should seek to know his state of being and learn to adapt it to the world. But knowledge of one's 'true self' is difficult, almost impossible to obtain. There are hence two kinds of isolation: being cut off from others and being cut off from one's own self. Empedocles cannot return to the company of men for to do so would merely be to exchange one form of isolation for another. The 'friendly chatter' of men haunts him 'till the absence from himself, / That other torment, grow unbearable', and then he is forced back to solitude again; there seem to be only two alternatives and both bring inescapable suffering.[42] In 'Empedocles on Etna' the 'detachment' sought after in the early poetry has become 'isolation'; the doctrine of cheerful renunciation has become bleak despair.

Goethe's importance at this point in Arnold's career is, therefore, somewhat paradoxical. After the disappointment of the affair with Marguerite Arnold believed himself in danger of becoming what Goethe had called a 'misanthropical hermit'. To avoid this he consciously followed Goethe's advice and 'renounced' both the painful Marguerite episode and the freedom of the emotional temperament which had rendered him vulnerable to it. But despite his efforts he was unable to renounce those insights into the misery of human isolation which the experience had brought him. The uncertainty, also, as to whether he had done the right thing in fostering his intellectual and moral life at the expense of his emotions, led him into that state of morbid gloom which he sought to avoid, but out of which his single masterpiece was born. Empedocles is the archetype of misanthropic hermits; nothing could be less Goethean than the mood of Arnold's major work. One of the most striking features of 'Empedocles on Etna' is the absence from its 'Weltanschauung' of any mention of love: the idea of love is obscured by the overriding notion of human loneliness. This keen sense of isolation from which Arnold suffered would have been frankly incomprehensible to Goethe; there is no trace of such an experience anywhere in his life or works. Not even Werther in the madness that precedes his suicide doubts the value of his love for Lotte or the reality of their communion. Faust begins to awaken to the meaningfulness of life through his love for Margarethe. For Goethe the experience of love was vital to a correct interpretation of human life and nothing could have seriously questioned its significance.

Furthermore, Goethe's advice to young poets, which meant so much to Arnold, was in one important respect ambiguous. Goethe advises his young poet not to dwell on experiences which have troubled without advancing him. The question Arnold seems to have asked himself when he assessed the effects of his encounter with Marguerite is whether or not it had made him a better person. In other words, Arnold takes 'advancing' in a too narrowly ethical sense. Even from Thun in 1849 he wrote that more than ever before he was 'snuffing after a moral atmosphere to respire in'.[43] But it is unlikely that Goethe intended his meaning to be construed in this way. He is surely thinking in terms of a much wider development, not merely of the moral character, but of the whole personality including the artistic faculties. Indeed, a useful gloss on Goethe's meaning in the Easay 'Für junge Dichter' can be found in the *Italienische Reise*, where Goethe formed this resolution: 'I must never again undertake anything outside the sphere of my talents, any task which exhausts me without bearing any fruit'.[44] Arnold may not have felt advanced as a person by his unhappy experience in Switzerland, but whether he knew it or not he was certainly advanced as an artist. The 'Switzerland' poems themselves are not of course Arnold's best, but the deepening of feeling which accompanies them eventually lent weight to the tragic view of life which he held, unconvincingly in the 1849 volume of poetry, but with far greater authority in 'Empedocles on Etna'.

Indeed Arnold was far too ready to equate those things which troubled him with those things which hindered or failed to advance his development. He would have found it difficult to accept that an experience which disturbed his moral and mental equipoise could actually have been useful or beneficial, whereas to Goethe this notion would have appeared obvious. Arnold could have corrected his distorted interpretation of Goethe's advice by simple reference to Goethe's poetic practice. Much of Goethe's finest poetry is clearly the direct consequence of an unhappy experience in love (for which the best example is perhaps the so-called Marienbad Elegy of 1823). There is a great difference between Arnold's futile efforts to bar out the memory of Marguerite as an unwelcome influence, and Goethe's recommendations which were intended only to discourage the kind of morbid and repetitive preoccupation with inner suffering which cuts the poet off from awareness of the external world. Arnold never saw poetic creation itself as a means of exorcising those spectres of which he wanted to be rid. For Goethe on the other hand the writing of poetry was always a therapeutic act, a way of liberating himself from the tyranny of strong emotion. As he said in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, it was always his practice

> . . . to transform into an image, a poem whatever gave me delight or caused me suffering or otherwise occupied my mind and in so doing to bring the matter to an end, in order to clear my ideas about external things and also to calm myself inwardly. The ability to do this was probably necessary to no one more than myself who by his nature was thrown constantly from one extreme to another.[45]

Goethe would have regarded Arnold's love for Marguerite and the pain which separation from her caused him as perfectly legitimate subjects for poetry and certainly not as experiences which ought to be ignored or forcibly excluded from his life. He would have seen the transformation of these subjects into poetry as the only hope of crushing the seed of madness that lies in every separation. Arnold avoided madness by suppressing the capacity for suffering, but in this way he ultimately killed his frail poetic gift.

In the preceding pages, I have attempted to suggest a relationship between Arnold's early development, both as he saw it and as it really was, and his reading of Goethe's essay, 'Für junge Dichter'. It would now be useful to examine Arnold's view of Goethe in more detail. Arnold's reference to Goethe in the 1853 Preface as the greatest critic of all times has already been noted, but with the exception of this isolated comment the Preface is unhelpful in revealing what Arnold thought about Goethe. Arnold's first full statements about the German poet occur in his poetry, and in particular the poems 'Stanzas in Memory of the Author of "Obermann" ' (1849), 'Memorial Verses' (1850) and 'The Scholar-Gipsy' (c. 1852).

In his letter to Clough from Thun in September 1849, Arnold spoke of his 'one natural craving' which was not for 'profound thoughts, mighty spiritual workings' but for 'a distinct seeing of my way as far as my own nature is concerned'.[46] These sentiments are closely connected with the 'Obermann' stanzas which Arnold was composing at about the same time as the letter. Arnold spoke in the poem of the two moderns who, apart from Obermann, had 'attained . . . to see their way' (ll. 47-48), and he identified them as Wordsworth and Goethe. The letter to Clough, therefore, indicates that Arnold was aiming for something which was closely associated in his mind with Goethe and Wordsworth even though their names are not actually mentioned in the letter. Goethe and Wordsworth are models and points of reference. But the letter indirectly suggests the limitations of their relevance to his position. Arnold states quite openly that he does not want 'profound thoughts' or 'mighty spiritual workings', but it is clear from the letter which Arnold wrote to J. Dykes Campbell in 1864 that these are the very things which he attributes to Goethe and Wordsworth respectively: 'I do not think Tennyson a great and powerful spirit in any line—as Goethe was in the line of modern thought, Wordsworth in that of contemplation . . .'.[47] The 'Obermann' stanzas elaborate this theme. Wordsworth is here given short shrift because anyone who averts his eyes from 'half of human fate' (l. 54) is plainly not an adequate model. Goethe's failure is not on the other hand one of adequacy, indeed the failure is not Goethe's at all but Arnold's; he cannot hope to 'emulate' Goethe's course:

For he pursued a lonely road,
His eyes on Nature's plan;
Neither made man too much a God,
Nor God too much a man.

Strong was he, with a spirit free
From mists, and sane, and clear;
Clearer, how much! than ours—yet we
Have a worse course to steer.

For though his manhood bore the blast
Of a tremendous time,
Yet in a tranquil world was passed
His tenderer youthful prime.

But we, brought forth and reared in hours
Of change, alarm, surprise—
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise?[48]

Goethe then remains a model of perfect adequacy; but it is far more difficult for Arnold to attain 'a wide / And luminous view' of life than it was for Goethe who achieved maturity in the tranquil, uncomplicated world of Europe before the French Revolution. (This may be poor history but it is excellent myth.) Arnold saw the world as involved in a process of becoming increasingly complex and less susceptible to comprehension by an individual mind. 'The poet's matter', Arnold told Clough in 1847, 'being *the hitherto experience of the world, and his own,* increases with every century'.[49] Arnold's growing certainty that modern man, unlike Sophocles, is necessarily unable to view the world as an entirety is an important factor in the gloom which overtook him after the separation from Marguerite. His melancholy, therefore, is not merely personal but has an existential element too.

The 'Obermann' stanzas are not, however, addressed to Goethe or Wordsworth, but to Senancour, the author of *Obermann*. Trilling explains the fact as follows:

> Arnold saw him as the very type of the modern soul, more relevant than either Wordsworth or Goethe, for his icy clarity of despair is of more use, says Arnold, than either 'Wordsworth's sweet calm' or Goethe's 'wide and luminous view'.[50]

While there is much truth in what Trilling is attempting to say, he makes one fundamental error. It is precisely because 'icy despair' is of NO use that Arnold rejects Obermann. Icy despair is the only honest and appropriate response to an inherently incomprehensible world, but it does not help a man get through the day-to-day business of living. Arnold cannot and does not want to retire to a mountain like a misanthropic hermit: 'I in the world must live' (l. 137) he says, and to do this he needs a distinct seeing of his way. The task of achieving a 'wide and luminous view' may well prove to be impossible, but the impossibility does not absolve him from the duty of endeavour. For Arnold's purposes Goethe is less 'relevant' than Senancour, but of far greater use.

Arnold's second important statement about Goethe also occurs in a poem dedicated to another writer. In April 1850 Wordsworth died and Arnold composed a poem to his memory. In this poem 'Memorial Verses', Goethe is figured as the 'Physician of the iron age' (l. 17):

He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear;
And struck his finger on the place,
And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*
He looked on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life—
He said: *The end is everywhere,*
Art still has truth, take refuge there!
And he was happy, if to know

Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness. (ll. 19-33)[51]

If these lines had been discovered as a separate fragment it would not have been easy to guess the name of the poet to whom they refer: one does not normally think of the author of *Faust, Werther,* or the *Gedichte* in the terms in which he is here described. Nevertheless, the view of Goethe which is represented in the poem is in complete agreement with Arnold's other statements. Essentially, two things are said about Goethe: firstly, that he understood the age in which he lived and diagnosed its failings, and secondly that he himself was above these failings and unaffected by them. With respect to the first statement it is likely that Arnold was thinking of Goethe as a 'critic' and with respect to the second, of Goethe as a poet. The description of Goethe looking 'down' the weltering strife, and seeing 'far below' the terror and insane distress, inevitably recalls the lines in 'Resignation' (quoted above, p. 26) where the poet (like Goethe a poet of wide and luminous view) is described as looking down from a hill-top upon the populous town. But in 'Memorial Verses' the darkening of mood is unmistakable. The lines on Goethe can be seen as a transitional phase in the development of Arnold's conception of the poet, from the serenity of 'Resignation' to the gloom of 'Empedocles on Etna'. In 'Resignation' the poet's detachment is happy, it is not isolation. In 'Memorial Verses' the conditional 'if' in the last lines of the description of Goethe looms large; Arnold is not sure that Goethe was happy in his position of separateness. In 'Empedocles on Etna' the uncertainty has gone. Arnold is now sure that separateness is isolation, and isolation involves misery.

Arnold wrote in 'The Scholar-Gipsy':

. . . amongst us one,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest.[52]

The controversy about the identity of the person Arnold is referring to in these lines is still not resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Most scholars (including C.B. Tinker, H.F. Lowry, K. Allott, and R.H. Super) have settled for Tennyson. The evidence is telling. Tennyson received the Laureateship in November 1850, which is one kind of 'intellectual throne', and lines 185-90 are an apt description of *In Memoriam* which Tennyson published in 1850. But the difficulty with this view is that Arnold on other occasions specifically denies Tennyson any intellectual standing and specifically contrasts him in this respect with Goethe: 'I do not think Tennyson a great and powerful spirit in any line–as Goethe was in the line of modern thought . . .' And again: 'The real truth is that Tennyson, with all his temperament and artistic skill, is deficient in intellectual power; and no modern poet can make very much of his business unless he is pre-eminently strong in this. Goethe owes his grandeur to his strength in this . . .'[53] R. H. Super has drawn the logical conclusion, namely that if the lines do refer to Tennyson they must be a piece of devastating irony.[54] On this interpretation, the words 'This for our wisest' (l. 191) have to be read as sarcasm or contempt, which is hardly a satisfactory reading if one considers the poem's tone.

Other critics (including Lionel Trilling and A. D. Culler) have taken the lines to refer to Goethe. They are in a position to point out that Arnold himself is reported to have said that the 'one' was Goethe. But since Arnold said this some thirty years after the poem's composition, those who favour Tennyson have not unreasonably doubted the reliability of Arnold's memory. Yet if his memory was at fault then it is strange that he should have been so specific, for he also said that it was the impression of sadness left by Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, which he had recently read, that inspired the lines in question.

There are difficulties with this view also. For example, 'amongst us' suggests that the 'one' is still alive, but Goethe had been dead for approximately twenty years when Arnold composed 'The Scholar-Gipsy'. Furthermore, lines 186-90 are not a very appropriate description of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, since Goethe's days were not conspicuously 'wretched'. Nevertheless, if one allows for a degree of poetic overstatement, one can easily reconcile the lines with Goethe's autobiography, which does, after all, recount the history of some very unhappy love affairs.

A suggested source for the phrase, 'intellectual throne' is Tennyson's 'The Palace of Art', where it is also used (l. 216). There is, however, an alternative source, not previously recognized, which speaks for Goethe. In his essay 'Goethe' (1828) Carlyle described the German poet as:

> . . . a man who . . . ascends silently through many vicissitudes to the supreme intellectual place among them [the Germans] . . . still labouring in his vocation, still forwarding as with kingly benignity whatever can profit the culture of his nation.[56]

Arnold had definitely read Carlyle's essay by 1847 and so presumably knew this passage.[56] If the passage is a genuine source, it serves to explain not merely the image of the intellectual king ascending his throne, but also the association of this king with the idea of 'one who most has suffered', for the way to the supreme intellectual place 'lies through many vicissitudes'. Furthermore, Arnold's 'dejectedly' could have been suggested by Carlyle's 'silently', and the puzzling 'amongst us' is accounted for by Carlyle's 'amongst them'. If the phrase 'intellectual throne' is thought too commonplace an idea to require a source, then of course this new piece of evidence will hardly appear compelling. But the really convincing evidence in favour of Goethe is that the picture of the 'one' as a pre-eminently intellectual figure who has endured much suffering, fits Arnold's conception of Goethe far better than it fits his conception of Tennyson dawdling with the painted shell of the universe.[57]

It is evident from the statements in the three poems discussed above that Arnold saw great similarities between the type of poet represented by Goethe (intellectually strong, stoical, detached) and the type of poet he wished to become. One important consequence of Arnold's conception of the German poet is his tendency to regard his own development as parallel to that of Goethe. There are two interesting examples of this tendency in Arnold's letters. As we have seen (above p. 34) Arnold believed that he had done himself great harm by subjecting himself to a rigorous course of intellectual studies. His reasons for believing this are expressed symbolically in the figure of Empedocles, whose joyful harmonious existence as a poet is destroyed by exaggerated service to the 'imperious lonely thinking-power'. In fact, Arnold had begun to perceive the dangers of exclusive attention to the intellect early in 1849. In a letter to Clough he wrote:

> I often think that even a slight gift of poetical expression which in a common person might have developed itself easily and naturally, is overlaid and crushed in a profound thinker so as to be of no use to him to help him to express himself.

By 1853 he was convinced that this applied to himself too.[58]

In Arnold's view Goethe was a particularly 'profound thinker', so surely he too ought to have suffered from this same malady, and in fact, although Goethe was not a 'common person', even he could not escape the malign influence. In 1860 Arnold wrote to his sister, Frances: 'Goethe owes his grandeur to his strength in this [intellectual power], although it even hurt his poetical operations by its immense predominance'.[59] Whether there is any truth in this is doubtful—even in Arnold's case it is only partly true that the drying up of the poetic talent was attributable to an over-emphasis on thought—but what really matters is not the correctness, or otherwise, of the opinion, but the fact that it illustrates his tendency to view Goethe's development and his own in similar terms.

I have already tried to show that Arnold attempted to bring his temperament under control by placing greater reliance on the powers of analytical reason, and I also suggested that this was only part of his strategy. The other important element is hinted at by the phrase he used in his letter to Clough from Thun in September 1849 when he described himself as 'snuffing after a moral atmosphere to respire in'.[60] The effort of self-mastery is not primarily intellectual but moral, and after his separation from Marguerite Arnold came to feel that a great moral effort was called for. In December 1849, he entered his twenty-seventh year. His 'youthful prime' was almost over and he would soon be entering the middle years of his life. Sober maturity was perhaps already a little overdue: the time had come, it seemed, to put all foolishness away. In January 1851 he wrote sadly to his sister 'K':

> The aimless and unsettled, but also open and liberal state of our youth we *must* perhaps all leave and take refuge in our morality and character; but with most of us it is a melancholy passage from which we emerge shorn of so many beams that we are almost tempted to quarrel with the law of nature which imposes it on us.

Arnold did not, however, quarrel with this particular law of nature. Instead he took a steady post as Inspector of Schools and thus put himself in a position to marry, in June, Frances Lucy Wightman. Their marriage was a happy one, and although the 'incessant grind in schools' was no joyful occupation, Arnold endured.[61] His 'starting feverish heart' had been firmly left behind, the 'rebel will' was tamed.

There can be little doubt that Arnold's decision to accept work, which he knew in advance would be a routine 'grind' absolutely uncongenial to his tastes and interests, was a part of his intention to take refuge in his morality and character. He must have known and accepted that the writing of poetry under these new conditions would be hard, perhaps impossible, and the difficulties proved great. To produce one's best 'is no light matter with an existence so hampered as mine is', he complained to his elder sister 'K' in 1853. One needed to 'devote one's whole life to poetry' as Wordsworth, Shelley, and Byron had done. But none of these is his model; he thinks instinctively of Goethe:

> . . . but of the moderns Goethe is the only one, I think, of those who have had an *existence assujettie*, who has thrown himself with a great result into poetry. And even he felt what I say, for he could, no doubt have done more, *poetically*, had he been freer; but it is not so light a matter, when you have other grave claims on your powers, to submit voluntarily to the exhaustion of the best poetical production in a time like this. Goethe speaks somewhere of the endless matters on which he had employed himself, and says that with the labour he had given to them he might have produced half a dozen more good tragedies; but to produce these, he says, I must have been *sehr zerrissen*.[62]

Arnold's memory appears to have been playing him false, for this represents a composite recollection of two, possibly three, separate conversations reported by Eckermann. On one occasion Goethe complained to his secretary that his poetic activities had been much hindered by his official duties as a government minister:

> My real happiness was my poetic thought and activity. But how this was disturbed, limited and hindered by my outward position! If I had been able to keep myself freer from public and official work and to live more in seclusion, I would have been far happier and would have achieved far more as a poet.[63]

In another conversation he remarked that, had it not been for the expenditure of half a lifetime of effort on the *Farbenlehre*, he 'could have written perhaps another half dozen tragedies'; but he added that he had no regrets about this.[64] In a conversation of 26 July 1826, however, he spoke of his deep interest in the theatre during the 1770s when he would have found it easy 'to write a dozen plays; there was no lack of subjects and production came easily'; and of his annoyance that he did not do so.[65] But on none of these occasions is there any mention of Goethe having to be *'sehr zerrissen'*, literally 'very torn apart', in order to write. This is important because Arnold seems to be rendering into German, and attributing to Goethe, an opinion concerning his own situation which he had expressed earlier in the same letter; he spoke of the approach to perfection as 'an actual tearing of oneself to pieces, which one does not readily consent to'. The firmness with which Arnold cherished his belief in the similarity of his poetic development to Goethe's becomes clear if one considers how the view of Goethe as the poet of wide and luminous perspective ('Obermann' stanzas), the poet existing in seclusion ('Memorial Verses'), has slipped gently into a view of Goethe as a man deeply involved in active life but nevertheless continuing to produce poetry.

The reasons for Arnold's selectively distorted picture of Goethe as this time is unclear. As I have already suggested (see above pp. 17-19) Carlyle may have been partly responsible, but there is probably another cause too. Two of the most important single works of Goethe to influence Arnold were the two short essays 'Für junge Dichter' and 'Noch ein Wort für junge Dichter'. Arnold found them enormously helpful, but they were also misleading. Goethe counsels his young poets with such insight that it appears as if in his own youth he too must have been a misguided subjective writer. The result is an over-simplified picture of Goethe's life as a troubled, tempestuous youth subdued by stoic renunciation leading to the serene and balanced wisdom of old age. It was perhaps because Arnold wished to achieve the same kind of balance that he turned to the very writer who, Goethe said, had helped calm his troubled poetic temperament–Baruch Spinoza.

It has been customary among Arnold scholars to assume that Arnold came to Spinoza through Goethe, but in general the real nature of the link has not been fully understood. The grounds for this assumption is the proximity of Goethe's name to Spinoza's in the obituary which Tom Arnold wrote for his brother in the *Manchester Guardian* (18 May 1888): Matthew 'plunged very deeply in the years following his father's death in the vast sea of Goethe's art and Spinoza's mysticism'. Two things are worthy of note. Firstly, Tom himself does not suggest that there was any significant link between Arnold's reading of Spinoza and his reading of Goethe. And secondly, the period about which Tom is writing is somewhat vague. Dr Arnold died in 1842, forty-six years before the date of the obituary. It is therefore open to question what Tom meant by 'the years following his father's death'. He is probably thinking of the period 1842-45, but it is possible that he is referring to a longer period, say 1842-50. The latter is unlikely, however, since Tom emigrated to New Zealand late in 1847 and henceforward was presumably not so well informed about his brother's activities. This is something of a puzzle. One can only say that if Arnold did plunge into the sea of Goethe's art and Spinoza's mysticism in the years 1842-45 he emerged undrenched. Arnold probably knew something of Spinoza's works at about this time since Spinoza was a writer who was widely read, but Arnold's first unambiguous reference to him occurs in a letter to Clough of 23 October 1850:

> Locke is a man who has cleared his mind of vain repetitions, though without the positive and vivifying atmosphere of Spinoza about him. This last, smile as you will, I have been studying lately with profit.[66]

Arnold does not say what had induced him to begin studying Spinoza again, but Arnold's essay 'Spinoza and the Bible' (1863) helps to provide an answer.

F. D. Maurice, writing in the *Spectator* in 1863, had permitted himself some speculations concerning the reasons for Goethe's admiration of Spinoza.[67] Arnold rightly took him to task:

> 'He [Spinoza] spoke of God', says Mr. Maurice, 'as an actual being, to those who had fancied him a name in a book. The child of the circumcision had a message for Lessing and Goethe which the pagan schools of philosophy could not bring'. This seems to me, I confess, fanciful. An intensity and impressiveness which came to him from his Hebrew nature, Spinoza no doubt has; but the two things which are most remarkable about him, and by which, as I think, he chiefly impressed Goethe, seem to me not to come from his Hebrew nature at all,–I mean his denial of final causes, and his stoicism, a stoicism not passive, but active. For a mind like Goethe's,–a mind profoundly impartial and passionately aspiring after the science, not of men only, but of universal nature,–the popular philosophy which explains all things by reference to man, and regards universal nature as existing for the sake of man . . . was utterly repulsive . . . Creation, he thought, should be made of sterner stuff . . . More than any philosopher who has ever lived, Spinoza satisfied him here. The full exposition of the counter-doctrine to the popular doctrine of final causes is to be found in the Ethics.

Arnold then goes on to discuss the second source of Spinoza's attractiveness for Goethe:

> Spinoza first impresses Goethe and any man like Goethe, and then he composes him; first he fills and satisfies his imagination by the width and grandeur of his view of nature, and then he fortifies and stills his mobile, straining, passionate, poetic temperament by the moral lesson he draws from his view of nature. And a moral lesson not of mere resigned acquiescence, not of melancholy quietism, but of joyful activity within the limits of man's true sphere.[68]

Arnold is right about Goethe's contempt for the doctrine of final causes; he probably discovered the fact in Goethe's correspondence with Zelter:

> . . . old Kant did the world, and I might add, myself an inestimable service when, in his *Critique of Judgment*, he placed Art and Nature on the same plane and

conceded to both of them the right to act out of great principles without purpose. Spinoza had already authorized my hatred of those absurd final causes. Nature and Art are too great to pursue purposes . . . [69]

For the rest, Arnold had relied on Goethe's own account of his discovery of the works of Spinoza which is given in *Dichtung und Wahrheit:*

Happily . . . I had absorbed the life and thinking of an extraordinary man, admittedly only partially and, as it were, for plunder, but even so I experienced significant effects. The mind who effected me so decisively and who was to have so great an influence upon me, was Spinoza. After I had sought in vain throughout the wide world for a means of cultivating (Bildungsmittel) my remarkable nature, I chanced eventually upon the Ethics of this man. What I read out of or into this work I could not say, enough that I found here what I needed to subdue my passions; a wide, free prospect over the physical and moral world seemed to open up before me. What particularly attracted me to him was the infinite selflessness which shone forth from every sentence. Those remarkable words–'He who loves God aright, must not demand that God love him in return', with all the supporting propositions on which they are based, and with all the consequences which follow from them–filled my mind completely. To be selfless in all things, but most selfless of all in love and friendship, was my greatest delight, my maxim, my habitual practice . . . Incidentally, let it not be overlooked that the most intimate relationships are born of opposites. The all-harmonizing calm of Spinoza contrasted with my all-agitating striving, his mathematical method was the counterpart to my poetic way of thinking and writing, and the very methodicalness of his treatment of moral subjects, which people generally found unsuitable made me his passionate follower, his most dedicated admirer.[70]

Spinoza was then forgotten for a time until Goethe happened to read an article which condemned the philosopher as an atheist. Goethe takes up the story again:

I still remembered well the calmness and lucidity that had been mine when I read the posthumous works of that remarkable man. This effect was quite clear to me although I could not have recalled particulars: so once again I betook myself to the works to which I was so indebted and once again the same peaceful air breathed upon me. I gave myself up to this reading and believed, as I looked into myself, that I had never before seen the world so clearly.

Goethe goes on to explain what Spinoza's thinking meant to him:

Both our physical and moral life, morals, habits, prudence, philosophy, even chance events, everything calls upon us to *renounce* . . .

To carry out this difficult task Nature has provided men with more than sufficient vigour, activity, and resilience. Frivolousness in particular comes to his aid . . . With the help of this he is able to renounce something every moment, provided only that he may pursue something new the very next moment; and so our whole life through we unconsciously repair the damage to ourselves. We replace one passion with another; tasks, affections, loves, fads, we try them all only to exclaim at last, *everything is vain*. No one is horrified at these blasphemous words, on the contrary people believe they have said something wise and irrefutable. Few men there are

> who know in advance this intolerable sentiment and, to avoid all partial resignations, resign themselves once and for all in the Whole.
>
> These men convince themselves of eternal, necessary laws and seek to form such notions as are indestructible which, far from being nullified by a contemplation of the transient, are confirmed by it.[71]

While Arnold's brief account of Spinoza's appeal for Goethe is necessarily selective, he has nevertheless given the essence of Goethe's own statement: that reading Spinoza produced a calming effect, and that Spinoza's message was for him a stoic lesson in renunciation and resignation.

It is a good indication of the degree of Arnold's interest in Spinoza and Goethe that he took the trouble to consult two relatively obscure works, the *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und F. H. Jacobi* edited by Max Jacobi (1846) and F. H. Jacobi's *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an Herrn Moses Mendelssohn*, (1785).[72] It is extremely probable that Arnold came to these two works by following up Goethe's reference to F. H. Jacobi in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* where he is mentioned as a man far in advance of Goethe both in philosophical thought and in his understanding of Spinoza.[73] Arnold's knowledge of these two works gives his treatment of Goethe's relationship to Spinoza (in his 1863 essay) particular significance. His account is accurate and just so far as it goes, but it also ignores much of importance. Since Arnold knew the details from his reading of Jacobi's book and Goethe's letters to Jacobi one cannot ascribe his sins of omission to ignorance or to an exclusive reliance on *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. To describe fully Spinoza's importance to Goethe would require too long a digression, but a brief outline will help us understand the significance of Arnold's comments in his essay 'Spinoza and the Bible'.

Goethe's earliest intuitions concerning the natural world did not amount to a fully worked-out, coherent system of philosophy. He had an intense feeling for nature as an organic being–'die lebendige Natur'–whose essential characteristics are an infinitely creative energy and abundant unceasing fecundity: the words 'Drang', 'Fülle', 'Kraft' resound through *Werther* and *Urfaust*. As long as these intuitions remained unformulated it was possible for them to exist amicably alongside orthodox philosophic and religious ideas. But some kind of rational, philosophical formulation of these unarticulated perceptions was ultimately inevitable, and the evolution of Weimar classicism out of the *Sturm und Drang* can be seen as a process of intellectual clarification and maturity or increasing self-awareness. As this process developed a conflict with traditional theology, never slow to detect a new heresy, became unavoidable. H. Korff calls Goethe's and Herder's joint study of Spinoza in the early 1780s 'the first classical straw in the wind' and it was over Spinoza that the first clash with orthodoxy occurred.[74]

Goethe's friend, F. H. Jacobi, met Lessing for the first time in 1780 and in the course of their conversation Jacobi showed Lessing a manuscript of Goethe's

'Prometheus' ode. To Jacobi's amazement Lessing expressed approval of the poem's sentiments which Jacobi considered Spinozistic. Half in question, half in exclamation, Jacobi said: 'Then you are fairly in agreement with Spinoza?' Lessing answered: 'If I must call myself after someone then I know no other.' Jacobi's report of this answer caused a sensation. Lessing's friends, in particular Moses Mendelssohn, the original of Lessing's wise Jew, Nathan, flatly denied that Lessing could ever have associated himself with a man who was generally reviled 'as a dead dog'.[75] Perhaps Jacobi had misunderstood Lessing, who enjoyed an ironic sense of humour? But there was no mistake and in 1785 Jacobi answered back in the biting polemic *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an Herrn Moses Mendelssohn*. Goethe was not delighted by the book:

> I have read your little work with sympathy, not with pleasure. It is and remains a polemic, a philosophical polemic, and I have such a horror of all literary controversies that if Raphael were to paint one or Shakespeare to dramatize it, I could hardly take delight therein, when all is said and done.[76]

Goethe had taken care not to publish his 'Prometheus' ode precisely because he dreaded becoming involved in defending himself from accusations of heresy, blasphemy, atheism, or whatever else the pious might have read into it. Understandably, therefore, he was annoyed when he found that Jacobi had printed the text of the poem without his consent and in addition had revealed Goethe as the author.

But Goethe was troubled by Jacobi's book for another reason. It had revealed the extent to which the two men differed in their fundamental outlook. They had been the closest of friends and Goethe had concealed from himself just how hostile Jacobi's traditional theism was to his and Spinoza's conception of nature. This self-deception was now no longer possible. Jacobi looked for a warm response from Goethe who was unable to give it. When he pressed for assent Goethe became evasive. The grounds of their disagreement were plainly set out for both of them to see. For Jacobi, who believed in a 'rational, personal cause of the world', Spinoza was an atheist.[77] Goethe could not accept this:

> He [Spinoza] does not prove the existence of God, existence is God. And if for this reason others would brand him *Atheum* then I would praise him and call him *theissimum* and *christianissimum*.

And again, even more firmly:

> You know that I do not share your opinion in this matter. That Spinozism and Atheism are to me two different things. That when I read Spinoza I can only explain him by reference to himself and that if it came to naming a book which, of all that I know, most agrees with my way of seeing things, then I would have to name the *Ethics*–even though by nature I do not share his way of seeing things.

As the crisis in their friendship grew more acute Goethe became more explicit about the significance Spinoza had for him; in a letter dated 5 May 1786 he wrote to Jacobi and explained:

> It shows what a good man you are that one can be your friend without sharing your opinions, for just how much we differ I have only fully realized from your book. I cling more firmly than ever to the God worship of the "Atheist" . . . and leave to you everything that you call, and have to call, religion . . . If you say it is possible only to believe in God . . . then I say to you that I consider *seeing* more important, and when Spinoza speaks of the *Scientia intuitiva* and says *Hoc cognoscendi genus procedit ab adaequata idea essentiae formalis quorundam Dei attributorum ad adaequatum cognitionem essentiae rerum*, then those few words give me courage to dedicate my whole life to the observation of things I can touch and whose *essentia formali* I can hope to form an adequate idea of, without bothering in the least about how far I will get . . .

Goethe insists, then, on the possibility of experiencing the Divinity directly through the senses, of recognizing the 'divine being' in particular natural objects–in *rebus singularibus*.[78] The notion of a God who lived outside his Creation, who was obscured from the eyes of men by his Creation was totally repugnant to Goethe. In retrospect Goethe regarded the proposition that 'nature hides God (die Natur verberge Gott)' which Jacobi fully endorsed, as the fundamental issue separating them, and the issue over which their friendship came to an end. He wrote in his Journals for 1812:

> –how could this strange, restricted, one-sided proposition fail to alienate me in spirit for ever from the noblest of men whose heart I loved and honoured? How could it fail to alienate me, a man whose pure, deep, native and habitual mode of apprehension had so firmly taught him to see God in Nature and Nature in God that it had become the very basis of his existence? However, I did not dwell upon my hurt but rather sought shelter in my old refuge and for several weeks in Spinoza's 'Ethics' my daily recreation . . . [79]

Jacobi's assertion that nature hides God represents a view of creation that finds support in the philosophy of Descartes. Descartes saw the world as divided into two self-contained orders of existence, mind and matter. The creator (mind) is conceived of as external to his creation (matter); and life, motion, physical change are all explained as the effects of a divine *fiat*. In the remote past God had set his creation in motion, but now he is withdrawn and difficult to discern. Spinoza based his objection to Descartes on what he regarded as the logical impossibility of conceiving the universe as two self-contained systems. Spinoza attacks the obvious flaw in Descartes's argument, namely the supposed point of contact between the two orders of existence. If the two are truly independent they can never meet or influence each other, and therefore the laws of cause and effect necessarily fall down at the very place where Descartes's philosophy seemed most in agreement with observation and common sense, namely, the division of mind and body in human beings. Spinoza's monistic counter-doctrine of an all-inclusive self-creating God-or-Nature was obviously much nearer to Goethe's sense of nature as a living being (natura naturans) than the inert, static, mechanical, lifeless creation (natura naturata) of Descartes's philosophy. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that Goethe was more concerned with establishing his right to *see* God in Nature and Nature in God than with asserting dogmatically that the two were identical. The final 'truth' about this question hardly interested him. As he said to Jacobi in a letter of 6 January 1813:

> With the many divergent tendencies of my being one mode of thinking is not enough; as a poet and artist I am a Polytheist, as a scientist on the other hand I am a Pantheist, and one as firmly as the other. If for my personality, as a moral being, I need one God then I can manage that too.[80]

This letter is both a final statement of the distance between the two men and a postscript to their friendship.

One is now in a better position to assess the significance of Arnold's account of Spinoza's importance to Goethe. Arnold correctly links the stoic elements in Spinoza's philosophy with his deterministic conception of causality. All things in nature, even the actions of men, were governed in Spinoza's view by immutable laws. The wise man seeks to increase his understanding of these laws, for the more knowledge he acquires the less he is governed by passions and the things around him; he ceases to love, fear, and hate blindly. Arnold rightly discerned that these ideas had a strong appeal for Goethe, but the central relevance of Spinoza he fails completely to mention. This failure is revealing because it is symptomatic of his blindness to a vital element in Goethe's life—his genuine devotion to natural science.[81] Goethe's studies in optics, geology, botany, osteology, etc., were no mere distraction or hobby, but were an essential part of his approach to experience. In the *Italienische Reise* Goethe is reminded of Plato's requirement that all who study at the Academy should have mastered geometry. For his own academy, however, the requirement would, he says, be mastery of at least one natural science.[82] Dr Arnold, on the other hand, could not see that it mattered very much whether the earth went round the sun or vice versa.[83] For him the truly educative subject was the study of history and the classics. Matthew seems to have inherited his father's attitudes in this matter for he shows an almost total lack of interest in scientific questions.

It is, in fact, difficult to understand the nature of Goethe's recommendation of 'objectivity' without taking his scientific studies into account. They played an important role in his own struggle for inner calm. The 'old habit of sticking to the objective and concrete' was his salvation:

> I sometimes think of Rousseau and his hypochondriac outpourings of misery. I can quite understand how a mind as delicately organized as his could become deranged. If I didn't take such an interest in the things of nature, or see that there are ways of sorting out and comparing hundreds of observations despite their apparent confusion . . . I should often think I was mad myself.[84]

Arnold looked admiringly on Goethe's ability to make sense of a profusion of disparate phenomena but he entertained no hope of ever being able to 'emulate' it.[85] He found it impossible to seek much solace in any of the natural sciences because they had contributed to that expansion of knowledge which had put beyond reach any 'whole' view of life. Both Goethe and Arnold sensed the 'multitudinousness' of existence, but whereas Goethe was able to rejoice in this sense Arnold could only suffer. He needed, as he explained to Clough, an 'Idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness'.[86] Christianity had been such an 'Idea', a unifying interpretation of life, but to Arnold's generation it appeared 'a dead time's exploded dream'.[87] In the absence of anything to replace this derided faith Arnold's most characteristic response as a poet was to utter what Trilling has called 'a plangent threnody for a lost wholeness and peace' [88] whether in the form of the pleasing melancholy of 'The Scholar-Gipsy' or the bleak gloom of 'Empedocles on Etna'. Another response both in his poetry and his prose was to begin the search for a new 'Idea'. It could not have the strength of the old one, which had enjoyed universal acceptance and recognition, but it would be something to live by. It is in this light that the rigorous studies to which Arnold subjected himself must be viewed.

Goethe's writings were a model of 'adequacy' but they were adequate only for Goethe's age not for Arnold's. The 'course' which Arnold had to steer was more difficult than it had been for Goethe:

> For though his manhood bore the blast
> Of a tremendous time,
> Yet in a tranquil world was passed
> His tenderer youthful prime.
>
> But we, brought forth and reared in hours
> Of change, alarm, surprise—
> What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
> What leisure to grow wise?[89]

The age in which Arnold lived had reached a greater pitch of complexity than ever before. Goethe's usefulness, though great, was nevertheless limited, and the exact point of limitation is indicated by Arnold's silence on Goethe's view of nature and its relationship to the philosophy of Spinoza.[90] Goethe's confidence in the essential adequacy of the mind's ability to confront a complex world, to comprehend this world and to perceive through its operations the life of the divine being, belongs to that 'dead time' whose passing Arnold lamented. Arnold's recognition of the change that had occurred in the intellectual climate since Goethe's death was remarkably perceptive. From the stand-point of the twentieth century Goethe does indeed seem the last representative of a type of mind that has passed out of existence.

If 'Spinoza and the Bible' is interesting for what it does not say, it is no less interesting for what it does say. In his account of Spinoza's attractiveness for

Goethe Arnold places the greatest emphasis on the calming, composing effect which Goethe experienced from his reading of the philosopher. As we have seen, this effect was precisely what Arnold himself was looking for after his separation from Marguerite and we have also seen how Arnold tended to regard his own development as parallel to Goethe's. It is very probable, therefore, that Arnold began his study of Spinoza in 1850 precisely because the effect which Goethe had experienced and described in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* were effects which he himself desperately wanted to feel:[91]

> Spinoza first impresses Goethe and any man like Goethe, and then he composes him; first he fills and satisfies his imagination by the width and grandeur of his view of nature, and then he fortifies and stills his mobile, straining, passionate, poetic temperament by the moral lesson he draws from his view of nature. And a moral lesson not of mere resigned acquiescence, not of melancholy quietism, but of joyful activity within the limits of man's true sphere.[92]

Even in 1850, when he told Clough of his reading Spinoza, Arnold expresses himself in terms that foreshadow his remarks on Goethe written thirteen years later. He had been reading Spinoza 'with profit'; the philosopher had a 'positive and vivifying atmosphere' not shared by Locke. But Arnold gives himself away, perhaps, when he says, in the passage quoted above, 'and any man like Goethe', for this must surely refer also to himself. Certainly, it is difficult not to feel as one reads this passage that Arnold is describing what Spinoza had meant to himself as much as what he had meant to Goethe.

It is evident from Arnold's early statements about Goethe that he considered a highly developed intellect coupled with an ethical posture of stoic renunciation to be the peculiar characteristics of the German poet. This one-sided view is manifested indirectly in several ways. For example, the selection of quotations from Goethe which Arnold transcribed into his note-books is very revealing. The quotations are almost exclusively of a distinctly moralistic cast, which is not at all typical or representative of the German poet. In two instances, Arnold's tendency to see Goethe in this way leads to a striking distortion of perspective. In 1872 Arnold entered into his note-book the following lines:

> Alles ruft uns zu: dass wir entsagen sollen.
> Entbehren sollst du! sollst entbehren!
> Das ist der ewige Gesang,
> Der jedem an die Ohren klingt
> Den unser ganzes Leben lang
> Uns heiser jede Stunde singt.[93]

The first line—'Everything calls upon us to renounce'—is taken from Goethe's discussion of Spinoza's influence upon him in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (quoted above p. 46). The source of the verse is *Faust I*, 'Sturdirzimmer' (ll. 1549-53). The fact that Arnold prefaces the lines of verse with the sentence from *Dichtung und Wahrheit* indicates that he understood them in the same sense. But, as Trilling points out, 'Faust is not accepting the necessity of renunciation; he is rejecting, in a satiric passion, the whole Christian ideal of self-abnegation' (*op. cit.* p. 139). Taken out of context the lines appear to have an edifying meaning which they in fact do not possess. Arnold preferred the edification.

The second instance is similar, but even more revealing. In May 1857 Arnold wrote to his sister 'K', Mrs Forster:

> I shall be baffled, I daresay, as one continually is in so much, but I remember Goethe, 'Homer and Polygnotus daily teach me more and more that our life is a Hell, through which one must struggle as best one can'.[94]

The tone of the letter makes it clear that Arnold made this comment in a fairly light-hearted way, but that Goethe's words had a serious meaning for him is proved by his use of the same reference elsewhere. He wrote in his note-book for 1860:

> Wir aber, wie ich nun immer deutlicher von Polygnot and Homer lerne, die Hölle eigentlich hier oben vorzustellen haben.[95]

Arnold also makes use of the sentence in *On Translating Homer* (1861) where he is berating the modern 'sentimental' view of Homer:

> 'From Homer and Polygnotus I every day learn more clearly', says Goethe, 'that in our life here above ground we have, properly speaking, to enact Hell':–if the student must absolutely have a keynote to the *Iliad*, let him take this of Goethe, and see what he can do with it; it will not, at any rate, like the tender pantheism of Mr Ruskin, falsify for him the whole strain of Homer.

The repeated use which Arnold makes of Goethe's comment is ample proof that he took it in earnest. That he should do so is not at all surprising since such sentiments are appropriate from the stoic intellectual that Goethe, in Arnold's view, was. However, as R. H. Super points out in his note to the passage: 'Goethe was supervising the printing of his paper on Polygnotus for the *Jenaische Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*, and at least part of the hell on earth was caused by the arduous editorial duties for that journal'.[96] The context in which Goethe uttered the remark does, as Super hints, show beyond any doubt that it was not intended seriously; for Goethe life was never a Hell on earth.

There is, however, a further point missed by Super. In the letter to his sister 'K', Arnold is obviously writing from memory and hence has put down the sense of the passage as he understood it–'life is a Hell, through which one must struggle as best one can'. In his note-book Arnold is probably copying from the German text in front of him, although he paraphrases a longer sentence. In *On Translating Homer* a different situation occurs. In part Arnold seems to be translating the German from memory: 'hier oben' is rendered as 'our life here above ground'. But in part Arnold is recollecting Carlyle's translation of the same passage:

> But, after all, if it be true, as Homer and Polygnotus teach me more and more, that we poor mortals have properly a kind of hell to enact in this earth of ours, such a life may pass among the rest.[97]

Carlyle's 'properly' is reproduced as 'properly speaking' in Arnold's version, but it is the word 'enact' which proves beyond doubt that Arnold was remembering Carlyle's translation, 'Enact' is a mistranslation of Goethe's 'vorstellen' which means 'conceive' or 'imagine'; Carlyle in trying to make sense of Goethe's meaning was presumably misled by the substantive 'Vorstellung' which means '(theatrical) performance'. It is unlikely that both Arnold and Carlyle would have misunderstood the word in precisely the same way. The error itself is not particularly significant, but what is certainly interesting is that Carlyle's presence should manifest itself at a point where Arnold is guilty of a more general misinterpretation of Goethe. Carlyle's distorted view of Goethe (see Chapter I, above p. 18) with its stress on the moralistic elements in the German poet's works has an affinity with Arnold's own view; it is possible, therefore, that Arnold's over-emphasis on the stoical elements in Goethe is partly due to Carlyle's influence, though it is no doubt also due to the earnestness of early Victorian England.

There may appear to be something self-contradictory in asserting, as I have done, both that Goethe was an important influence upon Arnold's evolution of a stoic ethic and that Goethe was not quite the prophet of renunciation Arnold imagined him to be. But, once noticed, the apparent contradiction helps us to define the uniquely ambivalent role played by Goethe in Arnold's early life. One must begin by stressing that other important influences were at work apart from Goethe. Arnold had read the stoic philosophers proper—Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and, possibly, Seneca—and was not deaf to their message. I have already remarked how un-Goethean is the spirit of 'Empedocles on Etna'. In contrast, Empedocles's hymn to Pausanias, Arnold's fullest poetic statement of his stoic creed, is filled with echoes of the works of the ancient stoic writers; they helped Arnold to clarify, define, and formulate his ideas. But they were not 'modern'; their individual ideas could provide useful and valuable insights, but their philosophy could not be applied *in toto* to the 'modern' situation. This limitation on their relevance, however, would not be true of Senancour's 'Obermann', who represents one form of modern stoicism. But 'Obermann' is rejected by Arnold whereas Goethe is not.

To explain the rejection by Arnold of one influence and the retention of the other, it is necessary to notice a fundamental irresolution in Arnold's attitude to stoicism. The great weakness of stoicism is that despite its rigorous intellectual honesty in rejecting religious superstition, and the truthful account it gives of man's place in the universe. It is not a creed by which man can live. As the fate of

Empedocles witnesses, there are truths upon which it is better not to dwell. The doctrine of renunciation and endurance lacks the vital element which makes existence tolerable—Joy. It was basically because 'Empedocles on Etna' lacked Joy that Arnold suppressed his dramatic poem. His reasons for refusing to re-publish it are given in the 1853 Preface. They are so revealing that they must now be examined in detail.

Since 'Empedocles on Etna' is unquestionably the single masterpiece among Arnold's longer poetic works, his decision to suppress it has not surprisingly baffled subsequent admirers, who have rightly remained unconvinced by his attempted justification of the act. Arnold was not dissatisfied with his poem because he felt that he had 'failed in the delineation which [he] intended to effect' but because the subject of the play belonged to a class of situations which he deemed 'poetically faulty'. Arnold defines these situations as 'those in which suffering finds no vent in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved by incident, hope or resistance; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done'.[98] The representation of such morbid and monotonous situations in poetry, he argues, can only be 'painful', not tragic. As Allott points out, these opinions are Arnold's own and are unsupported by Aristotle or Goethe.[99] Goethe objected to tragedy on the grounds that it 'unsettled the emotions' (das Gemüth . . . in Unruhe versetzen) and thereby hindered a truly moral, inner culture (einer wahrhaft sittlichen inneren Ausbildung).[100] He regarded a passion for tragedy as a sign of youthful immaturity. Goethe's own personality, as he himself recognised, was of a conciliatory kind, and in the 'tame' modern world 'the pure tragic case', where reconciliation is out of the question, seemed to him quite absurd.[101]

But Arnold does not have any such basic objection to tragic situations. His objection is directed against those situations which cannot be represented in poetry without negating the very effects which poetry ought to produce. Arnold demands of any poetical representation, not only that it be interesting 'but also that it shall inspirit and rejoice the reader; that it shall convey a charm, and infuse delight'.[102] In support of this argument he cites Hesiod, and Schiller's statement that Art is dedicated to Joy and that the right Art is that which creates the highest enjoyment. One would not wish to quarrel with this requirement. Indeed, it is so fundamental as to command almost universal assent; Goethe also speaks in similar terms:

> True poetry is marked by this: that like a secular gospel, by inner serenity (Heiterkeit) and outward agreeableness, it liberates us from the earthly troubles which weigh down upon us.[103]

A similar sentiment is again expressed in Goethe's remark to Eckermann that 'poetry properly speaking is given us to harmonize the little discords of our life and to reconcile Man with the world and with his condition'.[104] What critics have been at a loss to understand is how Arnold believed that 'Empedocles on Etna' failed to meet this requirement. They protest that their own experience proves Arnold wrong, for their reading of the poem has given them pleasure. They further point out that it is a mark of human nature that men are not afflicted by the representation of human suffering in tragedy but actually take delight in it. Arnold openly admits that this is so: 'In presence of the most tragic circumstances . . . the feeling of enjoyment . . . may still subsist'. The explanation of this phenomenon is provided by Aristotle.

> We all naturally take pleasure, says Aristotle, in any imitation or representation whatever: this is the basis of our love of poetry; and we take pleasure in them, he adds, because all knowledge is naturally agreeable to us; not to the philosopher only, but to mankind at large. Every representation, therefore, which is consistently drawn may be supposed to be interesting, inasmuch as it gratifies this natural interest in knowledge of all kinds.[105]

But since Arnold does not deny that the figure of Empedocles is consistently drawn, he must concede that a reader may find it both pleasurable and interesting. It would appear, therefore, that Arnold's reasons for rejecting his play are contradicted by the logic of his own argument. The argument is also patently weak when he attempts to define the class of situations which he calls 'poetically faulty'. There is no reason why a situation involving prolonged distress and suffering unrelieved by incident, hope, or resistance, should necessarily be morbid or distressing for the reader—Prometheus, for example, finds himself in a situation where resistance is futile.

A degree of confusion in Arnold's reasoning is undeniable, but he can nevertheless be rescued from the charge of self-contradiction. A distinction, which Arnold fails to draw clearly, is apparently intended between 'pleasure' and 'Joy'. Arnold might agree that a man could feel pleasure in reading his poem, but he would strenuously deny that the reader could be 'inspirited' or 'rejoiced' by it. As Arnold does not say exactly what he means by these terms one is obliged to speculate a little. The effect at which poetry according to Arnold aims—the 'inspiriting' and 'rejoicement' of the reader—would seem to be more lasting than the simple pleasure felt during the act of reading or watching. Poetry must apparently make man's life happier; it must render him better able to enjoy life, or conversely it must at least not unfit him for the task of living. Arnold appears, therefore, to be demanding for the reader of poetry something which amounts to a moral benefit. Such a demand would clearly be quite illegitimate. Let us suppose for example that a play (*King Lear* for the sake of argument) communicates to its readers a view of life so bleak that if it were wholeheartedly accepted it would necessarily make them unhappy. Certainly, if *King Lear* is capable of 'inspiriting' or 'rejoicing' its readers, as opposed to simply giving them pleasure, then it is difficult to see what meaning these words could retain. It would follow from Arnold's imperative that such a work ought not to be written, or, if written, that like 'Empedocles on Etna' it should be suppressed.

The theoretical arguments which Arnold adduces in support of his decision to withdraw 'Empedocles on Etna' are so weak that one is inevitably led to suspect that they represent an attempt to rationalize a choice which was made for other reasons. The suppression of the play must be seen as an almost symbolic gesture by Arnold. Furthermore, it is a gesture that is of moral rather than artistic significance. The play is the sacrificial victim of Arnold's rejection of the debilitating morbidity and gloom which was inherent in his own stoic ethic. Arnold was not prepared to rest content with a philosophy which proclaimed that 'there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done'. He was determined to transcend the inadequate Empedoclean 'stoicism' ('too near neighbour to despair') and to evolve in its place a stoicism 'not of mere resigned acquiescence, not of melancholy quietism, but of joyful activity within the limits of man's true sphere'.[106] In this approach, Goethe was again Arnold's model, and Spinoza is at the centre of his interpretation of the German poet. Goethe did not, like Wordsworth, 'avert his eyes' from the human condition, he was intellectually alive and fully aware, yet he did not succumb to the cosmic despair which afflicts Obermann or Empedocles. As we have seen, Arnold accounted for Goethe's strong and adequate stoicism by referring it to the moral lesson which he had drawn from Spinoza's view of nature, and in the hope of achieving a similar effect for himself he too began to study the works of that philosopher. Arnold was never more modern or un-Goethean than when he wrote 'Empedocles on Etna', but he never acted more in what he conceived to be a Goethean spirit than when he suppressed it.

The ambivalence, therefore, of Goethe's influence on Arnold in the period from 1847 to 1853 is that it operated in two apparently divergent directions. Firstly, Goethe's counsel was of great importance in Arnold's decision, consciously taken after the painful experience of final separation from Marguerite in 1849, to embark upon a course of 'renunciation', that is, of strictly imposed restraint upon personal emotion and a barring out of unwholesome influences. This course was based, as I have indicated, on a misconception of Goethe's meaning, and it is arguable that it led finally to the joylessness of Empedoclean reflection. But perhaps surprisingly Goethe forfeited in consequence none of his credibility with Arnold and none of his usefulness. On the contrary, Goethe suggested to Arnold, though less through explicit advice than in the capacity of a model, a means of transcending the despair in which he found himself. The troubled poetic temperament could also be subdued by confronting the individual will with a wide, 'grand' view of nature. This at least was the message of Goethe's biography for Arnold. The resultant stoicism, the kind which Goethe had achieved, was not 'passive' and gloom-ridden but joyful and active. For the creator of Empedocles this represented a possibility of escape which he was thankful to explore. In 1851, after he had begun or returned to his study of Spinoza, Arnold composed a number of poems which are evidence of his desire for a less despairing view of life. It can hardly be a coincidence that these very same poems show signs of Goethe's influence more strongly than any other poems Arnold wrote.

To modern eyes Goethe appears predominantly a poet, and perhaps for this reason critics of Arnold's poetry have tended to assume that Arnold's poetic technique must have been influenced by his reading of such a major figure in European literature. Certainly Arnold was receptive, perhaps dangerously so, to the influence of his poetic forbears. It is impossible to read his poetry without being conscious that its creator had absorbed the works of Homer, Milton, Wordsworth, and even of that unwholesome trio, Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson. So in view of the fact that Arnold is not normally thought of as a great poetic innovator it is reasonable to look for an explanation of his experiments in free verse among the works of poets he is known to have admired. Thus, L. Binyon has suggested that in 'The Strayed Reveller' Arnold is imitating 'Goethe's and Heine's free-verse poems, which I imagine were . . . modelled on a misunderstanding of Greek lyrics'.[107] Unfortunately Binyon is content with the suggestion and presents no arguments to support his view. Lionel Trilling has likewise proposed that Arnold's 'unrhymed, loosely-cadenced verse was modelled after Goethe's *Grenzen der Menschheit*', but Trilling is thinking primarily of poems like 'Rugby Chapel' and 'Haworth Churchyard' rather than 'The Strayed Reveller'. (Furthermore, Trilling conceded that a closer model might be the choruses of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.)[108]

Before one can begin to make suggestions of this kind it is obviously important to be clear which poems of Arnold are supposed to be influenced and which poems of Goethe are responsible. Allott's description of what Arnold himself termed a 'pindaric' provides a useful point of reference: 'a "free", unrhymed lyric made up of any number of verse-paragraphs, each paragraph having an unfixed number of lines . . . the line itself normally contains three stresses, but the number of syllables in a normal line varies between six and nine'.[109] This description can be made to apply with little distortion to more than the two so-called 'pindarics', 'The Youth of Nature' and 'The Youth of Man', and 'The Future' which was probably composed about the same time (c. 1851-52); for example, 'The Strayed Reveller', although not strictly a lyric, does consist of unrhymed verse-paragraphs of varying length, and the later elegies 'Haworth Churchyard' (1855), 'Rugby Chapel' (1857) and 'Heine's Grave' (1863) employ a similar form and metre. Among Goethe's works the description exactly fits a group of poems printed under the title '*Vermischte Gedichte*' in the second volume of the *Ausgabe Letzter Hand*. The group includes 'Der Wanderer', 'Mahomets Gesang' (1772-73), 'Gesang der Geister über den Wassern' (1779), 'Meine Göttin' (1780), 'Harzreise im Winter' (1777), 'Prometheus' (1774), 'Ganymed' (1774), 'Gränzen der Menschheit' (1781) and 'Das Göttliche' (1783). It is obviously possible therefore, that Arnold knew Goethe's 'free verse' poems and was consciously imitating them, but it is equally obvious that considerations of external 'form' alone are unhelpful. Apart from their common form and metre, 'The Strayed Reveller' is so unlike 'The Youth of Nature', and again 'Haworth Churchyard' so unlike 'The Youth of Man', that the idea of a common source for the form of these poems appears a little far-fetched. To explore and define the nature of Arnold's 'imitation' of Goethe's free verse, one must slightly expand the framework of the discussion to encompass other features of the poetry of both poets.

Arnold's earliest poem of this kind is 'The Strayed Reveller', but none of the poems in the *'Vermischte Gedichte'* is strikingly similar to it. On the other hand it is not difficult to show in the case of the poem 'The Future' that Arnold was imitating Goethe's free verse and probably doing so consciously. The river image is such a favourite with Arnold that one hesitates to suggest a source, but the similarities between 'The Future' and Goethe's 'Mahomets Gesang' and 'Gesang der Geister über den Wassern' are too striking to be purely coincidental. In general terms, what Arnold has borrowed from Goethe is the technique of what might be called 'explicit parable'. This involves the open statement at the beginning of the poem of a metaphor which is then pursued and developed in the remainder. Arnold begins his poem with an explicit metaphor of this kind:

A wanderer is man from his birth.
He is born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time.

The second paragraph closes with:

As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.[110]

Goethe uses this device himself in 'Gesang der Geister über den Wassern', which begins with the lines:

The soul of man,
Is like to the water:
From heaven it comes,
To heaven it goes
And all again
To earth it must
In endless alternation.

The poem concludes with a slightly varied form of the same similes.

Soul of man
How like to the water!
Destiny of man
How like to the wind![111]

The resemblances between 'The Future' and 'Mahomets Gesang' are perhaps more specific. In Arnold's poem the progress of mankind is likened to the course of a river which begins in the mountains and passes through the plain before finally reaching the 'infinite sea'. In Goethe's poem also a river is described which rises among the hills amid rocky cliffs, passes through flowered valleys and on through the plain to the 'eternal ocean' which waits to receive it. In both poems the plain is a desert place signifying aridity, and the sea, with its epithets 'infinite' and 'eternal', has overtones of death or extinction of self. The nature of the parable is, of course, quite different in both cases. For Arnold the river represents mankind, whereas for Goethe it represents the course of Mohammed's life, and there are other differences too. Arnold's poem contains many questions, Goethe's none; Arnold's poem has a digression from the parable, Goethe's does not. But in spite of this, the broad similarity is striking.

The relationship of the poems 'The Youth of Nature' and 'The Youth of Man' to Goethe's '*Vermischte Gedichte*' is less obvious than is the case in 'The Future', for these poems lack the device of parable and possess distinctive features which are quite absent from Goethe's poems. For example, 'The Youth of Nature' is essentially an elegiac lament on the death of Wordsworth, but none of the free verse poems in the '*Vermischte Gedichte*' is centred around a real person, nor are they vehicles of lament. Furthermore, the dialogue, or rather debate, which takes place in Arnold's poem between the Poet and Nature is typical of the ratiocinative, highly intellectual element in Arnold's poetry which is quite unlike anything in the poems of Goethe employing a similar metrical form. For Arnold the poem is often a medium in which ideas can be explored and tested, balanced against opposite notions, weighed and then rejected or accepted. This dialectical approach is in sharp contrast to the poetry of plain statement, the presentation of assured truths, which is so typical of Goethe's free verse poems like 'Gränzen der Menschheit'. The relationship of Arnold's 'pindarics' to Goethe consists less in stylistic similarity to the latter's poems than in the attempt which they make to achieve a 'calming' conception of nature. Arnold was hoping for an effect similar to the one which, he believed, Goethe had experienced from his reading of Spinoza: the mobile, straining, passionate, poetic temperament is to be stilled and fortified by a moral lesson drawn from a wide and grand view of nature.[112] In 'The Youth of Nature' this attempt can be seen in Arnold's suppression of the personal emotion of grief at Wordsworth's death by emphasizing the permanence and superiority of nature. The life of nature is independent of the life of men and is not diminished by the death of individuals, even the death of such a man of genius as Wordsworth. Thus, the poem ends with nature proclaiming that men after men 'are gone! I remain'. The feeling for the grandeur of nature which this sentiment is expected to induce is designed to act as a kind of restraint on the experience and expression of grief.

In 'The Youth of Man' the same grand, wide view of nature is set forth:

> We, O Nature, depart,
> Thou survivest us! this,
> This, I know, is the law.

Yes! but more than this,
Thou seest us die
Seest us change while we live;
Seest our dreams, one by one,
Seest our errors depart;
Watchest us, Nature! throughout,
Mild and inscrutably calm.
Well for us that we change!
Well for us that the power
Which in our morning-prime
Saw the mistakes of our youth,
Sweet, and forgiving, and good,
Sees the contrition of age! (ll. 1-16)

These lines relate to Goethe in two ways. Arnold translated a passage from *Dichtung und Wahrheit* into one of his 'General Note-Books' under the heading 'Stoicism':

> For my Stoicism my Tutor need only have told me that all our business in Life is with 'Doing': enjoyment and suffering come of themselves. In the meanwhile youth should be allowed to take its course: it does not stick long to false Maxims: Life soon tears it or lures it away from them.[113]

The obvious general similarity here in Arnold's and Goethe's attitudes to youthful error is, however, less significant than the attempt which Arnold's lines make to 'still' and to 'fortify' by contraposing the wilfulness of youth with natural Necessity. It is 'law' not only that nature is permanent while men are transient, but also that 'life' or 'nature' should gradually disabuse men of their youthful misconceptions–a process which can be painful, for men will not willingly acknowledge their limitations. In 'Gränzen der Menschheit' and 'Das Göttliche' an analagous confrontation takes place between Necessity and the human will:

A small circle
Limits our life,
And many generations
Are linked perpetually
On the infinite chain
Of their existence.

And in 'Das Göttliche':

We must all complete
The circles of our existence
According to
Eternal, immutable
Great laws![114]

The status of these lines in relation to Arnold's poem is clearly not that of a 'source'; their importance consists in the fact that they occupy a similar place in the canon of Goethe's poetry to the one occupied by 'The Youth of Man' in Arnold's. 'Das Göttliche' and 'The Youth of Man' represent an attempt at a stoical acceptance of human limitation by a concentration of emphasis on the subjection of the individual to universal laws. This essentially moral effort is reflected in a plain and unadorned, yet elevated style of verse. In both poems there is the same tendency to produce simple statements of philosophical truth and simple moral exhortations:

Be man noble
Helpful and good!
For in this alone
He differs
From all creatures
That we know. (ll. 1-6)

'The Youth of Man' ends with the lines:

Sink, O Youth, in thy soul!
Yearn to the greatness of Nature
Rally the good in the depths of thyself.

Whether or not Arnold was consciously intending to reproduce the style of Goethe's free verse philosophical lyrics is difficult to say positively, but there is not much doubt that the English poet's attempt to still and fortify his poetic temperament with a wide and grand view of nature was a self-conscious strategy carried out in full knowledge that Goethe had successfully done the same thing. It would not be surprising, therefore, if Arnold had instinctively imitated the style of those poems in which Goethe rehearses the very process which Arnold wished to repeat. One's confidence in this suggestion is strengthened if one notices that the stark free verse occurs consistently in those poems which reflect Arnold's stoic repression of the Romantic self.

Of Arnold's later poems in the same metrical form ('Haworth Church', 'Rugby Chapel', and 'Heine's Grave') there is little to say. The elegy is not a form for which Goethe adopted free verse. Only 'Rugby Chapel', perhaps, exhibits that tendency to explicit parable which characterizes some of Goethe's poems. In 'Rugby Chapel' there are two distinct parables. The first is introduced by the question:

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth?[115]

In answer Arnold points to the aimless, 'eddying' lives of most men and compares them to transient ocean waves that 'have swelled, / Foamed for a moment, and gone' (ll. 71-72). Goethe similarly introduces a 'parable' by a question in 'Gränzen der Menschheit':

In what do Gods
Differ from men?

And his answer, like Arnold's, makes use of 'waves' as a metaphor:

> In this. That many waves
> Before them pass,
> An eternal stream:
> Us the wave lifts,
> Us the wave devours,
> And we sink.[116]

It is possible that Arnold was unconsciously remembering Goethe's poem when he composed the lines from 'Rugby Chapel', but the poem's main parable, that of human life as a 'trek' through snowy mountains (ll. 84-86) and through the wilderness (ll. 171-87) owes nothing to Goethe either in conception or execution.

It would be absurd to claim that Goethe's poetry as such was a major influence on Arnold's poetic technique, for the number of poems affected and affecting is small. Goethe's presence is never felt as consistently in Arnold's poetry as the pervasive presence of Homer and Milton in 'Sohrab and Rustum' and 'Balder Dead', or of Keats in 'The Scholar-Gipsy'. Nevertheless, where Goethe's influence can be detected in the poems, its significance is usually considerable, for the bare style of Goethe's free-verse poems is associated specifically with a moral tendency which was crucial to both men. The direction of this tendency was stoic. On Arnold's stoicism itself, however, Goethe's influence was of major importance because for Arnold the figure of the German sage had almost heroic status; Goethe was supremely relevant as a model of the type of poet Arnold aspired to be. In this way Goethe's word commanded an authority with Arnold to which no other individual person could approach. The extent of this authority is evident particularly in Arnold's early critical statements on poetry and the poet. It is to these matters that attention must next be turned.

CHAPTER THREE

CRITICISM AND LITERATURE: MATTHEW ARNOLD 1853-1888

In Chapter II I examined some of the items in Arnold's 1847 'German Note-book' and showed how Goethe's diagnosis of the failings of young poets seemed to Arnold especially relevant to his own case. But Arnold presumably did not laud Goethe as 'the greatest critic of all times' on the strength of the handful of maxims, the group of literary reflections from *Wilhelm Meister*, and the two or three short essays which comprise Goethe's contribution to the contents of the note-book. It would be a mistake to view Arnold's translations in the note-book as indications of the limits of his acquaintance with Goethe's criticism even at that time. Goethe's critical writings as such are the essays on literature and art contained in Volumes XXXVII-XXXIX and XLIV-XLVI of the *Ausgabe Letzter Hand*, and it is a reasonable assumption that Arnold had already read in these volumes more than he translated from them for his own personal use.

In spite of the prodigious extent of these writings Goethe was not primarily a theoretician. His views on the nature and function of poetry are not set out in lengthy essays devoted to these very topics but are implied in his judgements on specific writers or works. His statements of a more theoretical or general nature tend to be brief remarks suggestively tossed out in the course of a more specific discussion but rarely pursued or followed up in detail. Yet even the 'critical writings' proper do not contain the sum total of Goethe's criticism. Goethe's views on literary matters are also expressed in his autobiographical writings, in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* particularly, in correspondence with close friends like Schiller and Zelter, and of course in his conversations with Eckermann. As I have shown, Arnold was familiar with all these by 1853, so that it is true to say that Arnold had steeped himself in Goethe's criticism at a time when his own views on poetry were taking definite shape. 1853 was, of course, the year of Arnold's first important critical utterance, the 'Preface to the First Edition of *Poems*' and if only because the Preface is the fullest exposition of Arnold's views one would expect *a priori* that Goethe's influence would be there manifested most strikingly.

Indeed, the importance of Goethe's influence on the 1853 Preface is now generally recognized. W. A. Madden, for example, finds that the spirit which informs the Preface 'is the spirit of Weimar classicism, with its ideal of educating and liberating humanity through art' and Allott writes that 'Goethe and Aristotle are the most important critical influences on the Preface'.[1] But to consider the Preface in complete isolation would be unduly limiting: to clarify and illuminate the ideas which Arnold expresses there it is useful to refer not only to his letters to Clough (which contain some material, in a more outspoken form, that ultimately found its way into the Preface) but also to the lectures 'On the Modern Element in Literature' (1857) and *On Translating Homer* (1861) in which ideas found only in germ in the Preface are developed, expanded, and modified. So, taking the Preface as the basic framework for discussion, it now remains to consider Arnold's poetic theory and to examine it in detail for Goethe's influence.

It will be remembered that Arnold begins his Preface with the announcement of the withdrawal of 'Empedocles on Etna' from his 1853 collection. He then gives his reasons (which I have already examined, above pp. 55-57) and is at some pains to assure us that his decision to exclude the poem was not taken out of deference to the opinions of those who disliked any but modern subjects. Arnold specifically objected to a comment made by a critic of the *Spectator* (2 April 1853) who had written in a review of Edwin Arnold's poems:

> The poet who would really fix the public attention must leave the exhausted past, and draw his subjects from matters of present import and therefore both of interest and novelty.[2]

Arnold quotes this passage and italicizes 'therefore' to point out the flawed logic of equating 'modern' with 'interesting'. His point is valid for he is not attempting to assert the directly contrary proposition, namely, that only classical subjects are suitable, but simply that the 'date of an action . . . signifies nothing'. He bases this contention on the claim that 'the eternal objects of poetry' are those 'human actions' which possess 'an inherent interest in themselves'. The poet's task, he argues, is to communicate these actions in an interesting manner. Arnold is plainly indebted to Goethe who likewise stresses the vital importance of selecting an excellent action. Arnold wrote:

> Vainly will [the poet] imagine that he has everything in his own power; that he can make an intrinsically inferior action equally delightful with a more excellent one by his treatment of it. He may indeed compel us to admire his skill, but his work will possess, within itself, an incurable defect . . . A great human action of a thousand years ago is more interesting . . . than a smaller human action of to-day, even though upon the representation of this last the most consummate skill may have been expended . . .[3]

And a little later he proclaims again ' "All depends upon the subject; choose a fitting action" '. Allott in his notes to this passage correctly draws attention to the parallel passage in Goethe that Arnold is echoing.[4] In Book VII of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* Goethe wrote:

> For the inner content of the subject treated is the First and Last of art. Of course, it will not be denied that genius, the fully developed artistic talent, can by its treatment of a subject make everything out of anything and subjugate the most intractable material. But then the result, seen properly, is a mere artistic trick rather than a work of art which should be based on a worthy subject, so that finally the treatment will . . . reveal to us all the more fully the worth of the subject.[5]

It is not, however, only Goethe's precept but its context that is relevant. The same section of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* contains a survey of many earlier works of German literature and in their discussion the inherent value of the subject matter is a constantly recurring theme. For example, Goethe speaks of a poem which J. G. Günther (1695-1723) began but failed to complete. Goethe explains this failure with the words 'Of course, the subject had an inner defect'.[6]

Arnold could not have failed to absorb Goethe's message on the importance of the choice of subject for it is emphasized continually by the German poet. There are, for example, two passages in Goethe's conversations with Eckermann which would serve equally well as sources for Arnold's argument.

> 'Yes', said Goethe, 'what is more important than the subjects and what is the whole theory of art without them. All talent is expended in vain if the subject is worthless . . .'.[7]

Eckermann also records a conversation in which Goethe had praised the French writer P. Dumont (1759-1829) for his choice of subjects:

> Among the subjects which he has treated there is not a single one that is not inherently interesting and significant; and the choice of subject always shows what sort of man one is and whose spiritual heir.[8]

Unlike Goethe, however, Arnold explains what he means by 'excellent actions'; but in his Wordsworthian definition of them as those 'which most powerfully appeal to the great primary human affections: to those elementary feelings which subsist permanently in the race . . .' he says nothing from which Goethe would have wished to dissent.

Arnold and Goethe were also in agreement on another point, namely in their approval of the practice of the Greeks in confining the dramatic poet to a small range of excellent actions 'eminently adapted for tragedy'.[9] The merit of the 'terrible old mythic' stories on which these dramas were founded was that 'their significance appeared inexhaustible'. Goethe comments in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* that 'Greek mythology in general offers an inexhaustible wealth of symbols, human and divine'.[10] Both poets saw too, that the merits of these subjects were still valid. Goethe wrote about the choice of subject in Spontini's opera 'The Women of Athens' that

> . . . the advantages of such subjects [from the time of the Greek heroes] are very great for they offer significant circumstances, a great and noble culture which is yet still close to nature and an immense mythology for poetic development.[11]

Goethe specifically recommended the use of frequently treated classical subjects for young writers of the modern period because this approach would be less taxing to their powers of invention.[12] Arnold, however, saw their merit simply in the fact that they offered great actions, nobler personages, and more intense situations than contemporary subjects.[13]

Arnold began by asserting that the date of an action was insignificant. Apparently therefore modern and ancient subjects were in principle equally appropriate. But by the end of the Preface he has subtly shifted his position. He now clearly favours ancient subjects because he finds the present time an age of 'spiritual discomfort' lacking 'moral grandeur'. Such an age, Arnold argues, cannot readily supply the poet with the kind of subject he requires. Sensing in advance the storm of protest which his disparagement of the present was likely to arouse, Arnold calmly points towards Goethe and Niebuhr and asks his readers to remember 'the judgments . . . [of] the men of strongest head and widest culture whom [the age] has produced'.[14] The implication of Arnold's words–that Goethe's opinions in this matter coincided with his own–is fair, and it is interesting to observe that Arnold seems to think instinctively of Goethe in the role of 'physician of the iron age'.[15] In fact, Goethe really conforms to this role only in the last decade of his life–the period of his conversations with Eckermann and of the majority of his letters to Zelter. Certainly if one turns to these late works one has no difficulty in finding many examples of dire foreboding and gloomy prophecy. Both Allott (*Poems*, p. 605) and Super (CPW I, 223) note an obvious example in Eckermann where Goethe identifies the modern tendency towards subjectivity (which he calls the 'universal sickness of the age') as a symptom of an age in cultural decline.[16]

There are equally impressive diagnoses of a similar sort elsewhere. The theme of mediocrity and cultural decline is sounded also in Goethe's letter to Zelter of 6 June 1825, which, as I have shown, Arnold knew.[17] Goethe's letter, which is an impressive and rather moving document, is worth quoting at length. Written at a time when England was on the verge of massive industrialization, it casts a prophetic glance into the later years of the nineteenth century:

> Young people become excited far too early and are then swept away in the Time Stream. Wealth and speed are what the world admires and what it strives for. Railways, quick postal services, steam-ships and all possible communication facilities are what the civilised world is after, to become over-civilised and thereby to persist in mediocrity . . . a middle culture becomes universal . . . This century is really made for the capable minds, for practical quick-thinking men, who, although they possess no talent for the highest things, are yet equipped with a certain ability and feel their superiority over the crowd. Let us cling to the sentiments in which we grew up; with a few others perhaps we will be the last representatives of an epoch the like of which the world will not quickly see again.[18]

In conversation with Eckermann, Goethe complained of the enervation of the present, the lack of manliness (das Männliche) and of a certain penetrating force (eine gewisse zudringliche Kraft); he finds a weaker race (ein schwächeres Geschlecht) and an absence of great personalities in art.[19] When Arnold sighed wearily to his 'dearest Clough' that 'these are damned times–everything is against one–the height to which knowledge is come, the spread of luxury, our physical enervation, the absence of great natures, cities, light profligate friends . . . our own selves, and the sickening consciousness of our own difficulties', he was doubtless seeing himself in the guise of a gifted Roman fallen on the uninvigorating days of the declining Empire–but part, at least of the 'sickening consciousness' was due to his reading of Goethe.[20]

More is at issue here than a simple question of borrowed ideas or attitudes. Few writers can have been more acutely aware than Arnold of the relationship between a poet's social and cultural milieu and his capacity to produce poetry. Arnold's interest in this topic ultimately bore fruit in one of his finest essays 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' (1864), but the seeds of these later speculations were planted much earlier. That this interest was closely linked with Arnold's uneasy doubts about the strength and resilience of his own poetic powers is evident from the figure of Empedocles. One of the main concerns of the poem is to account for the drying up of the hero's powers of imagination. Was the cause of this drying-up, the poem asks, 'some root of suffering within himself' or was it because he lived in an age lacking in moral grandeur–('Great qualities are trodden down, / And littleness united / Is become invincible')–an age with which he is out of sympathy?[21] In some measure both causes appear to be responsible.

Similar questions applied to himself are a constantly repeated theme throughout Arnold's most intimate letters to Clough and to his sister 'K'. 'Woe was upon me', he wrote to Clough in December 1852, 'if I analysed not my situation'. When Arnold is speaking of the contemporary situation, however, his comments hardly warrant the description 'analysis'. He has words in plenty to describe the times–'*blankness* and *barrenness*, and *unpoetrylessness*', 'Not unprofound, not ungrand, not unmoving:–but *unpoetical*' '*Arid*–that is what the times are'–but as yet he is unable to suggest any of the deeper causes of this state of affairs.[22] On the other hand, when he is speaking of other periods of literature, his ideas are rather better developed and consequently more interesting. For example, when he asks himself what conditions in Elizabethan England made the time such a productive period for poetry, his answer looks forward to the argument of his essay on 'The Function of Criticism'. (Briefly, Arnold maintains in this essay that a necessary precondition for a flowering of poetic literature is a cultural atmosphere which provides the poet with an ordered system of ideas as the basis of his art.) One condition of the 'best poetical epochs' is quite simply that the writing of poetry should be 'the bent of the time', but there are other requirements too.[23] Clough appears to have held that the Reformation was the cause of Elizabethan literature, but Arnold was more inclined to see the Reformation and the new literature as effects of a common cause. In a letter to Clough of September 1853, he put forward the view that the general upheaval in Europe which followed the collapse of the Roman Empire resulted in 'a vigorous crop of new ideas'.[24] The fertilizing effect of these ideas in due time produced the Reformation and England's Elizabethan literature.

In any attempt to account for Arnold's concern with these matters of cultural history the primary importance of his tendency to self-analysis, with its origins in his deficient confidence in his own powers, must of course be stressed. But other influences were also at work. Matthew's education by Dr Arnold, for example, must certainly have sharpened his historical consciousness. The editor of Thucydides had taught his pupils that history was mere antiquarianism if one did not learn to apply the lesson of past ages to the immediate present. Another influence could well have been Goethe, for in reading his criticism Arnold would have encountered numerous instances of the German poet's speculations about the effect on writers of their environment. Two such instances, both from Eckermann, must have impressed Arnold greatly. On 2 January 1824 the subject of discussion was Shakespeare.[25] Eckermann suggested that Shakespeare's greatness was more comprehensible and more accessible if viewed in the context of an age which also produced Marlowe and Ben Jonson, and that 'much of him lay in the powerful, productive atmosphere of his time' (daß vieles von ihm in der kräftigen produktiven Luft seines Jahrhunderts und seiner Zeit lag). Goethe concurred and went on to contrast the Elizabethan period with the present:

> Furthermore if anyone doubts that much of Shakespeare's greatness belongs to his great, powerful age, let him just ask himself whether he thinks such an astounding phenomenon possible in the England of 1824 in these bad days of criticising, fragmenting journals.
>
> That creative state, as undisturbed and innocent as walking in sleep, through which alone anything great can flourish, is no longer possible . . . The critical journals appearing daily in fifty different places and the nonsensical clap-trap they produce among the public will allow nothing healthy to grow. Whoever fails to detach himself forcibly, is lost . . . for a productive talent it is an invidious mist, a falling poison which destroys the tree of his creative life, from the green crown of the leaves into the deepest pith and most hidden fibre.
>
> And then how tame and feeble life itself has become in the last few miserable centuries! Where will you find unhidden an original nature today! . . . This reacts on the poet, however, who has to find everything within himself while he is left stranded by everything outside.[26]

Sentiments like these are echoed continually in Arnold's complaints about the blankness and dullness of contemporary life.

The second example concerns the French poet Béranger and the writers of the Paris journal, the *Globe*. Eckermann was surprised to learn that the writers for this magazine, whose judgements seemed to him so mature, were in fact still young men in their twenties. Goethe explained this by pointing out that Paris was a centre of national life without parallel in Germany. In Paris these young men were able to profit daily by contact with a historical past rich in associations of greatness. In the

Paris of the early nineteenth century an abundance of intellect (Geist) had been current (in Kurs gesetzt) for three generations through men like Molière, Voltaire, and Diderot. A talented writer could develop quickly there in a way which was unthinkable in any other environment. Goethe illustrates his argument by citing Béranger as a case in point. The son of a poor tailor became first a printer's apprentice and then a clerk in some office; he never attended a university. Yet he was still able to produce songs of such mature culture, such delicacy, so full of the finest irony and intellect, such perfect artistry and masterly control of language, that they were the admiration of the whole of Europe. Had Béranger been the son of a tailor in Weimar, such an achievement would have been impossible. Goethe sums up as follows:

> So, my good friend, I repeat: if a talent is to develop quickly and happily it all depends on there being current in the nation much intellect and solid culture.[27]

These lines contain embryonically one of the central insights of the essay 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time':

> . . . the exercise of the creative power in the production of great works of literature or art . . . is not at all epochs and under all conditions possible . . . This creative power works with elements, with materials . . . the elements with which the creative power works are ideas; the best ideas . . . current at the time . . . And I say *current* at the time, not merely accessible . . .[28]

On the basis of this premise Arnold builds much of his argument concerning the importance of 'criticism' and its function in making ideas current.

Another piece of evidence concerning Goethe's part in Arnold's interest in these subjects is revealed in an early letter to Clough in which Arnold considers the question of 'style'. He argues that the tendency to imitate the poetic expression of the founders of a national literature is a sign of decadence. He illustrates this with a comment on German literature:

> The strength of German literature consists in this–that having no national models from whence to get an idea of *style* as half the work, they were thrown upon themselves, and driven to make the fulness of the content of a work atone for deficiencies of form.[29]

Arnold's remarks seem to involve a recollection of, and to some extent a considered disagreement with, certain of Goethe's statements on the same topic. Goethe discussed the difficulties under which the German writers of his generation had worked on several occasions. In Book Seven of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* he wrote about the confusion which afflicted gifted young writers concerning what they were to aim for; theoretical criticism was unhelpful, foreign models were too far removed from their particular circumstances to be of use, and the merits of native models were too distinctively individual to be imitated. 'For anyone who felt something productive in himself', wrote Goethe, 'it was a hopeless state of affairs'.

Later in the chapter Goethe relates this condition more immediately to himself; his personal means were limited, his friends indifferent, his teachers reserved, men of culture lived in isolation. In such circumstances 'I was forced to search for everything within myself. If I wanted a true basis in feeling or reflection for my poems I had to go deep into my own breast'.[30] In the essay 'Literarischer Sansculottismus' (1795) Goethe asked, 'When and where does a national classic arise?' and answers that many circumstances must combine favourably for it to be possible. The basic necessity, however, is the existence of a national culture to which a writer can subordinate himself; this culture helps the writer, who might otherwise have to pay a high personal price for his self-development, to develop his talents easily and naturally. One element in this complex of requirements is the presence of works, whether perfect or imperfect, by those who have gone before, for an appropriate style (dem Gegenstande angemessenen Styl) can only be learnt from one's literary predecessors.[31]

Goethe may not have been the original influence behind Arnold's questionings about the poet's relationship to his age, but his role was nevertheless important. It is hardly necessary to prove that Goethe's comments on subjects so closely related to one of Arnold's deepest concerns must have had a special interest for Arnold. Even if he did reach his conclusions independently of the German poet, the similarity of their views must inevitably have constituted one of the sources of Goethe's attractiveness for him. It is more likely, however, that the similarities are not coincidental, and, if this is so, then it is no exaggeration to say that Arnold received from Goethe's critical writings a number of fundamental insights which he eventually developed more fully and in ways not directly suggested by his source.

In pursuing this line of enquiry we have moved a considerable distance from the 1853 Preface. It is now necessary to pick up the thread again. Arnold's defence of ancient subjects is closely related to the problem of the artist's relationship to his public. S. B. M. Coulling, in his excellent article 'Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface: Its Origin and Aftermath' sensibly views the Preface as 'a defence of his use of classical subjects and of his refusal to regard poetry as a medium for addressing the age . . .' To many of Arnold's contemporaries the choice of ancient subjects seemed tantamount to an abdication of responsibility or concern for the needs and problems of contemporary life. The charge of irrelevance was persistently levelled against his work. Even Clough repeats the familiar complaint. As Coulling points out, the significance of Clough's article on 'Recent English Poetry' in the *North American Review*, 77 (1853), is 'that it reflected a general view of the age regarding the nature and function of poetry'. Arnold could not accept this view: not only was the poet supposed to choose 'subjects from contemporary life' which had 'a direct relevance to the people and their time', but he was also expected to accept the responsibility of being a 'moral guide and spiritual comforter' as well.[32] Similar assumptions about the poet's duty underlie hostile reviews of Arnold's poetry by Kingsley in *Fraser's Magazine*, 39 (1849), Coventry Patmore in 'Glimpses of Poetry', *North British Review*, 19 (1853) and J. D. Coleridge's 'unaccountably vicious' piecee of work in the *Christian Remembrancer*, 27 (1854).

If sensibly and moderately expressed, the utilitarian demand for 'relevance' in poetry (provided that the word is understood in a sufficiently wide sense) cannot easily be ignored. Arnold knew this well enough. It is ironical that the reason which he gives for withdrawing 'Empedocles on Etna' is that the figure of Empedocles is so relevant to the modern age of spiritual discomfort that the play could not hope to 'inspirit' or 'rejoice', the reader. It is in his assessment of the age that Arnold differs from his critics, who were more enchanted than he by the 'great' aims of industrial progress and social amelioriation. But in conceding the reader the right to be inspirited and rejoiced Arnold was in partial agreement with his critics. Coulling, therefore, appears to have missed one of the main points of Arnold's stand against the reviewers. Arnold was not saying that the artist may be permitted indifference to his age, but that, in assessing and interpreting both its needs and his own, the artist must have autonomy. In other words it is the artist who assesses and interprets the needs of his age, not the clamorous voices of the literary journals. These the artist can and must ignore: 'The present age', Arnold concedes, 'makes great claims upon us: we owe it service, it will not be satisfied without our admiration', but he also insists that the 'confusion of the present time is great, the multitude of voices counselling different things bewildering'. The poet, no less than his age, needs a 'guide' but 'the English writer at the present day' will nowhere find one.[33]

In insisting upon the author's personal freedom Arnold was possibly influenced by Goethe. A maxim of Goethe which Arnold translated and copied into his 1847 note-book expresses one of the unspoken but underlying convictions of the Preface:

> The highest care an author can have for his Public is that he never should bring them what they expect, but what he himself at any given stage of his own growth and that of others, holds to be right and useful.[34]

Here lies the difference between an artist of Arnold's integrity and a nonentity like Alexander Smith whose verses Clough for a brief period preferred to his friend's and at whom Arnold jibes in the Preface.[35] As Trilling says, Smith and the other so-called 'Spasmodic' poets make 'a fine show of rushing out to meet the problems of life, but their endowment was limited enough to keep them safe and platitudinous'. 'Smith is being courageous in a trivial world of his own contriving' whereas 'Arnold is groping in the dark of modern Europe'.[36] This turns Smith into precisely the kind of dilettante of whom Goethe spoke so contemptuously:

> —Art gives laws to itself & commands the world.
> —Dilettantism follows the inclination of the Time.[37]

By following the inclination of the time, by giving the public what it wants and telling it what it wants to hear, the dilettante is sure to gather applause at the expense of the true artist, but it is the independent artist who does the world genuine service; and in the long run it is his name that survives. This was the gist of Goethe's message, and for Arnold it must have been a call to stand firm in spite of misunderstanding.

Arnold gives one example of the danger threatening any artist who pays too much heed to the demands of his age. A critic in the *North British Review* had made the following assertion: 'A true allegory of the state of one's own mind in a representative history, whether narrative or dramatic in form, is perhaps the highest thing that one can attempt in the way of fictitious art'.[38] Masson had supported his contention by pointing to Goethe's *Faust* as an example of the kind of work he meant. Arnold quotes this passage, in a rather garbled form, and proceeds to attack it:

> An allegory of the state of one's own mind, the highest problem of an art which imitates action! No assuredly, it is not, it never can be so: no great poetical work has ever been produced with such an aim. *Faust* itself, in which something of the kind is attempted, wonderful passages as it contains, and in spite of the unsurpassed beauty of the scenes which relate to Margaret, *Faust* itself, judged as a whole, and judged strictly as a poetical work, is defective: its illustrious author . . . would have been the first to acknowledge it; he only defended his work, indeed, by asserting it to be 'something incommensurable'.[39]

Perhaps the two most striking features of Arnold's attack are the slightly blustering indignation of its tone and the ineptitude of his reference to *Faust*. Arnold is, of course, correct in judging *Faust* to be an allegory of the author's mind (although the representative nature of the author's mind means that the play is simultaneously more than this), but he misses what could have been his most telling point, namely that the work is essentially a lyric poem in dramatic form and not a drama in the traditional sense. Goethe did in fact admit that the play's two main figures, Faust and Mephistophles, were the objective representatives of two aspects of his own nature, the gloomy, insatiable restlessness (Faust) and scornful, bitter irony (Mephistopheles).[40] But Goethe nowhere implies that this automatically relegates the work to an inferior artistic standing. Arnold is unable to establish any link between *Faust's* allegorical character and its supposed defectiveness. The flaw in the argument is masked, however, for he switches to a totally unrelated 'defect': the play is undoubtedly beautiful in parts, says Arnold, but not equally and uniformly beautiful if judged as a whole.

The *non sequitur* in the argument is only compounded when Arnold attempts to claim Goethe's authority for condemning *Faust*. To say that Goethe only defended his work by asserting it to be 'something incommensurable' is quite misleading. Goethe does indeed say this about *Faust*—on two separate occasions:

> But *Faust* is really something quite incommensurable and all attempts to make it

> accord with reason are in vain. Also one has to remember that the first part proceeded from a rather dark condition in the individual. But the very darkness attracts people and they tire themselves out on it, as on all insoluble problems.

The second occasion is similar:

> What is important with all such compositions is merely that the individual parts be clear and significant, while it always remains incommensurable as a whole and for this very reason, like an insoluble problem, it attracts people to repeated contemplation of it.[41]

Arnold would appear to have the second of these passages in mind for in this one Goethe makes Arnold's distinction between the play's parts and the play as a whole. However, Goethe's remarks offer no justification for Arnold's strictures. Goethe insists that all the parts be 'clear' and 'significant' and the inaccessibility is for him simply a testimony to the inexhaustible richness of meaning in the play. Furthermore, Arnold's charge is specifically refuted by Goethe in a letter which he wrote to Schiller (22 June 1797) at a time when he was working on the play:

> Since, with respect to mood, the different parts of the poem can be treated in different ways, provided that they are subordinated to the spirit and tone of the whole . . . I am able to work at it in spare moments and am able to do something even at the present.[42]

This letter shows that Goethe was fully conscious of the need to keep the various parts of *Faust* subordinate to a total unity of spirit and tone. Arnold was quite entitled to hold the opinion that Goethe had failed to do this, but it is a personal opinion, which has, from Goethe at least, no authority.

Arnold's reaction to the 'precious piece of cant' which he quoted from the *North British Review* was peculiarly sharp.[43] To account for this it is helpful to ask why he used Goethe, admittedly in a most inappropriate fashion, to attack it. Allott suggests that Arnold was irritated 'by the critic's assumption that he is expressing a Goethean view of poetry'.[44] Masson had claimed that,

> . . . what is poetical in literature consists of the embodiment of some notion or feelings . . . in appropriate objective circumstances . . . Indeed, Goethe's theory of poetical or creative literature was, that it is nothing else than the moods of its practitioners objectivized as they rise. A man feels himself oppressed and agitated by feelings and longings . . .; if he is a literary man, then the uneasiness is but the motive to creation, and the result is–a song, a drama, an epic, or a novel. Scheming out some plan or story, which is in itself a sort of allegory of his mood as a whole, he fills up the sketch with minor incidents, scenes, and characters, which are nothing more, as it were, than the breaking up of the mood into its minutiae, and the elaboration of these minutiae, one by one, into the concrete . . . Such, at least, was Goethe's theory, which he said, would apply most rigidly to all that he had written himself.[45]

To a generation familiar with T. S. Eliot's concept of the 'objective correlative' the point of view represented in this passage will seem to have much to commend it.

Nevertheless, Arnold's sharpness is understandable, for if Masson was correct in his argument then the direction of Arnold's poetic effort had been completely misguided for the last four years. Even before the second separation from Marguerite in September 1849 Arnold had expressed dissatisfaction with the personal, subjective tendency of his own poetry. As he told Clough in a letter of March 1849: 'Shairp urges me to speak more from myself: which I less and less have the inclination to do: or even the power'.[46] After the unhappy return from Switzerland dissatisfaction eventually became firm resolve; Arnold decided to renounce personal suffering as the subject matter of poetry. The classical notion of the poet as a 'maker', although clearly in opposition to the current of the time, began to have an ever stronger appeal. 'More and more', he wrote to his sister 'K', 'I feel bent against the modern English habit (too much encouraged by Wordsworth) of using poetry as a channel for thinking aloud, instead of making anything'.[47] Arnold's attempt to turn this sentiment into action can be seen plainly in his experiments with epic and dramatic form in 'Tristram and Iseult', 'Sohrab and Rustum', 'Balder Dead', 'Empedocles on Etna', and finally in *Merope*. Nor can there be much doubt that at least part of his dissatisfaction with 'Empedocles on Etna' stemmed from a feeling that the play had become, against his fixed intention and in spite of the objective mode of dramatic art, too much an allegory of his own mind. There is some humour in seeing the poem praised by one of Arnold's most intelligent and sensitive critics, W. A. Madden, in terms not unlike those used by Masson:

> As a projection of his own central experience, 'Empedocles on Etna' is Arnold's greatest achievement. The various impulses at war within himself are successfully objectified in the three *dramatis personae*, each of whom has a poetic life of his own within the 'action' of the poem.[48]

Arnold would not have appreciated the comment.

At the very period, therefore, when Arnold had been making great efforts to free himself from the tyrannical vagaries of his temperament he encountered in Masson's article a theory which made 'mood' the very basis of artistic creation. And as if with deliberate intention to provoke Arnold further, Masson had not only challenged the basic ideals and assumptions of Arnold's poetry but had done so in the name of Goethe on whose authority Arnold in his drive towards objectivity had chiefly relied. Superficially Masson appears to have a strong case and has won the support of at least one modern scholar. H. W. Garrod argues that the doctrine which Arnold refutes in the Preface belongs essentially to Goethe not to Masson.[49] Masson was certainly not speaking in total ignorance of Goethe's works; on the contrary, when he wrote of Goethe's theory of art as 'moods . . . objectivized as they rise', 'oppressed and agitated by feelings and longings . . . the motive to creation', a theory 'which would apply . . . to all that he had written himself', he seems to have had at least one, but probably two specific utterances of Goethe in mind. The first of these is the famous statement in *Dichtung und Wahrheit:*

> And so began the tendency from which I have never been able to deviate throughout my entire life, namely to transform whatever delighted, troubled or otherwise occupied my mind into a picture or poem, and in so doing to bring the matter to a close . . . All my works are merely fragments of a great confession.[50]

The second occurs in the conversations with Eckermann. Goethe had been giving Eckermann some advice. The young man, who had ambitions concerning a long poem that he intended to write, confessed that shorter pieces had begun to take second place to it. Goethe warned him of the dangers of this. 'What ever thoughts and feelings arise in the daily life of the poet must and should be spoken'. This, Goethe went on, had always been his own practice:

> All my poems are occasional poems, they are prompted by real life and have their roots therein. I give nothing for poems invented out of thin air . . . Real life should provide the motifs, the salient points, the real kernel . . .[51]

Nevertheless a close examination of Goethe's words will show that Arnold had understood their significance better than Masson.

Goethe's admission that all his works were fragments of a great confession merely affirms their basis in autobiographical fact and hence in real experience. It cannot be interpreted as meaning that the novels *Wilhelm Meister* and *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, or the epic poem *Hermann und Dorothea* were merely the objectification of a 'mood'. The only portion of Goethe's works of which it is strictly true to say that they are 'the moods of the poet objectivized as they rise' is the body of short lyrical pieces which he called 'occasional' poems. In both the passages quoted above it is quite clear that Goethe is speaking essentially of these short 'occasional' works. Masson had unwarrantably extended the definition to apply also to 'a drama, an epic, or a novel' and it is this distortion of Goethe's views which must have rankled with Arnold.

Arnold probably had no objection to the definition of art as 'the moods of its practitioners objectivized as they rise', provided that it referred only to lyric poetry. At any rate, his indignant exclamation of denial allows this interpretation: 'An allegory of the state of one's own mind, the highest problem of an art which imitates actions! No . . .' The crucial phrase is surely 'an art which imitates actions' for it shows clearly that Arnold was thinking exclusively of narrative or dramatic art; lyric poetry certainly does not fall within its scope.[52] As S. Coulling has pointed out, Arnold's negligence in failing to state clearly and explicitly that his insistence on the objective basis of art was not intended to apply to lyric poetry constitutes an obvious weakness in the Preface's case. Not surprisingly this omission drew down upon the Preface some valid adverse criticism. In the 'Preface to Second Edition of *Poems*' (1854) Arnold rather grudgingly conceded the defect in his argument–if it is taken to apply to all poetry–but elected to leave his text unchanged (see CPW, I, 16). Arnold's apparently unconscious oversight is, however, highly revealing for it shows how totally his poetic thinking was dominated by the idea of dramatic and epic poetry.[53] It is in this light too that Arnold's fondness for the abortive drama *Merope* must be seen—as also his preference for 'Sohrab and Rustum' and 'Balder Dead' above his undoubted achievements in lyric poetry. 'The Scholar-Gipsy' he disparaged (see *Clough Letters*, p. 146) and about 'Dover Beach' he remained silent.

Masson was clearly mistaken in the interpretation which he put upon Goethe's remarks. The German poet would never have approved a theory of drama which made a play into a mere vehicle for a poet's mood. Arnold, who had studied his Eckermann diligently, knew this well. Goethe's comments on Byron's drama *Marino Faliero* are sufficient to show that he made far different demands on a dramatic poet.

> . . . more strength and genius is required for the objective treatment of a subject than is commonly thought. Even Byron, in spite of his hugely prominent personality occasionally had the strength to deny himself completely as can be seen in some of his dramatic pieces and particularly in 'Marino Faliero'. When one is reading this play one completely forgets that . . . an Englishman wrote it. We live in Venice and at the very period of the action. The characters speak completely out of themselves and their situation, without any trace of the subjective feelings, thought, and opinions of the poet. That is the right way![54]

Goethe's writings on literature abound in statements expressing hostility towards subjectivity in art. During the years that preceded the writing of the Preface Arnold had immersed himself in the German poet's criticism and its effect on his poetic creed is unmistakeable. The Preface is nothing if not a repudiation of subjectivity, and as such it is also an attempt to vindicate the choice of poetic course on which Arnold had embarked. Goethe's role in this respect is so crucial that a correct understanding of his 'neo-classic' poetic theory is indispensable if one is to penetrate the underlying assumptions on which the arguments of the Preface are based.

Since Arnold flatly denies that any work of narrative or dramatic poetry ought to be an allegory of its creator's mind, one is prompted to ask what relationship exists, in Arnold's view, between a poet's mind and the work it creates. Does 'objectivity' signify the total exclusion of the poet from his productions? To answer these questions one must begin by pointing out an apparent paradox in Arnold's relationship with Goethe. In his discussion of Goethe's significance to modern European thought written some ten years after the Preface, Arnold made this statement: 'Goethe's profound, imperturbable naturalism is absolutely fatal to all routine thinking; he puts the standard once for all, inside every man instead of outside him . . .'.[55] Arnold is obviously remembering the essay 'Noch ein Wort für junge Dichter' which he had translated and copied into his 1847 note-book. There Goethe had written that 'every man must without fail learn to know and judge himself, because no foreign standard out of himself can come to his aid' (Arnold's translation). Arnold may well have re-read Goethe's essay in preparation for his own piece on Heinrich Heine, for a few lines before the passage cited above, Arnold quotes openly from it:

> 'Through me the German poets have become aware that, as a man must live from within outwards, so the artist must work from within outwards, seeing that, make what contortions he will, he can only bring to light his own individuality.'[56]

It would appear from this (and Arnold expresses no disapproval) that subjectivity is unavoidable in literature; that when a man writes poetry he expresses his individuality regardless of his intentions—'make what contortions he will'. It is not immediately obvious how one is to reconcile this with Goethe's praise of Byron for 'denying himself', for keeping *Marino Faliero* free from his personal thoughts and feelings, or indeed with his other strictures on subjectivity—in conversation with Eckermann for example:

> There is nothing wrong with the majority of our young poets except that their subjectivity is not significant (bedeutend) and that they cannot find material in the objective. At best they find material which is similar to them and which suits their subjectivity; but to take material for its own sake, because it is poetical, even if it is repugnant to their subjectivity—such a thing is never thought of.

Similarly, on another occasion Goethe criticized a young poet, O. L. B. Wolff (1799-1851) for his subjective tendency. He had asked Wolff to describe his return to Hamburg, but instead Wolff described his feelings as a son returning to his parents, relatives and friends; Hamburg did not enter into the description at all. Goethe was stimulated to remark:

> As long as a poet expresses only his few subjective feelings he may not properly be called a poet at all: but as soon as he is able to take possession of the world and to express it, then he is a poet. Then he is inexhaustible and can always be new, whereas a subjective nature has soon expressed its little bit of inner self and eventually goes to ruin in mannerism.[57]

Here Wolff and his contemporaries seem to be criticized for doing the very thing which, Goethe said, all poets do by necessity—namely bring to light their own individuality (Individuum).

To resolve this dilemma one must return to the essays 'Für junge Dichter' and 'Noch ein Wort für junge Dichter'. It is apparent from these essays that Goethe believed subjectivity to be a consequence of the high pitch of cultivation which the German language had attained. Everyone was capable of expressing himself easily and well; thus everyone who had reached a certain stage of cultivation and self-awareness felt himself 'impelled to communicate his thoughts and feelings'. But, said Goethe, 'it is hard, almost impossible for the young to see, that by this nothing has been done in the higher sense'. The reason why self-expression is in itself of little consequence is made clear by Goethe's 'earnest' advice to young poets 'that as their facility of rhythmical expression increases they must ever be gaining more and more in *content* (Arnold's italics).–But poetic content is content of our own life'.[58] In one sense, therefore, Masson was correct in believing that works of art reveal their creator's personality and Goethe would not have argued against this for, as he remarked to Eckermann, 'in art and poetry personality is everything'.[59] But Masson was fundamentally in error in making self-expression the poet's aim; the poet's aim should be to express the world outside of him, and in doing this he will inevitably express and reveal his own self. The process of self-revelation is a necessary consequence of artistic creation but to establish it as a principle of artistic intention is misleading. Young writers then believe that they have done enough if they express their own personal mood and thoughts. They are encouraged to be looking perpetually inward upon themselves when their attention should really be directed outward at the world. It is this outward direction of vision and activity that constitutes 'objectivity' and not any futile attempt by the poet to exclude his ego from his work. Subjective introspection necessarily encourages morbidity and this is unhealthy for through it the poet cuts himself off from the external world. Yet it is only through contact with the external world that the poet can enrich the content of his own life and ultimately of his own poetry. To improve as a poet is not simply a matter of increasing technical competence; it is also necessary to improve one's personality, one's inner self, by making it ever richer in content and meaning. Goethe's advice to young poets to dwell on no experience that troubled without furthering them can now be seen in its full importance. To act on this advice, as Arnold, for whom it had been specially relevant, knew better than anyone, entailed a conscious effort at self-improvement which was essentially moral in nature, but for the poet the processes of artistic and moral self-development could be identical. The basic defect of most young writers, therefore, lay in this: that the inner life which they expressed lacked any important content and was consequently insignificant.

It could, of course, be objected that although Arnold had a detailed knowledge of the works in which Goethe's theory is elaborated, there is yet no proof that he understood it in this specific way. At any rate, it will be said, there is very little in Arnold's refutation of Masson's statement to suggest that such ideas were particularly important to him. To some extent this is true; the reviewer seems to have irritated Arnold by falsely representing as Goethe's a view of poetry, which was in fact hostile to the ideals of both Goethe and Arnold. But Arnold's answer to Masson's claims is, as I have said, inadequate and can hardly be called a refutation; it is no more than an outraged expression of disagreement. The reason for the reference to Goethe in his answer is not difficult to discern–their mutual integrity was at stake–but why the answer was so inadequate can only be a matter for conjecture. On the other hand, Arnold's own dissatisfaction with the Preface–'far less *precise* than I had intended' he told Clough–begins to make sense.[60] In an unpublished letter (28 March 1855) to his brother Tom in Tasmania Arnold wrote that:

> We have numbers of young gentlemen with really wonderful powers of perception and expression, but to whom there is wholly wanting a 'bedeutendes Individuum' so that their productions are most unedifying and unsatisfactory.[61]

In these few words Arnold has summed up the essence of Goethe's attitude to subjectivity in poetry and the reference to a 'bedeutendes Individuum' (two key words) proves that he was fully conscious of the source of his idea.[62] At the same time one is struck by the fact that the point Arnold is making is not one which is made in the Preface. Arnold must surely have been aware that his reply to Masson was incomplete, and this may, in part, explain his feeling that the Preface was not precise enough. If by 'precise' Arnold meant the naming of names his motives for remaining silent are obvious. As an almost completely unrecognized poet himself it would have appeared insufferably arrogant of him to denounce anyone as an 'insignificant individual'. The weakness of Arnold's reply, therefore, may be due to his feelings that for discretion's sake his lips had to remain sealed, or may simply represent an unwillingness to become involved in a public dispute with another writer.

Although the Preface itself is undoubtedly a piece of polemical writing Arnold preserved a lofty theoretical stance which kept him at a distance from literary squabbles. His dislike of such things was in part a temperamental aversion to rancorous emotions, but it was never strong enough to keep him out of controversy for very long. The Preface paints a gloomy picture of the position of a young practising talent: he lives in an age which is hostile to all qualities of spiritual greatness and nobility and is assailed by voices prescribing false artistic aims. The possibilities of conflict are therefore almost limitless. Given such circumstances the question of what attitude to adopt to the contemporary situation presents itself to the poet with particular force. In dealing with this question Arnold was again influenced by his reading of Goethe, and again it is the conversations with Eckermann and the essays of advice to young poets which play the central role. A young poet, said Arnold, meaning of course himself, will not

> . . . maintain a hostile attitude towards the false pretentions of his age; he will content himself with not being overwhelmed by them. He will esteem himself fortunate if he can succeed in banishing from his mind all feelings, of contradiction, and irritation, and impatience . . .[63]

In the same year as the Preface Arnold wrote to Clough with a few words of advice which shed some useful light on the frame of mind which produced the passage just quoted:

> As to conformity I recommend it in so far as it frees us from the unnatural and unhealthy attitude of contradiction and opposition–the *Qual der Negation* as Goethe calls it. Only positive convictions and feelings are worth anything–and the glow of these one can never feel so long as one is pugnacious and out of temper.[64]

The reference to the 'Qual der Negation', which Arnold has taken from Goethe's letter to Schiller (7 December 1796) is completely apposite. The 'torture of negation' is felt by the 'malicious spirit' of those who had run foul of Goethe and Schiller in the distich-cycle of *Xenien*; they were condemned to negative action while Goethe and Schiller were able to continue their positive work (unsere positiven Arbeiten fortsetzen).

Essentially, however, the letter to Clough is of interest only in so far as it indicates that Arnold consciously associated these ideas with Goethe, for it is a long way from a passing remark of Goethe's in a letter to Schiller to the elaborated code of behaviour advocated by Arnold in the Preface. The link is provided by Goethe's essay 'Noch ein Wort für junge Dichter'. There the German poet offered his contemporaries the following advice:

> Let the young poet utter only what has in it life and progression under whatever form it may be: let him firmly put aside all spirit of opposition, all evil wishing and evil speaking, and what can only *deny* [Arnold's italics] for out of this comes nothing.[65]

In Goethe's opinion, Byron was an example of a talented poet who had ignored this wise counsel and perished in consequence:

> That he cut himself off from tradition and patriotism not only destroyed him personally as an excellent man, but his revolutionary purpose and the constant agitation of mind which attended it prevented his talent from developing properly. Also, this external opposition and condemnation is highly damaging to his excellent works as they are. For not only does the poet's discomfort communicate itself to the reader but also his opposition has a negative direction and the negative is nothing. What is achieved if I call the bad bad? But if I call the good bad then a lot of harm is done. *Whoever would have a positive effect must never scold, never bother about the absurd but only ever do right himself.* For it does not matter that something is demolished but that something should be built which men can take pure joy in.[66]

Goethe's influence here may well be of a subtle kind. It is not a case of Arnold expressing in the Preface an idea which but for Goethe he might not otherwise have expressed. Clearly, Arnold's temperamental bias against rancour and quarrelsomeness made him receptive to Goethe's advice; in a sense they shared a common outlook. Nevertheless, Goethe's influence on the terms in which Arnold expresses his conviction, terms like 'negation', 'contradiction', 'opposition', seems unmistakable. If attitudes based on a certain orientation of temperament remain frequently unarticulated, then Goethe's influence can be seen as consisting in this: that he helped Arnold to define, to bring to conscious formulation attitudes which Arnold had previously held only unconsciously and in doing so strengthened the attitudes and helped him to justify them to himself.

In the presence of false prophets like Masson and the absence of any reliable 'guiding hand' Arnold's purpose in the Preface is to recommend 'excellent models' so that the artist may fix his attention upon them and hence, hopefully, 'be taught to product what is excellent independently'.[67] The models which he proposes are the works of the Ancients. He ventures to suggest that Shakespeare is a dangerous model for a young writer, but he is careful to stress that in saying this he is not claiming that Shakespeare is inferior to the Greeks; the Greeks are merely a safer model. (The very tentativeness and circumspection with which Arnold puts forward his argument shows that he knew full well what patriotic protests it was likely to arouse.) In broad outline Arnold's argument would have had Goethe's complete agreement. There are so many instances of Goethe recommending the Greeks as models that it would be futile to catalogue them all. A few typical examples will suffice. In his essay 'Anforderungen an den modernen Bildhauer' Goethe speaks of the Greeks 'to whom we must always look up as our masters'. In 'Deutsche Sprache und Verwandtes' he speaks with approval of a young man who was 'convinced that the source of true culture is only to be found among the ancients'.[68] In a letter to Zelter of 1827 Goethe said that if he were young again he would submit himself completely to the study of the Greeks (würde ich mich dem Griechischen völlig ergeben).[69] And finally, in conversation with Eckermann, 'when we need a model (etwas Musterhaftes) we must always turn to the ancient Greeks in whose works lovely humanity (der schöne Mensch) is portrayed. All the rest we must consider historically . . .'.[70]

Arnold was criticized in the *Leader* by G. H. Lewes for recommending 'imitation' of Greek models. (Lewes approved of 'emulation', but he condemned imitation as an 'enervating practice'.)[71] In effect Lewes is splitting hairs for it is quite plain from Arnold's description of the process which he is envisaging, that emulation is precisely what he has in mind, not a slavish copying. The worst Arnold can be accused of on that point is a poor choice of word. Goethe saw clearly that in one respect the argument about 'classical' and 'modern' was futile, since a return to Greek antiquity was impossible anyway: the argument, he said, could easily be settled 'if people would remember that anyone who, from youth on, owes his culture to the Greeks and Romans will never be able to deny his classical ancestry, but will rather always acknowledge thankfully his debt to his dead mentors, even when devoting his fully developed talent to the living present, and without knowing it will end "modern", where he began "ancient" '.[72] These words could be interpreted as a justification of Arnold's advocacy of classical models and as a reply to Lewes.

Shakespeare had no greater admirer than Goethe, but, like Arnold, the German poet realized that for young writers he was a dangerous model, and an unkind observer might well remark that Goethe's play *Götz von Berlichingen* (1771) is the finest proof of this. Allott points out the parallel between Arnold's argument in the Preface and Goethe's comment on Shakespeare in conversation with Eckermann: Shakespeare 'is far too rich and powerful. A productive nature can only read *one* of his plays a year if it is not to be ruined by him . . . Shakespeare offers us *golden apples in silver bowls*'.[73] One must point out, however, that although Arnold is probably echoing this passage when he speaks of the young writer being 'vanquished and absorbed' by Shakespeare's talent, the details of Arnold's argument against the advisability of using Shakespeare as a model are his own.[74] Goethe does not elaborate the suggestive image of golden apples in silver dishes, but one will see from the following discussion how easily Arnold could have interpreted it to suit his own point of view. Arnold delivers his warning because a young writer will tend to notice Shakespeare's 'curious', highly-wrought style of expression and imitate only that, without also imitating Shakespeare's powerful sense of construction and form. It is true that the word which Arnold uses to characterize this sense of form, *Architectonicé*, is borrowed from Goethe's essay on dilettantism, which Arnold had in large part translated and copied into his note-book in 1847.[75] Arnold's definition of the term falls into two parts, what *Architectonicé* is and what it is not. It is 'that power of execution, which creates, forms, constitutes; not the profoundness of single thoughts, not the richness of imagery, not the abundance of illustration'.[76] In the first part he reproduces a correct translation of Goethe's words; in the second he adds his own thoughts. Nevertheless, his definition does no injustice to Goethe's meaning. It is only in the application of the term to Shakespeare that Arnold goes further than Goethe. The application is quite fair, but Goethe does not in fact speak of Shakespeare in the essay on dilettantism. Arnold's citation of Goethe at this point in the argument, therefore, tends to make it appear as if his entire account of Shakespeare's value as a model is derived from Goethe. An important and substantial part does indeed have Goethe's authority, but not all.

It is in Arnold's account of the virtues of Greek art and its significance, however, that Goethe's influence on the Preface is greatest. One of the fundamental precepts of Arnold's critical theory is the distinction between the 'Whole' and the 'Parts'. With the Greeks, Arnold says,

> . . . the poetical character of the action in itself, and the conduct of it, was the first consideration; with us, attention is fixed mainly on the value of the separate thoughts and images which occur in the treatment of an action. They regarded the whole; we regard the parts.

This distinction resolves itself basically into Arnold's insight, that, given subject-matter of high inherent quality, the essential stature of a work of literature depends upon the power of 'Architectonicé' which the author has expended upon it and not upon the poet's gift for felicitous expression. The notion of fine writing with its emphasis on the value of 'separate thoughts and images', 'richness of imagery . . . abundance of illustration', is the bane of modern poetry because it distracts attention from the importance of form and construction. There are modern critics, says Arnold, whose attention is directly solely at the language of a work and who believe that the merit of a piece depends upon brilliant single lines and passages. The Greeks, apparently, understood all this perfectly:

> With them, the action predominated over the expression of it . . . Not that they failed in expression, or were inattentive to it; on the contrary, they are the highest models of expression, the unapproached masters of the *grand style*. But their expression is so excellent because, it is so admirably kept in its right degree of prominence; because it is so simple and so well subordinated . . .[77]

This is Arnold's first public use of the phrase 'the grand style', but it already contains in embryo the distinctive association with which Arnold was later to endow it in his piece *On Translating Homer* (1861)–simplicity, severity, and plainness.[78]

W. A. Madden has pointed to the words of Serlo in *Wilhelm Meister* as a source of Arnold's ideas: 'Few Germans perhaps few men of any modern nation have a proper sense of an aesthetic whole: they praise and blame by passages; they are charmed by passages'.[79] Madden's example is a good one, revealing obvious affinities between Goethe's judgement and Arnold's. But individual instances of parallel opinion are less important here because Arnold, who had absorbed Goethe's writings and had been exposed to their influence for almost five years before writing the Preface, would have encountered numerous passages of the kind Madden cites. Arnold's distinction between the whole and the parts is taken directly from Goethe where it occurs with such regularity in letters, conversation, and criticism that it can justly be called a basic Goethean idea. However, in Goethe's writings the idea is not, as in the Preface, deliberately and consciously established as a critical dictum in opposition to other critical dicta, but is taken completely for granted and used unquestioningly as a basis for making aesthetic judgements. In conversation with Eckermann, for example, Goethe spoke of August Hagen's poem *Olfried und Lisena* (1820) in this way:

> There are parts in it which could not be better . . . But they are only beautiful parts, as a whole it would not satisfy anyone.[80]

Or again in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* he passes judgement on a painting which was 'quite successful in details, but poorly composed (componiert) as a whole'.[81] Furthermore, in Goethe's writings the idea does not quite have the specific application which it has in Arnold's namely to 'construction' (the Whole) and 'expression' (the Parts) in works of literature. Arnold has isolated and taken over the general case and has applied it to the condition, as he saw it, of modern English poetry.[82]

Even the phrase which Arnold uses to characterize what he considered the distinctive quality of Greek epic and dramatic poetry–'the grand style'–is borrowed, as Allott has pointed out, from Goethe.[83] (For Goethe, however, it never had the pregnancy of implication that it had for Arnold. Indeed, Goethe's fullest account of 'style' with respect to Greek drama does not even approximately resemble anything Arnold has to say on the subject.)[84] Consider, for example, the interesting description of the grand style in the letter to Zelter of 25 August 1824.

In the course of a comparison of the *Iliad* with Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. Goethe wrote: 'The Greek poem is in the grand style, self-sufficient, making use only of what is essential, rejecting all decoration in description and simile, resting upon a basis of ancient myth.'[85] Goethe included these comments verbatim in his essay 'Über die Parodie bei den Alten', which Arnold probably knew also. There the expression, 'the grand style' occurs several times, being twice used in a way to which Arnold must have responded. Goethe spoke of the Greek poet's success in treating even low objects and actions (die niedrigsten Gegenstände und Handlungen) in the grand style, and this is one of the characteristics of Homer which Arnold cites as a major problem for translators.[86] The unity of total impression produced by a Greek work of art, which in the Preface Arnold recommends to modern poets as an object of emulation, is a feature of antiquity noticed by Goethe too. 'With the Greeks', said Goethe in the essay just referred to, 'their work is all of one character and all in the grand style', and in conversation with Eckermann he made a similar observation: 'in the higher tragedies of the Greeks . . . a certain ground-tone (ein gewisser Grundton) pervades the whole'.[87]

The question of 'unity of impression' produced by a work of Greek art brings one back again to the distinction between the Whole and the Parts. Arnold's emphasis on the importance of 'Wholeness' is more than a mere quirk of preference for one kind of literature over another: Greek over Elizabethan, classical over romantic. In a letter to Clough (of uncertain date, but 1848-49) Arnold makes the suggestive remark that poets 'must begin with an Idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness'.[88] This belief is central to Arnold's thinking; it recurs in both 'Empedocles on Etna' and 'On the Modern Element in Literature'. Arnold's conception of the world at this time could fairly be described as pessimistic atomism. His *Weltanschauung* is atomistic because it conceives existence as composed of an infinitude of detached elements confronting the human mind. The complexity or multitudinousness of existence is such, however, that the human mind cannot cope with the load imposed upon it without the help of what Arnold calls, for want of a more suitable term, 'Ideas'. These Ideas are the interpretative principles which help the mind to account for the facts of its experience. They must not be understood, however, as innate organizing principles of human intelligence, nor even as a philosopher's propositions about the world, but rather as the particular 'myths' of any given civilization or culture. ('Myths' must here be understood in the widest possible sense to include related cosmological, religious, and philosophical notions; in this sense Christianity, for example could be regarded as an 'Idea'.)

A degree of historical relativism is naturally involved in such a view. The absolute 'truth' of an Idea is unimportant; an Idea is true only in so far as it is appropriate to any given stage of cultural development. Hence Arnold is able to write, in his essay 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', of the need for 'an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces'.[89] A more important criterion than truth, therefore, for judging an Idea is the concept of 'adequacy'–the interpretative strength and capacity inherent in it.[90] As human knowledge increases the interpretative capacity of any given Idea will begin to dwindle and, ultimately, it will fail completely. Arnold's pessimism stems less from the fact that he existed at a time when, because of the failure of Christianity and the absence of an Idea to replace it, the individual was more exposed than ever before to the world's incomprehensible multitudinousness, than from his belief in the progressive nature of the world's complexity.[91] The number of facts with which an Idea has to come to terms and which the mind has to comprehend is perpetually increasing. The inescapable conclusion of this is that the number must inevitably pass beyond the range of both mind and Idea. At least, this seems to be the tendency of Arnold's argument in the lecture 'On the Modern Element in Literature'. The literature of the Greeks is more adequate, and consequently more perfect, than the literature of the Romans, but this is really because the world which confronted the experience of the Greeks was far less complex than the world of the Roman Empire. Whether an adequate literature is even remotely conceivable in a world as complex as the modern one is a question that looms large in the background. Perhaps no individual Idea can ever again be adequate to account for all the facts of human experience and knowledge. Wholeness seems to have passed for ever from the world. Although this pessimistic conclusion appears to be the only logical outcome of the argument, Arnold refrains from drawing it–he chooses to leave it implicit and unspoken. He sensed, perhaps, that the belief in an inevitable cultural decline was too closely related to a barren historical necessitarianism which would rob all human activity of purpose and meaning, and was, therefore, essentially debilitating.[92] The need for a joyful activity within the limits of his proper sphere–now Criticism–triumphed with Arnold, and by the 1880s the gloom had quite receded: the essays 'The Study of Poetry' and 'Literature and Science' radiate a joyful optimism. It is necessary to investigate how Arnold effected this change, and by what stages it occurred.

In the sonnet 'To a Friend' Arnold said of Sophocles that 'he saw life steadily, and saw it whole' (l. 12).[93] This does not mean that Sophocles saw the whole of life, or even that he saw life more completely than those who came before or after him. Arnold's description of Sophocles seems, in fact, to have two implications. Firstly, it means that the part of life which he saw, he saw as a whole; he was not, like Empedocles, prevailed over by the complexity of the individual elements (the Parts) which make up experience, but had an Idea of life which enabled him to discern it as a unity (the Whole). (Similar considerations seem to play a significant role in the seclusion which Arnold counsels for the poet in 'Resignation'; from his high vantage point on the hill above the town the Poet is able to survey at once a wide span and see it as a whole.) Secondly, however, the wholeness is a quality of the seer rather than of the thing seen. In the lecture 'On the Modern Element in

Literature' Arnold refers to the earlier sonnet thus:

> . . . the peculiar characteristic of the poetry of Sophocles is its consummate, its unrivalled *adequacy*; that it represents the highly developed human nature of that age—human nature developed in a number of directions, politically, socially, religiously, morally developed—in its completest and most harmonious development in all these directions; while there is shed over this poetry the charm of that noble serenity which always accompanies true insight . . . And therefore I have ventured to say of Sophocles, that he 'saw life steadily, and saw it whole'.[94]

Although the inclusion of 'politically' and 'socially' in this account presages the widening of Arnold's interests in the 1860s and anticipates the social orientation of *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), it is still the integration of individual human needs and faculties with which Arnold is here concerned. Sophocles saw life whole because the elements of his humanity were perfectly and harmoniously developed; in other words Sophocles himself was a whole. The root of modern man's unhappiness lay, Arnold thought, in the fragmentation of his being. Sophocles, like the Scholar-Gipsy, inhabits a world of pristine wholeness and innocence (though perhaps a world only of Arnold's imagining), but modern man finds that he cannot simultaneously reconcile the claims of intellect and religious faith, religion and morality, intellect and emotion. Undue prominence is given to individual parts of human nature: the head rules the heart tyrannically, the service of reason chills the religious instincts, a precarious truce exists between morality and emotion. These human faculties cannot easily be made to operate as a harmonious whole, and in consequence modern man finds himself thrown into a state of uncertainty, confusion, doubt, and despair. Such at least was Arnold's provisional diagnosis in 'Empedocles on Etna', 'The Scholar-Gipsy', and the 1853 Preface, but now, with the application of the concept of *adequacy* to literature itself, rather than to Ideas alone, a faint ray of hope is able to penetrate the gloom.

A letter which Arnold wrote to his brother Tom in 1857, the year of his inaugural lecture, is interesting for the light it sheds on the lecture and the concept of adequacy.

> Pope's poetry was *adequate* (to use a term I am always using) to Pope's age—that is, it reflected completely the best general culture and intelligence of that age; therefore the cultivated and intelligent men of that time all found something of themselves in it. But it was a poor time, after all so the poetry is not and cannot be a first-class one. On the other hand, our time is a first class one—an infinitely fuller, richer age than Pope's; but our poetry is not *adequate* to it; it interests therefore only a small band of sectaries; hundreds of cultivated and intelligent men find nothing that speaks to them in it. But it is a hard thing to make poetry adequate to a first-class epoch. The eternal greatness of the literature of the Greece of Pericles is that it is the *adequate* expression of a first-class epoch. Shakespeare again is the infinitely more than adequate expression of a second-class epoch. It is the immense distinction of Voltaire and Goethe, with all their shortcomings, that they approach near to being adequate exponents of first-class epochs.[95]

Several features of the argument in this letter are worth commenting on. The most striking feature is, perhaps, the description of his age as a first-class epoch, infinitely fuller and richer than Pope's. This marks not merely a definite reversal of his point of view in the 1853 Preface, but more significantly a striking change of attitude to the complexity of modern life. Whereas previously this complexity had been a multitudinousness which threatened to prevail over the poet and to extinguish his talent, it now appears as a positive quality and a stimulating challenge to Poetry. Arnold, was of course, quite entitled to change his mind, but it is noticeable that in this letter he overlooks the reason for the superiority of Greek literature which he advanced in his lecture 'On the Modern Element in Literature': Greek literature was able to be adequate primarily because the Greek world was less complex than succeeding ages. In other words Arnold has suppressed the insight which involves the pessimism–the progressive fragmentation of the world caused by the advance of knowledge in all fields of human enquiry, and particularly in the natural sciences. Even the extension of the concept of adequacy from Ideas alone to literature represents a significant development, for it will now become possible for Arnold to cast poetic literature in a new role, no longer the victim of the world's complexity which makes adequate poetry impossible, but the redeemer of the modern world, a surrogate religion, and the only adequate interpreter of the world for contemporary man. Signs of this happening are apparent even in the inaugural lecture:

> . . . it is to the poetical literature of an age that we must, in general, look for the most perfect, the most adequate interpretation of that age,–for the performance of a work which demands the most energetic and harmonious activity of all the powers of the human mind.[96]

The crucial question, namely whether any poetical literature adequate to the modern age is at all feasible, is here in abeyance, and eventually its worrying insistence was to be completely ignored.

In 'Literature and Science' (1883) Arnold reconsidered the atomistic position implied in his inaugural lecture, and investigated the consequences for poetry of the new prestige enjoyed by the natural sciences:

> Following our instinct for intellect and knowledge, we acquire pieces of knowledge; and presently, in the generality of men, there arises the desire to relate these pieces of knowledge to our sense for conduct, to our sense for beauty,–and there is weariness if the desire is baulked. Now in this desire lies, I think, the strength of that hold which letters have upon us.[97]

The argument is, of course, familiar. Basically, Arnold is repeating what he had said in his inaugural lecture about 'intellectual deliverance'–that state of mind which comes of comprehending those general Ideas which are 'the law of this vast multitude of facts'. Intellectual deliverance is

> . . . that harmonious acquiescence of mind which we feel in contemplating a grand spectacle that is intelligible to us: When we have lost that impatient irritation of

> mind which we feel in presence of an immense moving, confused spectacle which, while it perpetually excites our curiosity, perpetually baffles our comprehension.[98]

And it is to poetry, Arnold maintains, that man must turn for intellectual deliverance. In the inaugural lecture, as I have argued, there is an implied doubt about the capacity of the human mind to deal with any spectacle as complex and confused as modern life. In 'Literature and Science' there is no such doubt. In essence, the argument runs: Man cannot do without intellectual deliverance, therefore he shall have it, and since neither Science, nor Philosophy, nor Religion can provide it, Poetry must do the task itself. Hope is responsible for the dubious logic. Arnold faced up to the problem of the spread of 'knowledge'; he saw that the natural sciences were 'accumulating items of fact' which were quite isolated and could not easily be related to the human sense for conduct and beauty. But this is no longer seen as an insuperable obstacle to the wholeness of mind which he called intellectual deliverance, for these innumerable pieces of knowledge which the natural sciences accumulate can be safely disregarded both by poets and the mass of mankind; in other words, scientific research can be left to the specialists. Science only impinges on the masses when it has distilled from the mass of facts with which it deals some governing law, some general principle or some 'interesting proposition':

> And one piece of natural knowledge is added to another; and others are added to that, and at last we come to propositions so interesting as Mr. Darwin's famous proposition that 'our ancestor was a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits'.[99]

Thus, the task of poetry is the 'harmonize' the findings of science with men's 'sense for conduct', 'sense for beauty'. Science will provide knowledge, satisfying our instinct for intellect, but only poetry will be able to relate this knowledge to our other instincts, and hence, the argument runs, only poetry will satisfy the mass of mankind which would otherwise be 'wearied', baffled and confused by the multitude of facts with which science confronts it.

The conception of a culture in which literature would be central had always had a strong attraction for Arnold. In a crucially important letter to Clough (28 October 1852), he makes a statement about poetry which looks forward beyond the 1853 Preface to the essay 'The Study of Poetry' of 1880:

> More and more I feel that the difference between a mature and youthful age of the world compels the poetry of the former to use plainness of speech as compared with that of the latter: and that Keats and Shelley were on a false track when they set themselves to reproduce the exuberance of expression, the charm, the richness of images, and the felicity, of the Elizabethan poets. Yet critics cannot get to learn this, because the Elizabethan poets are our greatest, and our canons of poetry are founded on their works. They still think that the object of poetry is to produce exquisite bits and images . . . whereas modern poetry can only subsist by its *contents*: by becoming a complete magister vitae as the poetry of the ancients did:

> by including, as theirs did, religion with poetry, instead of existing as poetry only, and leaving religious wants to be supplied by the Christian religion, as a power existing independent of the poetical power. But the language, style and general proceedings of a poetry which has such an immense task to perform, must be very plain direct and severe: and it must not lose itself in parts and episodes and ornamental work, but must press forwards to the whole.[100]

Arnold's comments imply that modern poetry has been unfitted for the interpretative task proper to it, because the prevailing Christian culture has isolated man's religious instincts and ministered to them as a separate item in his constitution, unrelated to man's instincts for intellect and knowledge, or to his sense for beauty. In other words English poetry has failed to reflect 'completely the best general culture and intelligence of [the] age' and in consequence, it interests only 'a small band of sectaries'–'. . . hundreds of cultivated and intelligent men find nothing that speaks to them in it'. The wholeness of the poetic office had in this way been impaired, but the difficulty could be regarded as simply a local problem, that is, the particular condition of English poetry did not imply any fundamental incapacity in the poetic office to carry out its interpretative function. Arnold did discern, however, as the letter of 1857 to his brother Tom shows (above, p. 87), the magnitude of the task: 'it is a hard thing to make poetry adequate to a first-class epoch'.

I have implied that Arnold's disregard of that insight which threatened to justify a fatalistic despair over the future of civilization–namely, the Poet's need for an Idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by its complexity, and the impossibility of attaining such an Idea–was a conscious act. Although this conclusion is inescapable–Arnold was never actually able to refute his earlier position–it is not the whole truth. The optimism of his late essays 'The Study of Poetry' and 'Literature and Science', although subsequent history has not proved it to be justified, is not to be condemned as a crass evasion of unpalatable facts, but is, at least, one logical possibility inherent in his previous attitude. The letter to Clough blames Christianity for the cultural isolation of poetic literature, and Arnold came to believe that as Christianity declined, losing its hold over men's belief, poetic literature would regain its supremacy. This was the view which he maintained in 'The Study of Poetry' (1880):

> The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. Our religion has materialised itself in the fact, in the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact and now the fact is failing it. But for poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea *is* the fact.[101]

It is not hard to see what Arnold means. The ethical teachings of Christianity had been for so long attached to the biblical stories that when the *Zeitgeist* made it impossible to deny the mythical, i.e. non-factual, nature of these stories confidence in Christian morality was shaken; the supernaturalism of Christian doctrine was likewise undermined by new criteria of proof established by the natural sciences. Arnold's attempt, so much resented by T. S. Eliot, to confine religion to a certain set of emotions and to strip it of any intellectual 'pretensions'–doctrinal theology–may or may not be sound, but it is clear that the decline of Christianity in Arnold's time was indeed due, in large measure, to the causes which he had specified. Eliot's remark that nothing in Arnold's prose work 'will stand very close analysis' is too harsh, but there is some truth in his stricture that Arnold had not the power of 'connected reasoning at length' and 'little gift for consistency or for definition'.[102] At any event it is difficult not to feel that if Arnold had given a more precise explanation of the concept of 'adequacy' and its relation to his cultural milieu, he would have found it less easy to abandon his youthful pessimism and to prophesy joyfully a central role for poetic literature in civilization.

The role which Arnold envisaged for poetry of relating the facts of science to man's moral, emotional, and aesthetic life was more ambitious than at first sight appears. Poetry was no mere anodyne for the troubled agnostic mind of Victorian England, giving it a comforting sense of comprehending existence. Of course, Arnold would not claim that this 'sense' gives us a truth to rest on: in 'Maurice de Guérin' (1863) he admitted that it might well be 'illusive', and even his phrase denoting poetry's capacity for inducing it–'natural magic'–hints at a sort of divine conjuring trick.[103] The 'intellectual deliverance' offered by poetry at any given historical moment was no more than provisional. It was nevertheless indispensable, particularly in Arnold's time when the Christian religion was no longer the cohesive force it had once been. Thus, in *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867), Arnold was able to define the task facing modern poetry by reference to Goethe's achievement:

> Our great, our only first-rate body of contemporary poetry is the German; the grand business of modern poetry–a moral interpretation, from an *independent* point of view, of man and the world–it is only German poetry, Goethe's poetry, that has, since the Greeks, made much way with . . . Dante's task was to set forth the lesson of the world from the point of view of medieval Catholicism; the basis of spiritual life was given, Dante had not to make this anew. Shakespeare's task was to set forth the spectacle of the world when man's spirit re-awoke to the possession of the world at the Renaissance. The spectacle of human life, left to bear its own significance and tell its own story, but shown in all its fulness, variety, and power, is at that moment the great matter; but, if we are to press deeper, the basis of spiritual life is still at that time the traditional religion, reformed or unreformed, of Christendom, and Shakespeare has not to supply a new basis. But when Goethe came, Europe had lost her basis of spiritual life; she had to find it again; Goethe's task was,–the inevitable task for the modern poet henceforth is . . . not to preach a sublime sermon on a given text like Dante, not to exhibit all the kingdoms of human life and the glory of them like Shakespeare, but to interpret human life

afresh, and to supply a new spiritual basis to it.[104]

The telling word (which I have italicized for convenience) in this account is, of course, 'independent': for Arnold, the new spiritual basis to life which poetry was to provide could not be the discredited supernaturalism of orthodox Christianity. Poetry's imperative duty was to do for mankind what (until that time) Christianity had done and therefore, in effect, to replace the old religion. From this imperative 'must' it is only a short distance to Arnold's confidently prophetic 'will' of 'The Study of Poetry' (see the quotation on p. 90), and the prediction that 'the majority of men will always require humane letters' with which he concludes 'Literature and Science'. The central place of literature in education is not really threatened.

> . . . I cannot really think that humane letters are in much actual danger of being thrust out from their leading place . . . in spite of the array of authorities against them at this moment. So long as human nature is what it is, their attraction will remain irresistible.[105]

Human nature requires a spiritual basis to its life and a moral interpretation of its apprehension of experience; only poetry *can* supply these adequately, therefore, it *will* supply them, and thus the primacy of literature is assured. This is the gist of Arnold's argument.

Such were the reflections on poetry which over the years grew out of the rudimentary distinction between the Whole and the Parts, wholeness and fragmentation. It now remains to relate Arnold's thinking in these matters to his reading and understanding of Goethe. I have already suggested that Arnold had learned the crucial distinction between the Whole and the Parts from Goethe, but I have still to show that for the German poet, too, this distinction had wider implications than a mere preference for one literary style over another, and that some of the ideas which Arnold develops and gives prominence to are also present in Goethe.

Like Arnold, Goethe applied the concept of 'Wholeness' to human culture in general, and for both men the example of the Greeks was of prime significance. In his essay on 'Winckelmann' Goethe wrote:

> By the expedient use of individual powers Man is capable of much; by the combined use of several powers he is capable of extraordinary things; but he will only achieve the truly unique, the wholly unexpected when his total powers combine simultaneously. This last was the happy lot of the ancients, particularly of the Greeks in their best period; we moderns are fated to exist in the first two states.
>
> If the healthy nature of man were to function as a whole, if he felt himself in the world as in a grand, lovely, noble, and precious whole; if harmonious contentment granted him a pure and free delight, then would the universe, if it were conscious of itself, leap with joy at having arrived at its goal, and gaze with admiration at the culmination of its own life and development.[106]

But the conditional 'if' shows that for the moderns wholeness cannot be attained. Modern man exists at a time when it is no longer possible to exercise in complete harmony all the elements which constitute full humanity. In outline, therefore, Goethe's diagnosis was very similar to Arnold's.

Arnold had observed that the predominance of intellect at the expense of feeling had impaired wholeness of being in the modern era. Goethe made a similar observation. Looking back at the 'best period' of the Greeks he saw that something had occurred since that time (rather like Eliot's dissociation of sensibility) to separate thought and feeling: 'Then feeling and contemplation were not fragmented, that perhaps incurable schism in healthy human nature had not yet happened'.[107] And in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* he remarked that in the poetry of the ancients religion, poetry, and philosophy were all gathered in one entity.[108] For Goethe, as for Arnold, art represented a sphere in which Wholeness was essential to perfection:

> . . . man is not merely a thinking being but a feeling being too. He is a whole, a unity of many inwardly connected powers, and the work of art must speak to this human wholeness and must correspond to this rich unity and this unique multiplicity within him.[109]

In other words, since art is itself the product of the harmonious activity of all human powers, it is uniquely fitted to engage the spectator's being as a total entity, instead of addressing individual elements of that whole—the reflective, the emotional—separately. Goethe was, of course, speaking here of the visual arts, but the similarity of the idea to Arnold's view of poetry is nevertheless striking.

No less striking is the correspondence of their ideas about 'style' in a literary work. In the letter of 28 October 1852 to Clough (quoted above p. 89), Arnold argued that poetry which had to become a 'magister vitae', satisfying the religious as well as the aesthetic and moral needs of man, 'must be very plain direct and severe', not losing itself 'in parts and episodes' but pressing forwards to the 'whole'. Poetry must be plain, direct and severe not because that is what a complex age requires as a sort of antidote to its ills, but rather because the immense task of organizing and unifying experience is one which demands 'wholeness' of the practitioner of poetry; as the poet, so the style. This relationship of poet to style is stated more explicitly in an earlier letter to Clough:

> . . . there are two offices of Poetry—one to add to one's stores of thoughts and feelings—another to compose and elevate the mind by a sustained tone, numerous allusions, and a grand style . . . Nay, in Sophocles what is valuable is not so much his contributions to psychology and the anatomy of sentiment, as the grand moral effects produced by *style*. For the style is the expression of the nobility of the poet's character, as the matter is the expression of the richness of the mind.[110]

A noble style, such as Sophocles possessed, is the expression of the nobility of the poet's character, but such a style is also a morally educative experience for the reader. In the 1853 Preface Arnold returns to this point again:

> I know not how it is, but their commerce with the ancients appears to me to produce, in those who continually practice it, a steadying and composing effect upon their judgement . . . They are like persons who have had a very weighty and impressive experience.[111]

Arnold was not interested in the psychological mechanism by which the educative effect was produced; that it was produced was for him a matter of experience. In the essay 'On the Literary Influence of Adacemies', for example, Arnold remarks *en passant* on the '*ethical* influences of style in language,–its close relations, so often pointed out, with character'.[112] This belief in the intimate relationship between style and character was a fundamental one in Arnold's poetic. It underlies, in my opinion, his insistence on wholeness in an ideal poetical genius:

> Of an ideal genius one does not want the elements, any of them, to be in a state of weakness; on the contrary, one wants all of them to be in the highest state of power; but with a law of measure, of harmony, presiding over the whole.[113]

With this demand in mind–a demand which above all others Sophocles satisfied–one is in a better position to understand some of the implications of some of Arnold's typical literary judgements: Dante, for example, was in his view guilty of an excessive cultivation of his spiritual nature at the expense of 'the outward life', and Byron, in spite of his considerable poetic gifts, was regarded as deficient in intellectual power.[114] One can be fairly confident that Arnold's belief in the effects of style on character is derived, in part at least, from Goethe. In conversation with Eckermann, for example, Goethe said: 'On the whole an author's style is a true reflection of his inner life; if a man wants to write a *clear* style, then let him be clear beforehand in his own soul; and if a man wants to write a *noble* style, then let him have a noble character'.[115] Goethe also insisted that the style of treatment accorded to a work of art produced in the spectator a state of mind similar to that felt by the artist during creation:

> . . . every artistic production puts us in the same state of mind that the author was in. If that state of mind was calm and easy then we shall feel free; if it was narrow, anxious, and uncertain then it makes us feel constricted in the same degree . . . every work will give us pleasure which the author produced with ease and facility.[116]

Arnold must certainly have known that he was following Goethe closely when he noted in the 1853 Preface the 'steadying and composing effect' upon men's judgement which resulted from their 'commerce with the ancients', for here he was echoing a passage from Goethe's *Campagne in Frankreich* which he also translated for his 'general note-book':

> The study of Art, like the study of the ancient writers, gives a certain steadiness [*einen gewissen Halt*], a satisfaction within ourselves; in that it fills our inner man with great objects and thoughts, it overpowers all wishes which were struggling

outwards, but nourishes every worthy desire in the silent bosom.[117]

The notion of steadiness was, we remember, associated with that of 'wholeness'– Sophocles and Goethe were poets who saw life steadily and saw it whole–and, like 'wholeness', it was usually connected in Arnold's mind, through the word 'Halt', with Goethe.[118] In his later work Arnold came to apply the idea, in a way which had no direct parallel in Goethe's writings, to ethnological speculations about the dominant moral traits of Germanic peoples, but even as late as 1880, when Arnold wrote of poetry as a worthy object of study because it is more of a 'stay' to us than science or art, one can still hear an echo of his argument of the 1853 Preface.[119]

Arnold's usual emphasis on the morally educative function of poetry would perhaps have made Goethe slightly uneasy. Arnold does, of course, insist that a work of poetry should 'inspirit and rejoice' the reader, but this 'joy' seems distinct from 'pleasure' in being an ethical rather than an aesthetic concept. In a passage from *Dichtung und Wahrheit* quoted in Arnold's note-book for 1884 (see *Note-Books*, p. 406) Goethe wrote that a 'good work of art may and will have moral results; but to require of the artist a moral aim is to spoil his work'.[120] Arnold presumably agreed with this view, but even if we grant that his ideal of personal ennoblement through poetry is a far cry from any crudely utilitarian demand for the inculcation of edifying moral principles, he nevertheless comes close to requiring of his own work beneficial moral results before he gives it his approval. 'The Scholar-Gipsy', for example, awakes a pleasing melancholy, but does it inspirit and rejoice the reader? 'Empedocles on Etna' was repudiated for its failure in this respect. If, as he and Goethe believed, a work of poetry induced in the reader a state of mind not unlike that out of which the work grew, then he owed it to his readers to withhold from them whatever seemed to him morbid. Such considerations could well have been in Arnold's mind, even though the ostensible reasons for suppressing the poem were rather different. Goethe would undoubtedly have disapproved the morbid state of mind out of which the poem arose, but one suspects that he would have been willing to concede 'Empedocles on Etna' an artistic validity which its creator refused to acknowledge.

My primary intention in this chapter had been to show how the formation of Arnold's critical ideas in the decade 1847-57 was influenced by his reading of Goethe. There is, of course, no surprise in the conclusion that Goethe's influence at this time was both extensive and profound. We know from independent sources that Arnold was deeply immersed in Goethe's life and works during the very years when he was working out his own ideas about poetry and life. We know also that Goethe had immense authority with him: a close friend of Arnold's, J. C. Shairp, tells us that to 'Matt' Goethe was an 'oracle'.[121] In pursuing my intention I have been at pains to stress the many striking parallels and similarities between their views, and to emphasize that these are not random borrowings but are part of a consistent pattern of influence, no chance likeness but the result of Arnold's intimate knowledge of Goethe's writings. In addition, I have traced certain of Arnold's ideas—on 'wholeness', adequacy, and the function of poetry—through their developments in the literary criticism of his middle and late years.

There is a danger, perhaps, that by adopting this method any sense of the direction or total shape of the arguments put forward will have been obscured by the mass of details concerning Arnold's borrowings from Goethe. A very brief attempt to remedy this is therefore called for. To see clearly the extent of Arnold's indebtedness, one need only call to mind the essential outline of the 1853 Preface. There Arnold establishes a poetic theory, which, for the sake of brevity, one may term neo-classical. He repudiates romantic subjectivism and rejects personal emotion as the basic concern of art. The dramatic and epic poet, Arnold affirms, is a maker; his art is also a craft in that it is governed by sound principles which can be learned and ought to be followed. In the place of emotion Arnold puts 'actions'; events taken from the external world and imitated in the work of art. The inherent quality of the subjects treated in a work of art becomes in consequence a matter of prime importance. The Greeks are models of sound practice, and the poet who would produce anything of worth ought to study and learn from them. There can be no question that in asserting all this Arnold was more or less consciously following Goethe. Furthermore, underlying the Preface are several ideas and assumptions, not always complete or consistent, which are at first expressed explicitly in his private correspondence, but which are eventually aired in the lecture 'On the Modern Element in Literature'. Around the central concept of 'wholeness' Arnold weaves a web of ideas which nearly amounts to being at once a theory of literary style, a theory of moral psychology, and a historical theory of culture. In Goethe Arnold appears to have found not only the germ of some central insights and an essential framework of ideas, but also much of the terminology and vocabulary of criticism.

The method I have adopted has another danger. By constantly drawing attention to similarities of thought, 'parallels' and borrowings I have perhaps created an impression that Arnold's relationship to Goethe was passive. This would be the reverse of the truth, for Arnold was not a mere receptacle for Goethe's ideas. Even when the German's influence was at its height Arnold's attitude was never one of slavish dependence. He brought to Goethe's works an independent mind fully capable of selective reading. It may, of course, be possible for one man to shape the thought of another by generating a kind of stimulating and fertile antagonism towards him, but there can be no doubt that Goethe's influence on Arnold was so deep and extensive because Arnold was predisposed, through temperament and training, towards Goethe's classicism. For example, it is clear that no amount of recommendation by Goethe of the Greeks would have had the slightest effect on Arnold if he had not already been convinced of the excellence of Greek literature.

Furthermore, there are many crucial ideas in Arnold's criticism, such as, for example, the concept of adequacy or the notion of Ideas, as unifying principles in the mind's approach to experience, which have no parallel in Goethe. And even when Arnold did borrow an idea directly from Goethe it does not follow that their thinking was in all respects identical. When Arnold takes over an idea he usually bestows on it a degree of prominence quite different from that which it possessed in its original context. (The 'Part-Whole' dialectic, for example, occupies a more central position in Arnold's thinking than in Goethe's.) Arnold acted quite consciously:

> We are accustomed to interpret generally the expressions of a Poet, of whatever kind they may be, and to apply them to our own circumstances, as they may happen to fit. By this means many passages come to have quite a different sense from what they had in the connection out of which we have torn them.[122]

In these words is contained the theoretical justification of Arnold's eclectic method. He wrote them into his 1847 note-book, and it should surprise no-one to learn that they were taken from Goethe.

I have already followed out some of Arnold's ideas on literary matters as they developed in the years after 1857. In the following chapter I will turn my attention to the period from 1857 until 1888, the year of Arnold's death, and enquire how Arnold's attitude to Goethe altered during this time. I will also investigate what new meaning Goethe's works had for Arnold, whose interests now extended into the fields of social, political, and religious criticism, and indicate how these interests affected the nature of the relationship between the two men.

CHAPTER FOUR

NATURE AND CIVILIZATION: SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND POLITICS 1857-1888

'It is a mistake to think that the judgement of mature reason on our favourite author, even if it abates considerably our high-raised estimate of him, is not a gain to us.'[1] The judgement of Arnold's mature reason on Goethe did indeed considerably abate the high-raised estimate of him expressed in the 1853 Preface. In 1885 Arnold was still able to speak of him as 'great', but also as 'the stiff, and hindered, and frigid, and factitious Goethe who speaks to us too often from those sixty volumes of his'.[2] His mature judgement on the German poet—expressed in the essay 'A French Critic on Goethe' (1878)—was an ambivalent one: a 'double judgement' he himself called it. His comments on Goethe's artistic productions, with the exception of the *Gedichte*, are uniformly unfavourable. Even the first part of *Faust*—'undoubtedly Goethe's best work'—is too episodic, too fragmentary, Arnold tells us, to 'produce a single, powerful total-impression'. He cannot find it in himself to extol *Iphigenie* or *Tasso*, and *Faust II* stands condemned as 'symbol, hieroglyphic, and mystification'.[3] He still ranks Goethe 'the greatest poet of modern times', but he finds that it is less as a poet that Goethe truly excels than as 'the clearest, the largest, the most helpful thinker of modern times'. The essay ends on a note of praise with Goethe described 'as a clear and profound modern spirit, as a master-critic of modern life'. Despite the praise, the pervading coolness of Arnold's attitude is evident. This change came about gradually and there are signs of it many years earlier. In the Preface to *Merope* (1857) Arnold expressed an admiring but somewhat reserved attitude to *Iphigenie*. Goethe had produced the effect proper to tragedy, that of 'repose', but in order to achieve it he had avoided the genuinely tragic core of the Iphigeneia legand.[4] Even *Wilhelm Meister*, the large and liberal world view of which had been so attractive to Arnold as an undergraduate, appeared to him in 1866 imperfect as a novel: 'it is as a repository of thoughts and observations that it is so valuable.'[5] In 1864, eleven years after he had spoken of Goethe as 'the greatest critic of all times', Arnold now valued him more justly as 'one of the greatest of critics'.[6] Arnold's literary experience was wider now, and the high-raised estimate of 1853 had to be abated.

Arnold's description of Goethe as a master-critic of modern life is, however, suggestive. It invites us to consider how far Arnold's own efforts as a critic of modern life were modified by his reading of Goethe. Arnold's first essay in the field of politics was the pamphlet *England and the Italian Question* published in 1859, but the interest in social and political issues expressed in it was not new. The letters which Arnold wrote to Clough, to his mother and to his sister Jane ten years earlier, are full of remarks which display a lively awareness of contemporary history and foreshadow, sometimes in detail, the opinions later proclaimed publicly in *Culture and Anarchy*. The interest had always been there in the background, but to the poet the confusion and turmoil of political life often seemed an unedifying spectacle. As he explained to his sister, Jane, in a letter of 10 March 1848:

> It is so hard to sequester oneself here from the rush of public changes and talk, and yet so unprofitable to attend to it. I was myself tempted to attempt some political writing the other day, but in the watches of the night I seemed to feel that in that direction I had some enthusiasm of the head perhaps, but no profound stirring. So I desisted . . .[7]

To 'citizen' Clough the revolutions of 1848 were a stimulant without which he would 'sink into hopeless lethargy', but Arnold was less optimistic than his friend about what they were likely to achieve, and regarded Clough's immersion in the Time-Stream with disapproval.

Arnold's youthful habit of cautious detachment from politics is obviously connected with the conception of his poetic calling outlined in Chapter II (above), and his gradual abandonment of it was probably due to a combination of circumstances. In view of his real interest in the 'Condition of England Question' self-imposed silence must have come to seem a false and artificial course, especially as it became apparent to him that the poetic gifts which detachment was intended to protect were failing. Again, his work as an Inspector of Schools, tedious though it was, assumed increasing importance in his eyes. A letter which Arnold wrote to his wife in 1851 was prophetic:

> I think I shall get interested in the schools after a little time; their effects on the children are so immense, and their future effects in civilizing the next generation of the lower classes, who, as things are going, will have most of the political power in their hands, may be so important.[8]

In 1862 he described 'popular education' as 'a cause in which I have a deep interest'. The defective civilization of the lower classes became a matter of profound concern to Arnold and much of the literary effort of his later years was devoted to working an improvement there.

As Arnold himself indicates in the letter to his wife quoted above, the overriding social issue of his time was the transfer of political power from the aristocracy to other classes, in other words the democratization of society. One of Arnold's few statements about Goethe's attitude to this issue, in the essay 'Heinrich Heine' (1863), reveals a curious misunderstanding of the Weimar poet, which it is instructive to examine in detail. Arnold wrote:

> Modern times find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come to them from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward; yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation, that it by no means corresponds exactly with the wants of their actual life, that, for them, it is customary, not rational. The awakening of this sense is the awakening of the modern spirit. The modern spirit is now awake almost everywhere; the sense of want of correspondence between the forms of modern Europe and its spirit, between the new wine of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the old bottles of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, or even of the sixteenth and seventeenth, almost everyone now perceives . . . To remove this want of correspondence is beginning to be the settled endeavour of most persons of good sense. Dissolvents of the old European system of dominant ideas and facts we must all be, all of us who have any power of working: what we have to study is that we may not be acrid dissolvents of it.

Arnold's purpose in the essay was to praise Heine as a 'dissolvent' and liberator, and to indicate that in this Heine (and not, as Carlyle had believed, Tieck and Jean Paul Richter) was the true continuator of Goethe's work for German literature. Thus, a portrait begins to emerge of Goethe as 'that grand dissolvent in an age when there were fewer of them than at present'. Arnold then describes Goethe's method:

> Goethe's profound, imperturbable naturalism is absolutely fatal to all routine thinking; he puts the standard, once for all, inside every man instead of outside him; when he is told, such a thing must be so, there is immense authority and custom in favour of its being so, it has been held to be so for a thousand years, he answers with Olympian politeness, 'But *is* it so? is it so to *me*?' Nothing could be more really subversive of the foundations on which the old European order rested; and it may be remarked that no persons are so radically detached from this order, no persons so thoroughly modern, as those who have felt Goethe's influence most deeply . . . Nevertheless the process of liberation, as Goethe worked it, though sure, is undoubtedly slow; he came, as Heine says, to be eighty years old in thus working it, and at the end of that time the old Middle Age machine was still creaking on, the thirty German courts and their chamberlains subsisted in all their glory; Goethe himself was a minister, and the visible triumph of the modern spirit over prescription and routine seemed as far off as ever . . . in 1830 Heine was in no humour for any such gradual process of liberation from the old order of things as that which Goethe had followed.[9]

It is certainly true, as Arnold says, that Goethe's method, his spirit of enquiry, necessarily tended to undermine some of the assumptions on which 'the old European order' rested, but this fact should direct our attention to a fundamental division of sympathies in Goethe himself.

This division can perhaps be explained best by examining the phrase 'the old European order'. At the risk of gross simplification one could describe this order as having two aspects—a social aspect in an essentially feudal structure of society with government in the hands of a hereditary aristocratic class, and a religious aspect of a 'supernatural' Christianity which appears to justify this feudal structure as ordained. While it is true that Goethe was thoroughly detached from religious 'superstition', it is quite wrong to maintain that Goethe was detached from 'the thirty German courts and their chamberlains'. Indeed Arnold seems a little embarrassed that 'Goethe himself was a minister'—a fact which fits in with the portrait of the detached, thoroughly modern Goethe only if one assumes that he was quietly and deliberately subverting the creaking 'Mediaeval' social order from within. Nothing could be further from the truth. Goethe explicitly approved 'the thirty German courts' because of their tendency to disseminate culture, preferring them to the centralized state with one capital city having a 'monopoly' of culture:

> How is Germany great if not through an admirable national culture which has penetrated all parts of the *Reich* equally. But is it not the individual courts from which this culture spreads and which are its patrons and guardians.[10]

Goethe was no secret Jacobin. His outlook was thoroughly conservative and from the time of the French Revolution on he was implacably hostile to the new democratic dispensation.

One may, I think, disregard the possibility that Arnold was intentionally distorting the facts to suit his argument, so the question naturally arises how he came to make this error. It is not difficult to understand how he came to be unclear about Goethe's political views. Goethe's writings are for the most part strictly apolitical, and it would require a very deliberate reading of them to glean anything of his political outlook. The most explicitly political of his works were written in the 1790s under the impact of the abortive German intervention in France (1792) which he had witnessed personally. For Goethe the supreme concern was the preservation of German culture, which events in France appeared to threaten. His alarm at the prospect of similar happenings in Germany was expressed in two light 'realistic' comedies *Die Aufgeregten* (*Agitation*, 1791) and *Der Bürgergeneral* (*The Citizen-General*, 1793), but after the French armies had repulsed the German intervention on behalf of the Bourbons his alarm deepened and the mood of his works became more serious. Humour and realism were abandoned. *Hermann und Dorothea* (1797) and *Die Natürliche Tochter* (*The Natural Daughter*, 1799-1803) approach close to symbolism, myth and tragedy, but in doing so their obvious political content seems to recede. *Hermann und Dorothea* appears to be nothing more than an epic of bourgeois life until one discerns that it is only the background of fleeing refugees and of the impending invasion of Germany by France that gives significance to the tale of domestic love which occupies most of the narrative. In *The Natural Daughter* Goethe turned his back altogether on contemporary settings, and initially it comes as a suprise to find Goethe describing this verse play about a court intrigue in an unspecified country at an unspecified period of history as a 'vessel in which I hoped to put, with appropriate seriousness, everything that for so many years I had been thinking and writing about the French Revolution and its effects'.[11] During the French occupation, and particularly after the decisive victory of Napoleon's armies at Jena in 1806, Goethe was never diverted from his habit of maintaining complete silence on contentious political matters, and the frankest confessions of his views were made only many years later (between 1823 and 1832) to Eckermann. Even these 'confessions' naturally have the desultory and disconnected quality unavoidable in a 'table-talk'.

It is also possible that Arnold had formed a false impression of Goethe's attitude to democracy from such *Sturm und Drang* pieces as *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773), *Werther* (1774), and *Egmont* (1787). 'Liberty' is a much used word in all these works, and in *Werther*, at least, the shade of Rousseau, the ideological precursor of revolutionary ideas, is ever present. It is true even in these works, however, that the freedom for which Goethe's heroes die is a freedom compatible with a rigidly hierarchical society; his heroes are not republicans. Arnold's earlier interest in Goethe was, as we have seen, primarily concerned with the German poet as a critic of literature and contemporary culture, so, despite the fact that he had absorbed Goethe's conversations with Eckermann thoroughly in the years 1849-53, it is not surprising that when he came to write his essay on Heine in 1863, the politically reactionary character of many of Goethe's statements was either forgotten or simply overlooked.[12]

Arnold's portrait of Goethe in the 'Heine' essay may, however, have had a more specific origin. At the end of Arnold's note-book for 1863 is a list of books headed: 'read—1863 At Athenaeum or Brit. Museum'.[13] This list includes several items which were obviously intended as preparation for the essay on Heine—'Heine's Allemagne and Later Publications, Heine's Romancero and Reisebilder'. All these items are crossed out as read. In the same list is a further item, also crossed out, namely 'Falk's Goethe', and it is probably this which Arnold was referring to in the essay 'A French Critic on Goethe' when he mentioned 'the volumes of Riemer, Falk, Eckermann, the Chancellor von Müller' as some of the places where 'the truly great, the truly significant Goethe is to be found'.[14] The only work on Goethe by Johann Daniel Falk is *Goethe aus näherm persönlichem Umgang dargestellt* (1832), so this would appear to be the work which Arnold had read. But there is a difficulty. Arnold's reading-list for 1864 also includes Falk's Goethe (entry crossed out), and the title appears again on the list for 1866 (without erasure).[15] This succession of entries could, of course, indicate either that Arnold did not complete the reading of Falk in 1863, or that he was so pleased with the volume that he re-read it constantly. The first possibility seems unlikely since Falk's work is less than 200 pages, and the second is hardly more plausible. However, the three entries in the reading lists would be consistent with reference to a three-volume work, and this gives us the vital clue. In 1833, a year after Falk's *Goethe* had appeared in Germany, Sarah Austin, a friend of Carlyle, Crabb Robinson, and William Taylor of Norwich, published a three-volume work entitled *Characteristics of Goethe*.[16] Apart from the Preface the work is not original, but simply a compilation from various German sources, the most important of which, occupying the bulk of the first two volumes, is her translation of Falk's *Goethe aus näherm persönlichen Umgang dargestellt*. (The third volume consists of two anonymous memoirs, from the *Bibliothèque Universelle de Genève* and the *Konversations Lexicon*, and Chancellor von Müller's memoirs on the Grand Duke Karl August and the Grand Duchess Luise.)

Falk's portrait is certainly the source of Arnold's expression of admiration for Goethe's 'profound, imperturbable naturalism'. Of several strands in Falk's account of Goethe, this is the most important. A few examples will make this clear:

> It cannot be denied that Goethe's greatness, as observer of nature and as poet . . . must be sought in this objective turn of mind.
>
> Goethe, by his very nature, cannot, must not, will not set a single step which may compel him to quit the territory of experience . . . All conclusions, observations, doctrines, opinions, articles of faith, have value in his eyes only in so far as they connect themselves with this territory, which he has so fortunately conquered.
>
> Repugnance to the super-sensual [*übersinnlich*, outside the realm of sense experience] was an inherent part of his mind.
>
> . . . everything merely learned by rote, was distasteful to him; as was all taught elevation of soul, all taught philosophy, all praying by rote, and so on.[17]

The list of examples could be extended, but it is sufficient to show how much of Falk's account Arnold had absorbed. It is not difficult to see how Arnold's view of Goethe's naturalism as subversive of authority and 'routine thinking' arose.

Arnold's remarks on Goethe in the 'Heine' essay cannot, however, be completely explained by reference to Falk's *Goethe*, because both Falk and Sarah Austin make Goethe's attitude to political questions an important part of their account. It is true that both writers tend to obscure the profoundly anti-democratic bias of Goethe's creed, but nothing in their account explains Arnold's description of Goethe as a secret 'dissolvent' of the aristocratic system. Their description of Goethe must, in fact, have been a striking reminder to Arnold of his own proclaimed attitude to the dangers of political involvement for a creative writer, and of his earlier conception of Goethe. Sarah Austin's Preface stresses many of the same points as Falk:

> To be able to follow Goethe . . . to consider all the questions that most interest and agitate mankind with perfect *indifferency* (using the word in Locke's sense)—requires an imagination as mobile, a temper as impartial, an understanding as large as his . . . To most men (particularly in a country where the divisions of class and sect are so strongly marked as in England) it would be just as possible to transform themselves bodily . . . To them every writer necessarily appears intent on attacking or defending . . . the opinions, actions, or characters of some party. But, it cannot be too often repeated, Goethe was *not* a partisan. He observed and described . . .
>
> Indifferent to many of the questions that are most fiercely debated, he might,—nay rather he *must*—be, for his wide and prophetic glance pierced far beyond the

> strife of the hour . . . are we then justified in accusing him of apathy and selfishness because he had a dread of violent political convulsions; a distrust of the efficacy of abrupt changes in the mechanism of government?
>
> It was not, surely, that he was indifferent to the welfare of mankind, but that he thought it a pernicious illusion to look for healing to sources whence he was persuaded healing could never come. His labours for the improvement of the human race were unwearied, calm, and systematic.

Falk's account defends Goethe in a similar way:

> Certainly the tranquil observer of all the events of this moving and chequered life, and the actual participant, whether doer or sufferer, in its strife and tumult, are characters essentially distinct and incompatible. The latter can by no possibility form an accurate and impartial estimate of his own situation.
>
> There was but one party for which, with such views, he could declare himself: that, namely under whose influence tranquillity might be expected, or even hoped for, let it be found how it might.[18]

In the second volume of *Characteristics* Mrs Austin translated the substance of a speech entitled 'Goethe, Considered as a Man of Action', which von Müller delivered after Goethe's death in 1832. Like Austin and Falk, von Müller was acutely conscious of the hostility that Goethe's silent acquiescence in the French occupation and his apparent indifference to the cause of German nationalism had aroused, and in consequence the tone of his speech was defensive and apologetic. He stressed Goethe's 'elevated point of view', his refusal to allow 'the pure element of his thoughts and works to be troubled by the confused and tumultuous incidents of the day', and his hatred of 'ferocious party spirit'. Goethe, von Müller admitted, was 'disinclined to liberal opinions', but only because he attached relatively little importance to the 'form' of society:

> It was his persuasion that much less could be done for a man from without than from within; and that an honest and vigorous will could make to itself a path, and employ its activity to advantage, under every form of civil society.
>
> Actuated by this persuasion, he held fast to order and obedience to law, as to the main pillars of the public weal. Whatever threatened to retard or to trouble the progress of moral and intellectual improvement . . . or to abandon all that is best and highest in existence to the wild freaks of unbridled passion and the domination of rude and violent men, was, to him, the true tyranny, the mortal foe of freedom, the utterly insufferable evil.[19]

I have quoted from these authors at such length not merely to establish that Arnold's assessment of Goethe's political stance in the 'Heine' essay of 1863 was inaccurate, nor even because their account is, if too uncritical, nevertheless fair and judicious; what is significant about their remarks is their closeness to the view which Arnold had formed of Goethe some ten years earlier. Two of the most important elements in their account recall vividly Arnold's poems 'Resignation' and 'Stanzas in Memory of the Author of "Obermann" '. As I have shown, the view of the poet as a man surveying the tumult of human society from some 'higher', more detached standpoint had a considerable attraction for Arnold as a younger man, and Goethe—the sage of 'wide and luminous view'—was in the Englishman's opinion the archetypal poet of this kind. The usefulness to Arnold of this ideal had diminished as he grew older and less able to produce poetry, but in 1863-64 he met with it again, this time in the context of specifically political involvement. This context possibly suggested to Arnold a new application for the idea of detachment.

With the exception of D. J. DeLaura, Arnold's critics have not sufficiently stressed that the concept of 'Disinterestedness', which he formulated first in his essay 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' (1864), is essentially a 'fossil' remnant of his earlier attitude to poetry.[20] In this essay Arnold was developing a line of thought begun in the 1853 Preface and continued in 'On the Modern Element in Literature' (1857). The central question was the relation of the individual poetic talent to its cultural milieu, and in the 1864 essay Arnold arrived at the conclusion that a poetically gifted writer, if he is to thrive, needs to exist in a society permeated by 'ideas'. The poet, Arnold argued, makes beautiful works out of ideas, but he does not himself create these ideas—this is work for the philosopher or scientific discoverer. The poet's is a work of intellectual synthesis, not of invention or creation. Ideas are the poet's raw material. The critic's function, and it is as a critic that Arnold now views himself, is to help to establish a cultural environment in which the production of great literary works is possible. From this it follows that the critic's duty is, in Arnold's famous definition, 'to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas'. In doing this, however, the critic performs a service not merely for creative writers, but for society as a whole. Arnold takes it for granted that the critic's concern is with all literature, even where the subject is politics or religion, and it is 'where these burning matters are in question, that criticism is most likely to go astray'. Critics go astray here, Arnold argues, because it is in these burning matters that they are most likely to be tempted from their duty: 'The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex'. The critic, therefore, as formerly the poet, must refuse to plunge into the Time-Stream to bellow with the rest, but must instead obey the first 'rule' of his calling. Arnold's 'rule' may be summed up in the word 'disinterestedness':

> And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called 'the practical view of things'; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are quite certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently but which criticism has really nothing to do with . . . For what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It subserves

> interests not its own. Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of mind the second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted.[21]

Arnold's reading of 'Falk's Goethe' before the composition of this essay must have reminded him that Goethe's method was basically sound. The quality of 'indifferency' which Sarah Austin attributes to Goethe has clear affinities with Arnold's 'disinterestedness'–whatever other sources there may be for the notion. For both Arnold and Mrs Austin this particular quality was a rare and precious thing, too little valued in a country so much riven by class and sectarian divisions as England. Von Müller likewise stressed that Goethe's sphere of activity was elevated above that of practical politics, and that he would never permit himself to be made the mouthpiece of 'ferocious party spirit, so disgusting, so hateful to him'.

Arnold's theory of the proper method of criticism only partly defines his own practice as a critic of society. It is true that he always avoided close party ties. He defined himself as a 'Liberal of the future', but that did not make his strictures on the Liberal party any less caustic; indeed he was more severe with his supposed allies than with the Tories–a party for which he would never vote.[22] But in questions of a social and political nature the realm of ideas and the realm of practical application have so much territory in dispute that the border between is often hard to define. Thus Arnold was inevitably led to make eminently practical suggestions to the Liberal government on a variety of contentious issues from secondary education to Church establishments. Further, while persiflage and irony were all that some Liberal nostrums and programmes deserved, other matters seemed to Arnold too serious for irony–Gladstone's handling of the Irish national question in the 1870s and 1880s, for example. As the situation deteriorated, with the Irish members under Parnell successfully obstructing parliamentary activity and Fenian 'outrages' increasing, no voice would have been listened to that did not suggest some practical route out of the morass. Arnold thought Home Rule would be dangerous for Ireland no less than for England, so he opposed it vigorously, and to avoid what he considered to be the evil of a separate Irish parliament he advocated radical concessions to all just demands:– the expropriation of bad absentee-landlords, the granting of a Catholic university, the disestablishment of Anglicanism in Ireland and the transfer of property to the Catholic Church. Once he had taken the plunge in the 1860s, Arnold found the Time-Stream a pleasant enough element in which to disport himself.

The conception of disinterestedness as it was defined in the 1864 essay must gradually have come to appear less relevant to Arnold. In 1866 he was a married man of forty-three with four children growing up in a society whose future was perhaps in the balance. His public office as an 'H.M.I.' enabled him to see how urgent was the need to provide a better education for the poor children of the proletarian masses produced by the uncontrolled expansion of industry, and how great might be the threat to civilized life if this need was not met. A critic was, after all, a man like any other, and, if he saw his society endangered, it was his duty to speak out and give whatever advice or practical help was required. In *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) Arnold had begun to shift his ground: the duty of Culture, which now replaces 'Criticism', is not simply 'the endeavour to *see* and *learn*' or even to 'propagate' the best ideas, but rather to discover 'the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world . . . in short, the will of God' and to make it *prevail.* The struggle to make right prevail necessarily takes man into the sphere of practical activity which it had been the critic's duty to shun. As Arnold points out, once Culture is considered in this way, its 'moral, social and beneficent character' becomes plain.[23]

There is a revealing passage, too, in the review of the last volumes of Curtius's *History of Greece* which Arnold wrote for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1876. There he weighs the respective merits of the man of ideas, Plato, whose *Republic* was as far removed from practical considerations as it is possible for social criticism to be, and Demosthenes, the practical man of action:

> However, in no State, great or small, is it the business of a good citizen to believe that the decline and fall of his country are inevitable, and to resign himself to that belief. The grandeur of Demosthenes, and his civic superiority to a man, even, so fascinating as Plato, consists of his having refused to allow himself to entertain such a belief . . . Dr Curtius shall characterize for us both him and Plato—the divine Plato, who indeed 'passes far beyond that which was comprehended in the moral consciousness of his nation', and who therefore 'stands like a prophet above his times and his people'. But, 'In proportion as Plato in his ideal demands rose above the data of the the circumstances and principles around him, it became impossible to expect that he would exercise a transforming influence upon the great body of the people . . .'
> . . . Towards the followers of Plato, who constituted an intellectual power at Athens, Demosthenes stood in an attitude of direct opposition. For 'he could not but be averse from any philosophy which estranged man from his civic duties, and removed him from the sphere of practical efficiency into the realms of ideas.'[24]

The parallel with Arnold's own position is obvious. Living at a time when the values of civilization appeared to be threatened, he was, as a critic, faced with the choice of existing in the realm of ideas, removed from the sphere of immediate practical efficiency and estranged from his civic duties, or of labouring to exercise a transforming influence on the lives of the great body of the people. From the time of *Culture and Anarchy* onwards Arnold appears to have settled for the latter course. His analysis of English society in this work persuaded him that if civilization was to survive in this country, then the masses to whom the movement of history must inevitably bring political power, needed to be transformed.

In *Culture and Anarchy*, without actually retracting his earlier statements on the critic's need to be detached, Arnold makes the idea of society central to his notion of Culture. He agreed with Wilhelm von Humboldt, whom he described as 'one of the most beautiful souls that have ever existed', that he 'who is isolated is no more able to develop himself than he who is bound by enthralling fetters'.[25]

> Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward.[26]

Disinterestedness is not, of course, absolutely incompatible with this duty, because disinterestedness and isolation are not identical, but Arnold's growing sense of his social responsibilities tended to dissolve the Goethean position which he had earlier defined for himself and still maintained in the essay of 1864. By 1869 detachment had given way to something not unlike involvement.

Arnold must have come to realize that Goethe was not quite as close an ally as he had depicted him to be in the 'Heine' essay of 1863. Arnold's note-books and reading-lists show that his reading of Goethe after this date made a sounder estimate possible. He re-read Goethe's conversations with Eckermann in 1866-67, Riemer's bulky two-volume *Mittheilungen über Goethe* between 1867 and 1870, the 'Maximen und Reflexionen' in 1870, and Burkhardt's edition of *Goethe's Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler Friedrich von Müller* in 1874. These are all works in which Goethe's political outlook is plain, and having read them Arnold could hardly still regard Goethe as a dissolvent, at least in intention, of the old European order. Indeed, Arnold used Goethe's frankest admission of political conservatism as an epigraph for *God and the Bible* (1875):

> In the principle, to preserve what exists, to hinder revolutionists from having their way, I am quite at one with the monarchists; only not in the means thereto. That is to say, they call in stupidity and darkness to aid, I reason and light.[27]

For Goethe 'what exists' did not mean only the best of the old culture—as it might have done for Arnold—but rather the social *status quo*.

In the essay 'Democracy' (1861), the earliest and one of the finest statements of his political creed, Arnold considers some alternative views of society to his own, only to reject them as no longer feasible:

> I do not say that grandeur and prosperity may not be attained by a nation divided into the most widely distinct classes, and presenting the most signal inequalities of rank and fortune. I do not say that great national virtues may not be developed in it. I do not even say that a popular order, accepting this demarcation of classes as an eternal providential arrangement, not questioning the natural right of a superior order to lead it, content within its own sphere, admiring the grandeur and high-mindedness of its ruling class . . . may not be a happier body, as to the eye of the imagination it is certainly a more beautiful body, than a popular order, pushing,

> excited, and presumptuous . . . But a popular order of that old-fashioned stamp exists now only for the imagination.[28]

In this passage Arnold had precisely defined, although of course unwittingly, Goethe's conception of society, and rejected it as unmodern. Arnold, in other words, discerned what Goethe did not: that democracy was not a temporary and unnatural aberration confinable to France, but was the necessary culmination of an irresistible historical process. For Goethe the conception of society as an essentially fixed hierarchical structure is fundamental. His perception of hierarchies among the plants and living organisms of the natural world made an analogous social structure, with a rigid division of classes according to their function within society as a whole, appear literally 'natural'. On this view, society itself is conceived of as a complex organism which can exist only if all the parts renounce an independent existence and work solely for the whole. Willingness to forego an illusory independence on the part of individuals and classes is essential to the survival of any state. It is realized in practice by the principle of loyalty to something higher–in a monarchy, to the ruling Monarch. Once this principle is weakened, a process of social dissolution may commence, which, if unchecked, will lead to the kind of anarchy witnessed in France during the Reign of Terror. Anarchy will persist until some authority emerges which is capable of subjugating lesser forces and compelling loyalty: for France, as Goethe saw it, this authority was Napoleon.

Goethe's organic conception of society is closely related to his conviction, which is ethical rather than political, that each individual has a certain sphere of action within which he can operate with benefit to himself and others. This sphere of action is defined for the individual primarily by the social class into which he is born, but also by his natural talents and abilities. For Goethe, one of the greatest personal and civic virtues consisted in recognizing one's own particular sphere, voluntarily restricting oneself to it, and quietly going about one's business there. This meant, of course, that the lower classes were to have no direct influence in government. Von Müller reports Goethe as saying:

> Lucidity in all one's affairs–is very helpful to the individual, if he restricts this to himself; but if he wishes to interfere in the agitated mechanisms of the world, if he thinks he must act, help or hinder independently as a part of the whole according to his own ideas, then he will come to grief all the more easily. One must simply keep oneself to oneself, do what is right quietly in one's own appointed circle.[29]

It was this self-restraint which, Goethe thought, gave meaning and dignity to the most insignificant individual, or as he expressed it in one of his maxims:

> The meanest of men can be complete provided that he moves within the limits of his abilities and attainments, but even excellent qualities are darkened, nullified and destroyed if this indispensably required balance is lost.[30]

Applied to society Goethe's conception justifies the existing class structure:

> The Bürger is as free as the Noble as long as he keeps within the limits which God appointed for him by the class into which he was born.[31]

In that one word 'appointed' (*angewiesen*) a view of the world is implied which is essentially feudal.

In comparison with Goethe's politics, Arnold's appear revolutionary, and nothing illustrates more vividly the distance between the two men than their response to the events of 1789. Goethe was totally unsympathetic to the Revolution, but for Arnold 1789 was a crucial date for the awakening of what he called the 'modern spirit'. It was the Revolution that had given Europe the 'ideas' of equality and of religious, civil, and political liberty; these ideas had 'left their trace', he argued, 'in half the beneficial reforms through Europe'. But as a people the French had been 'unripe for the task they . . . set themselves to do'.[32] The ideas had been sound in themselves, but the world had not been ready for them. The French had attempted to put them into practice too soon; they had rushed into the realm of practical action when it would have been safer to remain in that of theory. Their organization of democratic ideas was 'crude', and the attempt to establish a state on the basis of them was premature.[33] While Goethe, preferring tyranny to anarchy, revered Napoleon as a 'daemonic' figure outside the standards of conventional morality, Arnold saw in him a man 'under the fatal spell of his personal ambition and ungovernable self-will'.[34]

Culture and Anarchy was, of course, Arnold's longest and most substantial single work in the field of social and political criticism, but it represents incompletely his social and political thinking. If the shorter periodical pieces, collected and published in *Mixed Essays* (1879) and *Irish Essays* (1882), are ignored, then Arnold's position on political matters appears more conservative than in fact it was. His refusal to worship at the shrine of freedom and his insistence that the Liberal Party's faith in the virtue of 'doing as one likes' threatened England with anarchy may strike modern readers as a crudely disguised defence of the existing order, but his recommendation of the virtues of renouncement and self-restraint, and his promotion of the idea of state authority as opposed to individualism, have nothing to do with social conservatism. Arnold was no enemy of liberty, but he wished to remind his audience that liberty was a means and not an end in itself, or, as Arminius more pointedly expressed it, that 'Freedom, like Industry, is a very good horse to ride;–but to ride somewhere'.[35] This reminder, however, detracts neither from his commitment to democracy, nor from the qualified egalitarianism of his basic political creed. Arnold was constantly emphasizing the serious defects that existed in the very structure of English society. 'We are trying to live on', he wrote in the essay 'Equality' (1878), 'with a social organisation of which the day is over'.[36] Political power was still in the hands of an aristocratic élite, but this defect could be altered and corrected; he ended his essay 'Democracy' (1861) with the words:

> Human thought, which made all institutions, inevitably saps them resting only in that which is absolute and eternal.[37]

It is this confidence in the control of human affairs by the agency of human thought which links Arnold with the radical tradition of English politics and which distances him, on this issue at least, from his admired mentor Burke.

'Law-makers or revolutionaries who promise both freedom and equality are either charlatans or fanatics', said Goethe, whose hierarchic conception of society stands in direct opposition to Arnold's idea of the value of greater social equality.[38] One of Arnold's favourite phrases for describing the state of English society was 'an upper class materialised, a middle class vulgarised, a lower class brutalised', and he put the blame for this condition on the great inequalities of wealth which existed in England.[39] In Arnold's view the aristocracy as a class was being corrupted by its wealth. He was acutely conscious that dissipations and distractions, to which the aristocracy by its high rank and splendour was tempted, were slowly eating away the high sense of conduct that had once been the aristocrat's saving grace. The danger for the rest of society was great:

> Then, as to the effect upon the welfare of the community, how can that be salutary, if a class which, by the very possession of wealth, power and consideration, becomes a kind of ideal or standard for the rest of the community, is tried by ease and pleasure more than it can well bear . . .?

In consequence the ideal revered by the rest of society, instead of being 'intelligence and strenuous virtue', was a purely material one of wealth, comfort, and ease. The large bulk of the middle class, which with its lesser wealth was not exposed to the same temptation, was left without any high ideal of life towards which it could aspire. In its turn the working class was also left without an ideal by which it could raise itself from its brutalized condition of drunkenness and venality.[40] The social fabric was threatened 'wherever there is an immense inequality of conditions and property; such inequality inevitably depresses and degrades the inferior masses'.[41] For Arnold a measure of equality was a *sine qua non* of social culture. 'Certainly equality will never of itself give us a perfect civilisation', he wrote in 1878, 'but, with such inequality as ours, a perfect civilisation is impossible'.[42] To Goethe aristocracy meant the preservation of culture, to Arnold it was a threat. The aristocracy with its almost exclusive possession of land and wealth was, Arnold believed, 'in a great degree' the cause of England's miserable social condition, and with fitting caution he drew the inescapable conclusion: the social and political power of the aristocracy had to be diminished.[43]

Behind Arnold's analysis of the three classes lies the question which had presented itself with unremitting insistence to all social theorists since the time of Milton—the question where in society authority was to be located. As Northrop

Frye has shown, in a brilliant essay, English writers from Milton to Burke and J. S. Mill have offered a variety of contradictory answers.[44] The revolutionary answer of Milton locates 'true' authority, that is, spiritual rather than temporal authority, in reason and revelation (to a Christian reason and revelation must eventually coincide). Such spiritual authority is necessarily superior and antagonistic to temporal authority which rests merely on the habits and traditions of a fallen humanity. The conservative answer of Burke refuses to acknowledge any such opposition of spiritual and temporal authority. On the contrary, it fuses the two, and locates the new compound in the ascendant class. Yet, dissimilar as Burke's and Milton's answers appear, they share a common premise, namely that the ultimate origin of authority is not human but divine. This was not a premise which the more secular-minded Arnold could accept. He investigates the respective claims of England's three classes to be made the source of authority in society as a whole, only to dismiss them all. In their stead he puts a notion intended to transcend the idea of class–the notion of Culture. The source of spiritual authority is now the best that has been thought and known; in other words, the source is human, for this authority is nothing other than the collective wisdom of humanity derived from experience. The extremes of revolution and reaction are thus dissolved, while the road to a better civilization remains open. The collective wisdom needs only to be embodied in a social 'best self' for a harmonious community to emerge.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that for Goethe the problem of authority did not exist. The French Revolution failed; the old European order was shaken, but it survived. Goethe was a minister in a ruling class which appeared to him unoppressive and humane. His mental energies were fully engaged by poetry and science, and the question what right his class had to govern produced only an irritated and dismissive reply:

> What right we have to rule, we don't ask: we just rule. Whether the people has the right to depose us, we don't bother about that: we simply take care that it isn't tempted to do it.[45]

This curt maxim indicates more succinctly than any argument how foreign to Arnold Goethe's political thinking really was.

Given this basic divergence between Goethe's and Arnold's respective outlooks on political matters, it is now possible to suggest some points of connexion without fear of misrepresenting the total picture. Eckermann once questioned Goethe about his reasons for not having used his poetic talents to further the German cause during the French occupation, and Goethe replied:

> How could I write songs of hatred without feeling any hatred myself!–And, between ourselves, I didn't hate the French, although I thanked God when we were rid of them. And how could I, to whom only culture and barbarism are things of importance, hate a nation which is one of the most cultivated on earth and to which I owe so great a part of my own development.[46]

Goethe's answer reminds us that in at least one respect he was in agreement with Arnold. The political opinions of both men were subordinate to their concern for civilization, and the choice between culture and barbarism, culture and anarchy, was always for them the supreme consideration. Arnold certainly did not believe that democracy was superior to feudalism in any absolute sense; he did not share with Bentham, whom he despised, any feeling of indignation toward the past. To Arnold, democracy was simply an inevitable historical development, and civilization was threatened by any futile attempt to hold back the movement of history by maintaining a superseded social structure. For Goethe, German civilization was threatened chiefly by the hostility of democracy to the life of the Courts, but for both men any political act was to be judged primarily in relation to its effect upon national culture, and both were agreed also that without 'order' no national culture was possible.

Goethe's dread of anarchy is one of the characteristics most stressed by the writers of 'Falk's Goethe'. Falk wrote of his subject that, 'There was but one party for which . . . he could declare himself: that namely, under whose influence tranquillity might be expected or even hoped for, let it be found how it might'. Von Müller concurred: 'he [Goethe] held fast to order and obedience to law, as to the main pillars of the public weal'.[47] Falk and von Müller were quite right in their judgement, which is amply confirmed by Goethe himself. As I have already suggested, it was the experience of chaos in the German campaign in France which led Goethe to an 'authoritarian' position in political questions. In his account of the siege at Mainz he wrote: 'It is simply in my nature, but I would rather commit any injustice than endure disorder'.[48] The same sentiment was later formulated in a maxim:

> It is better that you suffer an injustice than that the world be without law.
> Therefore let each man submit to the law.[49]

Without the restraints imposed by law the baseness of undeveloped human nature, its fury, malice, and spiteful weakness, would break loose and take control. Until men had learned to rule themselves they should never speak of freedom.[50] Goethe's humanism extends only to this limit.

As for Matthew Arnold, it is undeniable that his urbanity was ruffled more by the fear of civil disturbance than by any other single factor. There is not much sweetness, and even less light, in his support for Dr Arnold's suggestion for handling mass demonstrations:

> As for rioting, the old Roman way of dealing with that is always the right one; flog the rank and file, and, fling the ring-leaders from the Tarpeian rock.[51]

But to accuse Arnold of being an enemy of democracy on the strength of this rather silly outburst would be totally unjust. 'Anarchy' now seems too strong a word to describe the tearing down of the railings in Hyde Park, but to a generation nearer than we are to the Revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848 mass gatherings of the working-class appeared to be the first step on the slippery slope to violence and mob-rule. A quick transition to democratic government was not worth the price of anarchy. A 'revolution by due course of law', in the Duke of Wellington's words, was what Arnold desired, and until the time was fully ripe he was content to see the executive power deal firmly with any manifestations of civil violence, whether in England or Ireland.[52] 'Force till right is ready', a phrase borrowed from Joubert, was one of Arnold's favourite maxims.[53] Although this attitude is no longer fashionable, it is difficult to disagree with Arnold when he says:

> . . . a State in which law is authoritative and sovereign, a firm and settled course of public order, is requisite if man is to bring to maturity anything precious and lasting now, or to found anything precious and lasting for the future.[54]

This belief is at the root of Arnold's hatred of disorder, and it was shared by Goethe: if unrestrained liberty threatened civilization both men saw no option but to approve whatever curbs on individual freedom government deemed necessary. Of course, one does not need to explain Arnold's attitude by reference to Goethe. The rejection of violence was almost universal among those whom Arnold most admired.

The word 'civilization' has occurred frequently in the preceding discussion, and it is instructive to enquire what Arnold meant by it, because his thinking on this matter typifies the complex nature of his relationship to Goethe during the latter part of his life. In *Culture and Anarchy* he analysed English society in terms of its class structure–although with Arnold 'class' must be understood as an ethical concept (i.e. related to behaviour) not as an economic one–but his discussion of the Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace was essentially only one element in a wider analysis, that of 'civilization' or 'culture' itself. In Arnold's view, a perfect civilization had to show a balance between the two forces to which he gave the names 'Hebraism' and 'Hellenism'. Hebraism signifies 'ethical sense' or 'sense of proper conduct', while Hellenism signifies 'intelligence' and 'aesthetic sense'. Civilization, Arnold held, depended primarily on conduct–he never tired of reiterating his conviction that conduct was three-fourths of life–and, as he argued in front of an American audience, 'moral causes govern the standing and the falling of States'.[55] However, if no nation could survive without a proper sense of conduct, and Arnold points to the decline of Ancient Greece, Rome, and modern France as examples of the dangers of moral degeneracy, no civilization could be perfect that lacked the intellectual flexibility to test the soundness of its moral sense, or the feeling for beauty required to sense 'the fitness of things'. The English, Arnold believed, were endowed with a high sense of morality, but were sorely wanting in the finer gifts of intellect, and the defects of English civilization–the exterior ugliness of industrial society, the ineptitude of the political leaders–could all be traced to this deficiency. In other words, perfect civilization could only come as the resultant of a balance of forces:

> . . . the necessary means towards civilization may be said to be, first and foremost, expansion; and then, the power of expansion being given, these other powers have to find their account in it:— the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, the power of social life and manners.[56]

Any nation which disregarded one or more of these 'powers' could not expect to enjoy a lasting and harmonious social order.

The structure of Arnold's thought, whether applied to literary style or social civilization, remains the same, and it is not hard to see how his view of civilization relates to his earlier concern with 'style'. In literature the grand style was impaired if any single aspect of the literary artefact was given excessive emphasis and allowed to take precedence over the total shaping of the whole work. So, in social life also, high civilization could only be attained if all the powers which make up man's humanity were developed, not independently, one at the expense of another, but harmoniously and in balanced relationship with each other. I have shown in earlier chapters how Arnold derived his original conceptions of 'wholeness' and 'the grand style' from Goethe, so it is tempting to ascribe an equally important place to Goethe's influence on his social thinking. But this would be quite mistaken. Goethe never applied his ideas in the field of literature and art to social and political matters, and although there are many occasions in *Culture and Anarchy* where the language seems to have a Goethean ring—whenever, in fact, Arnold speaks of 'true human perfection as a *harmonious* perfection, developing all sides of our humanity; and as a *general* perfection developing all sides of our society'—this is due to the derivation of the structure of Arnold's thinking from a Goethean model, rather than to any direct influence.[57]

Indeed, in *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold was much more directly indebted to Wilhelm von Humboldt than to Goethe, though Humboldt himself had of course breathed the air of classical Weimar. Humboldt's 'master-thought' was the development of the individual citizen in his perfect individuality, and he was suspicious of any state action—in education, for example—to bring about this end, which he believed could only have a stultifying effect. Hence the agreement of his views with Arnold's is limited. Nevertheless, in *The Spheres and Duties of Government* the thought and expression could often be Arnold's own:

> The true end of Man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal and immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole.

And again:

> . . . man has it in his power to avoid . . . one-sidedness, by striving to unite the separate faculties of his nature, often singly exercised; by bringing into spontaneous co-operation . . . and endeavouring to increase and diversify the powers with which

> he works, by harmoniously combining them, instead of looking for a mere variety of objects for their separate exercise.[58]

The idea of 'harmony' in this sense has obviously a very distinguished pedigree in European thought. The concept of 'justice' as set out by Plato in *The Republic*, has for its basis this very idea: a man cannot be truly happy if the higher elements of his nature are enthralled by the lower, and the just man is the man in whom a real order and harmony among these elements has been established. This example illustrates the special problems for any study of 'influence' posed by Arnold's electicism: he had read some Plato at Rugby School, more when preparing for the Oriel Fellowship examination in 1847-48, and his reading-lists show him to have been re-reading the Greek philosopher in 1867-68.[59] By the time of his writing *Culture and Anarchy*, the main-stream of Arnold's thought was fed from many sources, and to separate the individual currents with any degree of certainty is an arduous and perhaps impossible task.

For Arnold, as for Humboldt, the development towards perfection could only take place in a social context. It was not possible, Arnold thought, for an individual to perfect himself in a society which was not itself improving its condition. Therefore, the duty of the individual lay not merely in self-development, but in social responsibility and the effort to help others perfect themselves. Goethe's experience of society in a state of turmoil had persuaded him otherwise. Confronted with the fact of a foreign occupation of his country Goethe had felt powerless. There was nothing else for him to do but go quietly about his own tasks, pursuing his scientific enquiries and developing his talent as a poet. Social and political freedom were not absolutely necessary.

> If a man has freedom to live a healthy life and to go about his own business, then he has freedom enough, and everyone can easily have that much.

Nor was Goethe impressed by the idea that 'each man should work for the common weal, as an indispensable condition of his own happiness'—a point of view put to him by Eckermann. Goethe rejoined:

> I would have thought that each man should rather start with himself and his own happiness first from which eventually the common happiness will not fail to arise.[60]

Once again it is the question of the individual's responsibility as a social being which marks the point of divergence between Arnold's opinions and Goethe's.[61]

Although there are few tangible links between Goethe's conception of civilization and that elaborated by Arnold, it is still true that Arnold associated his own views strongly with Goethe. Civilization was threatened, Arnold thought, not simply by 'monster' meetings in public parks—to him an emblem of the coming chaos—but also, and more insidiously, by democracy itself. Arnold's approval of social democracy as historically inevitable was hedged by a certain reserve. The poet who put into the mouth of Empedocles the words,

Great qualities are trodden down,
And littleness united
Is become invincible,[62]

was not, one feels, a democrat by instinct. The fear that the new political order might bring with it a reverence for the tastes and standards of the multitude told strongly with Arnold. Indeed, it was evidently one of his oldest and most deeply-felt political insights, for as early as 1848 he expressed to his mother an anxiety about 'a wave of more than American *vulgarity*, moral, intellectual, and social, preparing to break over us'.[63] In *Culture and Anarchy*, some twenty years later, he wrote that 'excellence dwells among high and steep rocks, and can only be reached by those who sweat blood to reach her'.[64] No one who maintains this view is likely to be deluded by any fanciful trust in the inherent soundness of the masses.

It was in America that Arnold preached most fervently his elitist doctrine of the 'remnant'. True excellence of any kind must necessarily belong only to 'the few' in society; it is unthinkable that any really high standard of culture should become generally established. That was Arnold's message in his 'Numbers' lecture, and it is a point of view which maintains a precarious co-existence with his avowed belief in democracy. Not that he was ever tempted with Carlyle to advocate a more or less benevolent tyranny by the cultivated minority: instead, he insisted that, while the governors of a country ought to be drawn from the 'remnant', it was the democratic responsibility of society to ensure that it was ruled by its 'best self'.[65] Although Goethe is not among the authorities summoned by Arnold in support of his argument in 'Numbers'—Plato and Isaiah were quite sufficient to give it respectability—he was well aware that Goethe held a similar opinion. In his note-books under 1881 Arnold had copied out a quotation from Eckermann: 'Do not imagine one could make anything natural and beautiful popular'.[66] And when, in 'Numbers', he expressed the opinion that 'the majority is and must be in general unsound', he was merely repeating, in slightly milder form, Goethe's remark to von Müller that, 'The mass, the majority is necessarily always absurd and misguided'.[67]

Arnold has a name for the mediocrity which threatened the high excellence that was the goal of individual man's and society's striving, and it was a name which he derived from Goethe—*das Gemeine*. The concept is central to Arnold's concern for the state of English civilization, and it figures prominently in his writing's from 1865, the year of publication of *Essays in Criticism* (first series), to his death in 1888. He first used the expression in his essay on 'The Literary Influence of Academies' where it signifies 'the atmosphere of commonplace habitual to most of us'; in other words *das Gemeine* is the essence of Philistinism, the very air it breathes.[68] In *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867) Arnold developed this definition. The danger for a Germanic nation whose characteristic virtue was its moral strength, that quality of 'steadiness with honesty', lay in 'the humdrum, the plain and ugly, the ignoble: in a word, *das Gemeine, die Gemeinheit*, that curse of Germany, against which Goethe was all his life fighting'.[69] Within these two definitions is contained the full range of significance that Arnold attached to the word—the plain, the ugly, the ignoble, the vulgar, the mediocre, the common, the average—and it served him well. He made use of it as a convenient 'shorthand' expression for anything which fell short of his high ideal. It expressed concisely the besetting fault of American society with its worship of the average man and its inferior higher education, or even the danger to English society if Dissenters were allowed to adopt their own form of burial service in public churchyards.[70] Trivial though the matter of the Burials Bill seems to us now, in Arnold's eyes it embodied an issue of principle. The emphasis which Liberal cant placed upon the value of unrestricted individual freedom seemed to Arnold to have contributed significantly to the spread of the harmful notion that there existed no such things as high ideals of excellence, and that, on the contrary, there were merely the diverse tastes and predilections of individuals. If this were indeed so, then Liberal egalitarianism could further insist that the tastes of all men should be treated with equal seriousness and accorded equal recognition in the national life. Arnold was naturally hostile to liberalism so conceived, and at the root of this hostility was his horror of *das Gemeine*.

Culture and civilization were for Arnold states attained only by the greatest exertion—by the sweating of blood—but *das Gemeine* was the habitual, the commonplace, the slough into which man or nation too readily sank. The individualist creed of Victorian Liberalism seemed in danger of eroding the very foundation of civilized life, the belief in objective and real excellence, and in the value of effort in striving to attain it. Civilized standards stood in need of defence, and so it was that Arnold advocated ideas which, he hoped, would expose the clichés of liberal individualism. Against the principle of 'voluntaryism' in education—the philistine middle-class providing for the schooling of its children by its own unaided action and thus perpetuating its own inadequate ideals and standards—Arnold set the principle of State supervision of education to ensure that satisfactory standards were maintained. Dismayed by the fragmentation of religious life into innumerable dissenting sects, notable chiefly for the intellectual absurdity of their doctrines and the vulgarity of their forms of worship, Arnold spoke out for the principle of Church establishment as a means of excluding the worst excesses of sectarianism and of preserving whatever was sound and good in the Anglican and Catholic traditions. In *Culture and Anarchy* he expressedly linked Goethe's name with his own animosity to the wilfulness and self-assertion involved in sectarian religion:

> One may say that to be reared a member of a national Church is in itself a lesson of religious moderation, and a help towards culture and harmonious perfection. Instead of battling for his own private forms for expressing the inexpressible and defining the undefinable, a man takes those which have commended themselves most to the religious life of his nation; and while he may be sure that within those forms the religious side of his own nature may find its satisfaction, he has leisure

> and composure to satisfy other sides of his nature as well.
>
> But with the member of a Nonconforming or self-made religious community, how different! The sectary's *eigene große Erfindungen*, as Goethe calls them—the precious discoveries of himself and his friends for expressing the inexpressible and defining the undefinable in peculiar forms of their own, cannot . . . but fill his whole mind.[71]

The passage with its borrowing from Goethe is revelatory of the way in which certain ideas cohered in Arnold's mind. When Goethe spoke of 'eigene große Erfindungen', he was not referring to the private caprice of sectarian worship but to the writing of drama.[72] He was telling Eckermann that it was preferable to make use of material already at hand, like the legends of Greece, where characters and incidents are already worked out and developed, than to resort always to one's 'own great inventions'. Obviously, therefore, the context of Goethe's remark does not justify Arnold's use of it, but it at once reminds us that in the 1853 Preface Arnold has approved the practice of dramatists in ancient Greece where a 'few actions . . . eminently adapted for tragedy, maintained almost exclusive possession of the . . . stage'. That is, the individual Greek writer suppressed his own choice in favour of tradition, and this in turn reminds us of Arnold's eloquent concluding appeal:

> Let us not bewilder our successors; let us transmit to them the practice of poetry, with its boundaries and wholesome regulative laws, under which excellent works may again, perhaps, at some future time, be produced, not yet fallen into oblivion through our neglect, not yet condemned and cancelled by the influence of their eternal enemy, caprice.[73]

Caprice, then, like *das Gemeine*, must be the negation of culture, for culture is the truly excellent, the best that has been thought and known in the world, and it was this inherited store of real culture which, Arnold believed, the critic was duty-bound to disseminate and to transmit to succeeding generations.

Further lines of continuity suggest themselves. In 'The Study of Poetry' (1880) Arnold argued that the role of poetry in modern life would become increasingly important as human beings began to learn that neither the natural sciences nor supernatural religion were in themselves sufficient to meet their spiritual needs, but that poetry, 'the breath and finer spirit of knowledge', as Wordsworth had called it, was the medium in which all truths could exist harmoniously, as they had once done in religion. Poetry was to be the religion of the future. 'Poetry', in the sense intended by Arnold, is all great poetry, past, present, and future, that 'mighty river of poetry' to which 'the stream of English poetry' is a tributary. In defence of the institution of poetry stands criticism, admitting only 'poetry of a high order of excellence', and so it follows that we 'must accustom ourselves to a high standard and to a strict judgement'. Naturally enough, Arnold mentions the force which is antagonistic to excellence, and its name now is 'charlatanism':

> In poetry, which is thought and art in one, it is the glory, the eternal honour, that charlatanism shall find no entrance . . . Charlatanism is for confusing or obliterating the distinctions between excellent and inferior, sound and unsound or only half-sound, true and untrue or only half-true.

Plainly, then, charlatanism follows on from 'caprice' and 'das Gemeine', and it is part of Arnold's purpose in this essay to suggest a way of finding which poetry is really excellent. This is to discover the 'real' estimate of a poet's work, as opposed to the 'historic' or 'personal' estimates. Arnold's method can be summed up in one sentence:

> . . . there can be no more useful help for discovering what poetry belongs to the class of the truly excellent, and can therefore do us most good, than to have always in one's mind lines and expressions of the great masters, and to apply them as a touchstone to other poetry.[74]

The 'touchstone' idea is, of course, basically the same as the more familiar notion of 'taste', the literary tact which a critic acquires by making himself familiar with the best which has been thought, known, and written in the world. Arnold's argument is bedevilled by circularity: we find out what is excellent by measuring it by the standard of what we already know to be excellent—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare. But how can we know, unless there are further standards of excellence by which these can in turn be measured? To this admittedly awkward question there is no answer other than that we know because experience tells us it is so. The great lines and passages are the elementary particles, as it were, of literary excellence: it is not possible to go beyond them, they are the ultimate arbiters. The idea of 'touchstones' is Arnold's attempt at a sort of literary naturalism. He is attempting to put criticism on the firm basis of 'experience', that is, the literary experience of the past, as it is transmitted down the ages to us through the medium of culture.

It is not difficult to show that Arnold's argument coincided exactly with Goethe's belief in the necessity of using admitted excellence, not simply as the substance on which any man striving to develop his artistic taste must nourish himself, but also as a criterion for judging whatever new matter presented itself for evaluation. As Eckermann's mentor once remarked in conversation:

> . . . one cannot develop one's taste through studying the moderately good, but only through the highest excellence. Hence I show you only what is best; and if you consolidate this, then you will have a criterion for other things which you will not overestimate but nevertheless still appreciate.[75]

Goethe was not maintaining, as Arnold had done, that the application of touchstones in establishing high standards of poetry was the task of criticism—as a kind of institutionalized Good Taste—and necessary for the continuance of civilization. The coincidence of their opinion here is not, I believe, due to borrowing in any direct sense, but rather to a more fundamental similarity of their naturalistic conception of culture as the transmission of experienced value. (Arnold could, after all, have encountered his 'touchstone' theory, in germ at least, in Wordsworth's 'Advertisement' to the first edition of the Lyrical Ballads: 'An accurate taste in poetry . . . is an acquired talent, which can only be produced by severe thought, and a long continued intercourse with the best models of composition'.) It was a naturalism which Arnold rightly recognized as thoroughly Goethean and which he sought to advocate and, in his own way, to emulate.

One concept elaborated by Arnold in 'The Study of Poetry', namely that of a 'mighty river of poetry' to which the literatures of individual nations contribute, reveals the real link between Arnold's 'Europeanism' and Goethe's idea of *Weltliteratur*. If culture is the best that has been known and thought in the world, then obviously no single national literature can claim exclusive possession of culture, and the critic, whose duty it is to get to know and to propagate this 'best', must have the proper range of knowledge. Therefore we have Arnold's advice to critics of English literature:

> One may say, indeed, to those who have to deal with the mass–so much better disregarded–of current English literature, that they may at all events endeavour, in dealing with this, to try it, so far as they can, by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world; one may say, that to get anywhere near this standard, every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own; and the more unlike his own the better. But, after all, the criticism I am really concerned with . . . is 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.[76]

One would not perhaps have associated such ideas with Goethe at all, if Arnold had not in the essay 'Wordsworth' (1879) repeated this statement about Europe and added: 'This was the ideal of Goethe'.[77] Arnold might, of course, simply have been thinking of Goethe's aphorism that 'No man who knows only his own language knows even that', but the fullness of Arnold's statement of Goethe's ideal suggests that he had something more substantial in mind, i.e. the notion of *Weltliteratur*.[78]

In actual fact Goethe's ideal was not as close to his own as Arnold believed. Comparison is difficult since Goethe's thoughts on the subject were desultory and are scattered rather widely throughout the conversations, letters, and critical essays of his latter years, but some points are immediately obvious. For Goethe the age of *Weltliteratur* was only beginning to dawn: he speaks of World Literature as something which is 'taking shape' or 'hoped for', whereas for Arnold the term signified primarily Europe's literary heritage, its past.[79] Goethe viewed the new age as the product of easier communications (erleichterter Communication) between nations, and conceived a role for German as the *lingua franca* of 'spiritual commerce':

> Whoever understands and studies the German language finds himself at a market where all nations offer their wares; he plays the interpreter while growing rich himself.

The advantages of a state of world literature, as opposed to separate national literatures isolated from each other, consisted in the mutual stimulation which would thereby be fostered. Goethe did not envisage, or desire, a uniform culture throughout all European nations–'there is no question of nations having to think alike'– but he was aware that any national literature will stagnate if cut off from foreign influence. A further benefit which was to result from the increased contact between national literatures was the growth of mutual tolerance and understanding, and the lessening of hostile prejudice. The distinctive peculiarities would not disappear, but the truly valuable parts of a national culture (*das wahrhaft Verdienstliche*) must belong to humanity as a whole.[80]

This is clearly no exhaustive account of Goethe's conception of *Weltliteratur*. but enough has been said to demonstrate that its primary implications for him were not the same as those stressed by Arnold. For the English critic the great inheritance of European literature provides a standard by which to measure the productions of English literature. His description of the act of 'measurement' as a process of juridical evaluation–'to try English literature by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world'–reminds us not merely of the primacy of evaluation over analysis in Arnold's view of criticism, but also of the fundamental unity of his thought: for the relation of European culture to English culture appears to parallel that of literary academies to individual writers–Arnold envisages academies as a 'literary tribunal' or, quoting Sainte-Beuve, a 'haut jury' before which the individual author is 'tried'. The underlying principle is the necessity of 'deference to a standard higher than one's own habitual standard in intellectual matters, a . . . respectful recognition of a superior ideal'.[81] The same relationship clearly obtains, or should obtain, between the individual and the state–'the common reason of society ought to check the aberrations of individual eccentricity'–and between the dissenting sect and the established religion. All Arnold's dichotomies, whether between provinciality and classical centrality, between provinciality and totality, between the grand style and the Tennysonian picturesque, can be resolved into the fundamental dichotomy between 'the whole and the parts'.[82] Wholeness is harmony and joy, fragmentation is anarchy and misery. The reason for Arnold's association of his own ideas of a supra-national European culture, both incorporating and transcending national literatures, with Goethe should now be self-evident. 'One's own habitual standards in intellectual matters' are, after all, exactly what is meant by 'caprice', '*eigene große Erfindungen*', '*das Gemeine*', individual eccentricity and charlatanism, and it is these which are transcended by the 'superior ideal' of a European culture.

This conception of a division between the wishes of the individual and the claims of a superior authority is at the heart of Arnold's ethical consciousness, for the individual's submission to this superior authority is in his view the fundamental moral act. For Arnold, as for Goethe, the ethical life could be conceived as a dialectic of freedom and restraint, and morality as essentially renunciation. Indeed, it was in acknowledgement of this dialectic that Arnold described himself as a 'Liberal tempered by experience, reflection, and renouncement'.[83] If it was true to say with Spinoza that 'Life itself consists . . . in the effort *to affirm one's own essence*', then the freedom of self-affirmation must be admitted as valid, because it was this effort which underlay the necessary human urge towards change, development, and progress.[84] But the liberty of self-affirmation was only one half of the picture:

> And we no more allow absolute validity to the Philistine's stock maxim, *Liberty is the law of human life*, than we allow it to the opposite maxim, which is just as true, *Renouncement is the law of human life*.[85]

Real liberty, therefore, is not the absence of restraint but lies in the subordination of the 'ordinary' self to the idea of a perfected humanity—the best possible self. In a note on the passage quoted R. H. Super points out that 'Renouncement is the law of human life', a maxim used by Carlyle as the thesis of *Sartor Resartus*, is taken from *Wilhelm Meister*. Arnold entered in his note-book under 1872 Goethe's comment in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 'Everything calls upon us to renounce', and perhaps had these words in mind as he wrote.[86] Certainly the passage in *Culture and Anarchy* where the idea of renouncement is applied to married life reveals Arnold's intelligence at its most sensitive and would have enjoyed Goethe's unqualified approval:

> And man's true humanity, and therefore his happiness, appears to lie much more, so far as the relations of love and marriage are concerned, in becoming alive to the finer shades of feeling which arise within these relations, in being able to enter with tact and sympathy into the subtle instinctive propensions and repugnances of the person with whose life his own life is bound up, make them his own, to direct and govern in harmony with them the arbitrary range of his personal action, and thus to enlarge his spiritual and intellectual life and liberty, than in remaining insensible to these finer shades of feeling and this delicate sympathy, in giving unchecked range, so far as he can, to his mere personal action, in allowing no limits or government to this except such as a mechanical external law imposes, and in thus really narrowing, for the satisfaction of his ordinary self, his spiritual and intellectual life and liberty.[87]

Not, of course, that Arnold needed to read *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* in order to learn that in marriage renunciation of arbitrary desire was essential.

There is, I believe, good evidence to support the view that Arnold associated his conception of culture as a cumulative historical process with Goethe. Arnold's aversion to divorce was deep-seated. The publicity given to court proceedings in divorce cases, and the 'mire of unutterable infamy' which was there revealed, presented a spectacle so hideous that Arnold found 'the marriage theory of

Catholicism refreshing and elevating'.[88] G. W. E. Russell attributed Arnold's aversion to

> . . . his strong sense . . . that the sacredness of marriage, and the customs that regulate it, were triumphs of culture which had been won, painfully and with effort, from the unbridled promiscuity of primitive life. To impair that sacredness, to dislocate those customs, was to take a step backwards into darkness and anarchy.[89]

Russell's comment shows an acute perception of Arnold's view of culture as something conquered from a 'nature' which is basically amoral. In *God and the Bible* (1875) the question of sexual morality was again discussed, and it was Arnold's intention to establish the precepts of Judaic-Christian morality on a sounder basis than that which supposed certain actions to be wrong simply because God forbade them. The only sound basis was that of 'experience'. In other words, adultery and fornication are not wrong because God disapproves of them, but because the experience of mankind teaches us that 'freedom' in sexual behaviour is in reality a kind of bondage. Hence, anything which tended to weaken the ties enjoined by the Seventh Commandment, was a backward step towards

> . . . that old, chaotic, dark, almost ante-human time, from which slowly and painfully man had emerged when the real history and religion of our race began.

Arnold then goes on to enlist Goethe's support for this view with a quotation from a conversation with von Müller:

> He [Goethe] says: 'What culture has won of nature we ought on no account to let go again, at no price to give up. In the notion of the sacredness of marriage, Christianity has got a culture-conquest of this kind, and of priceless value, although marriage is, properly speaking, unnatural'. Unnatural, he means to say, to man in his rudimentary state, before the fixing of moral habits had formed the right human nature.[90]

In the light of this discussion one is better able to understand Arnold's remark in a letter to his mother of 3 March 1865:

> No one has a stronger and more abiding sense than I have of the 'daemonic' element–as Goethe called it–which underlies and encompasses our life; but I think, as Goethe thought, that the right thing is, while conscious of this element, and of all that there is inexplicable round one, to keep pushing on one's posts into the darkness, and to establish no post that is not perfectly in light and firm.[91]

It appears that Arnold has partly misconstrued Goethe's meaning in the expression *das Dämonische*. For Goethe there was indeed a daemonic element, dark and inexplicable, inwoven in the texture of existence, but he did not, as Arnold implies, conceive of it as something against which one has to do battle.[92] What is interesting, however, about Arnold's oddly colonialist metaphor of establishing outposts in the great, uncharted darkness is, apart from his association of the idea with Goethe, its implication of the same progressive and cumulative conception of human development that we found, in germ at least, in the 1853 Preface; and, as in *Culture and Anarchy* and the discussion of sexual morality in *God and the Bible* quoted above, this development is conceived in terms of conquest and struggle. Clearly, the spirit of the age had left its mark on Arnold. Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, which appeared in 1859, had raised disturbing considerations concerning the nature and origin of human social morality even for a man like Arnold, who had already abandoned orthodox supernatural religion. 'Public spirit', which Bishop Butler could so easily take for granted, now had to be viewed as 'a slow conquest from rudimentary human nature', and the origins of conscience sought, not in some divine fiat, but in that 'vast, dimly lighted, primordial region of the natural genesis of man's affections and principles'.[93]

I have until now carefully avoided any attempt to show definite links between Arnold's conception of culture and development, and Goethe's thinking on these matters, other than that Arnold consciously associated his own ideas with the German poet. But the time has come to ask whether Arnold was correct or mistaken in attributing to Goethe ideas similar to his own. It is useful to begin with the phrase '*das Gemeine*' which generated the preceding discussion. We have seen how the fear which Arnold felt concerning the erosion of cultural standards in a democratic society was shared, to an even intenser degree, by Goethe, but we must now inquire whether the range of significance which Arnold attached to the phrase '*das Gemeine*' was Goethean or whether it was Arnold's own invention.

The apparent source of the phrase, or at least the one indicated by Arnold, is Goethe's poem 'Epilog zu Schillers Glocke'. But the poem itself is of little help, because it tells us virtually nothing of what Goethe understood by *das Gemeine* other than, whatever it was Schiller escaped it. Arnold's explication of the phrase as 'the atmosphere of commonplace habitual to most of us' does not derive from the poem itself, but he had rightly noted that it is used so frequently by Goethe elsewhere than it does indeed deserve to be called a Goethean idea. When one examines these other occasions of its use it quickly becomes apparent that Arnold had absorbed the essential content of Goethe's meaning, even though this meaning was not quite so precise or fixed as Arnold's citing of it might suggest. For example, the 'Maximen und Reflexionen', the collection of aphorisms from which Arnold quoted continually in his note-books, contains several on the theme of *das Gemeine*. Only two, however, have a really close relevance to Arnold's thought:

> Life, however common [*gemein*] it appears, however easily it seems content with the habitual and everyday, nevertheless secretly fosters certain higher demands and looks around for means of satisfying them.[94]

Here, there is not only the specific connexion of *das Gemeine* with the habitual and commonplace, but also the source perhaps of Arnold's statement in the essay 'Civilization in the United States' that what is common and ignoble 'is notwithstanding its admitted prevalence, contrary to a deep-seated instinct of human nature and repelled by it'.[95]

In Book 19 of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* Goethe discusses the abuse of the word 'genius' among the Germans and the 'happy effects' of Kantian philosophy:

> And so the Germans, among whom *das Gemeine* threatens to gain the upper hand far more frequently than among other nations, almost sacrificed the loveliest blossom of language, that seemingly foreign word, but a word which in reality belongs equally to all nations:–if the feeling for the highest and best, new-established once again by a deeper philosophy, had not happily reasserted itself.[96]

On this occasion Goethe not only specifically contrasts *das Gemeine* with 'the feeling for the highest and best', but also points to it as a particular failing of Germans–as Arnold does in *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (see above, p. 117) This meaning is reinforced by the passage from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* in which Goethe argued:

> Man is disposed to involve himself with the commonest of things (*dem Gemeinsten*); mind and senses become blunted so easily to impressions of the beautiful and perfect, that one should preserve one's capacity for feeling them by every possible means.[97]

Here again the significance which attaches to *das Gemeine* is precisely that which Arnold attributed to it, and although it is obvious that his use of the phrase to describe, in a specifically political context, the uglier aspects of contemporary civilization, could not derive from the German poet, the ideas which underlie it are, as Arnold himself clearly recognized, thoroughly Goethean.

The second of Goethe's aphorisms which makes reference to *das Gemeine* appears at first sight rather puzzling:

> People say: Artist, study Nature! But it is no small matter to develop the excellent from the base (*dem Gemeinen*), the beautiful from the formless.[98]

In this instance the phrase seems to signify (without overt disapproval) the raw, inchoate material from which the artist must create the shaped, meaningful object, the work of art. One might have passed over this aphorism as simply another occasion when the connexion with Arnold's thought is too tenuous to be of any importance, if it were not for the fact that, of all the aphorisms dealing with *das Gemeine*, this is the only one which Arnold copied into his note-book.[99] In it *das Gemeine*, like *das Dämonische* in Arnold's letter to his mother quoted above, signifies nature in its 'undeveloped' state, before art and before culture.

Some distinctions, however, must be drawn between Arnold's and Goethe's meaning. In the first place, Arnold's conception of social culture as a cumulative development, advancing on the basis of human achievements won from a nature essentially hostile to the imposed limitations of morality, has a much more distinctly ethical stress than the corresponding conception in Goethe. With Goethe the primary antithesis is between Art and Nature, not–as with Arnold–between Culture and Nature. When Goethe writes of this antithesis, human morality is not uppermost in his mind:

> The noblest demand which is made of an artist, is always this: that he should keep close to nature, study her, copy her, produce something similar to her phenomena.
>
> How great, indeed how huge this demand is, is not always recognized, and the true artist learns it only as his development progresses. Nature is separated from art by a huge chasm, which genius alone, without external aids, is incapable of crossing.
>
> Everything we perceive around us, is merely raw material . . .[100]

Even when Goethe considers the question of art and artists in their social context, it is evident that the emphasis is less ethical than with Arnold, although the conception of cumulative development on the basis of the achievements of the past is the fundamental assumption which also underlines Goethe's thinking.

It is important to realize that this conception was an 'assumption' with Goethe; it appeared to him self-evident, a truism. Only once did Goethe feel it necessary to elaborate the idea and to defend it. This was in 1795 when a literary journal, the *Berlinische Archiv*, published an impertinent article on contemporary prose-writers complaining anonymously of the lack of any writer among the Germans of 'classic' stature. Goethe's reply, 'Literarischer Sansculottismus', set out the conditions under which a national classic could arise. He stressed above all the necessity of an already advanced culture as a precondition for the appearance of a classic author. Younger writers now enjoyed an advantage which had not been available to Goethe's generation:

> . . . the good fortune, which young men now enjoy who develop earlier and achieve more quickly a pure style appropriate to their subject, to whom do they owe this if not to their predecessors who laboured incessantly under many kinds of difficulty throughout the last half of this century, each developing himself in his own way? In this way a sort of invisible school has arisen, and the young man who enters it, finds a much larger and brighter circle than earlier writers . . .[101]

The conception of cultural development as a cumulative and co-operative effort, which is implied here, finds further expression in Goethe's conversations with Eckermann. For example, in a conversation about the painter Raphael he comments:

> Whenever you see a great master, you always find that he has used the achievement of his predecessors, and it is precisely this which makes him great. Men like Raphael don't grow out of the ground. They built upon antiquity and the best that had been done before them.

Again, in the conversation from which Arnold took Goethe's remark about the dangers of *eigene große Erfindungen*, Goethe offered Eckermann the following advice in the same key:

> Everyone thinks he himself must know what's best, and in that way many are lost completely and many are trapped in error for a long time. But there is no more time for error, that is why we old men were there; and what use would all our searching and erring have been, if you younger people were merely going to tread the same ground? We would never get any further! Error can be reckoned to the credit of the older generation because we didn't find the paths already trodden; but more is demanded of those who come after, they shouldn't repeat the erring and searching but should utilize the advice of old men and advance forthwith along the right way.[102]

A connected idea is expounded in the essay 'Deutscher Naturdichter' when Goethe considers the case of men of talent born into a hostile environment. Gifted men born at a pre-cultural stage of history belong to this category, and it is to such anonymous talents, Goethe thought, that we owe the first growths of knowledge, myth, legend, philosophy, and history. Their situation is almost unthinkable in modern times, Goethe argued, except when a gifted man is born into the lower classes and remains cut off from the advanced and widespread culture of the day. One mark of an advanced culture is the permanent presence of the exemplary achievements of past artists ('Muster und Vorbilder') from which rules and theories of artistic practice can be abstracted.[103] These are Arnold's 'wholesome regulative laws', the real rules of artistic practice derived from the accumulated *experience* of great artists in the past, of which Arnold spoke in the 1853 Preface.[104] These are the rules which the Dilettante ignores, but which must be preserved and transmitted to succeeding generations if the practice of poetry is to survive. In the context of these ideas one can begin to discern the origin of Arnold's admiration for Goethe's 'naturalism'.

The final question, namely whether Arnold did or did not derive from Goethe the idea of cultural advance as a process of accumulated victory over nature is perhaps unanswerable. One of Arnold's best critics has no doubts. In a suggestive but regrettably undeveloped note on Arnold, W. Robbins wrote:

> It is hard to see how Arnold's definitions of cultural totality could reflect merely 'preconceived attitudes', and it can safely be asserted that the modern and naturalistic Goethe was largely responsible for the attitude or 'ruling idea' in Arnold which came closest to being 'scientific'—namely, his insistence that established customs, beliefs, creeds and intellectual patterns must come before the joint tribunal of general culture and cumulative human experience.[105]

It is hard to be so categorical. With both Arnold and Goethe the ideas which we have been considering had the status of axioms, basic assumptions which governed much of their thinking. There is no doubt that Arnold firmly associated these ideas with Goethe, and possibly even believed that he had derived them from him, but the ethical emphasis in Arnold's view of culture is his own—or, at least, certainly not Goethe's. The essential structure of Arnold's conception of culture is present in outline in the 1853 Preface where its relation to Goethe is immediate and direct: the ideas of *Culture and Anarchy* are basically an elaboration of this conception, but with the stress shifted to morality as the primary constituent of both individual culture and social civilization. The relation to Goethe of Arnold's ideas in *Culture and Anarchy* is, therefore, less immediate and direct than in the Preface.

Arnold's strictures on Protestantism in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) were not always kindly received, and in the years that followed he was obliged to set out and defend his own religious position. *St Paul and Protestantism* was published in 1870; *Literature and Dogma* followed in 1873, *God and the Bible* in 1875, and *Last Essays on Church and Religion* in 1877. It now remains to consider Goethe's relationship to Arnold's religious thought, and in particular to investigate the meaning of Arnold's 'naturalism' and what it owes to the German poet and scientist. It has already been suggested that Goethe may well have been among the intellectual influences which contributed to the breaking-up of Arnold's belief in orthodox Christianity many years before when he was an undergraduate at Oxford, but this is mainly a matter for conjecture.[106] In the case of the mature and developed opinions expressed in his published writings it is possible to proceed with more assurance, for we know in detail what Arnold thought and what he had already learned from Goethe. But one is immediately confronted with a new difficulty. Arnold's religious writings are strewn with so many references and acknowledgements to Goethe that one could easily assume at the outset a close correspondence between the religious views of the two men. But Goethe's religious beliefs are highly problematical, and it is not easy to see how his ideas could have contributed, to any significant extent, to the forming of Arnold's religious position since he never troubled to define or defend his views on God, religion, and Christianity in anything like the detail or fullness of Arnold's theological writings. He remained outside religious controversy far more resolutely than Arnold, and he became impatient if his opinions on religious subjects were solicited too importunately. He told his over-zealous friend Lavater flatly that he was 'not anti-Christian, not un-Christian but decidedly non-Christian', and when the pious Gretchen enquired after Faust's beliefs she was gently rebuked with the question 'Who can name Him?' and its corollary 'Words are sound and smoke/Obscuring Heaven's bright glow'.[107] As Goethe explained to his friend Jacobi, he did not like to feel committed to one specific set of opinions:

> With the many divergent tendencies of my being, one mode of thinking is not enough; as a poet and artist I am a Polytheist, as a scientist on the other hand I am a Pantheist, and one as firmly as the other. If for my personality, as a moral being, I need one God then I can manage that too.[108]

One cannot imagine Arnold subscribing with much enthusiasm to any of the views expressed in these characteristically Goethean remarks. However, Goethe did have more definite opinions on religious matters than the letter to Jacobi suggests. In conversation with such intimate friends as Eckermann, Riemer, Falk, and von Müller he spoke quite candidly. In the last years of his life Goethe was more willing to talk on questions of faith than he had been in his youth, and since Arnold was well acquainted with the records of these conversations, he certainly knew the measure of agreement between his own ideas and Goethe's.

Contrary to one's first impressions Arnold probably did not mean to indicate by his frequent reference to Goethe in his theological writings that the position which he was elaborating directly derived from the German. Arnold's was a Goethean position only in so far as the ideas and opinions which he expressed could have been expected to have had the German poet's general approval.[109] This at least is how Arnold himself seems to have viewed the nature of his relationship to Goethe on religious matters. After advancing his own theory of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel Arnold remarked that he 'would cheerfully consent to submit to the judgement of any competent tribunal; only the judges . . . ought not to be professors of the theological faculties of Germany, but Germans like Lessing, Herder, and Goethe'.[110]

One should remember thatArnold did not claim permanent and absolute validity for his religious ideas:

> Thought and science follow their own law of development, they are slowly elaborated in the growth and forward pressure of humanity . . . and their ripeness and unripeness . . . are not an effect of our wishing or resolving. Rather do they seem brought about by a power such as Goethe figures by the *Zeit-Geist* or Time-Spirit . . .[111]

Arnold could therefore feel entitled to the authority conferred by Goethe's agreement simply by regarding his own views as views which Goethe would have acknowledged had he been Arnold's contemporary. The principle of 'development' was, after all, admitted by Goethe. F. Neiman has shown how the term 'Zeitgeist', which Arnold seems to have found in Goethe's essay on Wolfian theories of Homer, 'Homer noch einmal', gradually changed in meaning for the English writer.[112] At first it signified little more than 'fashion' or 'the spirit of the age', but later it came to mean the active, almost purposeful force of historical development. This notion of development belongs to a conception of periodicity in history which Arnold could have encountered in his father's writings or in the writings of Burke, Niebuhr, and others.[113] The latter significance with which Arnold endows the term 'Zeitgeist', is not, however, justified by Goethe's use of it. Admittedly, Riemer recorded Goethe's conviction that 'Religion itself, like time, like life and knowledge, is in a state of constant advance and development', and that was quite enough for Arnold's purposes; he approvingly copied the maxim into his note-book under 1868.[114] But the fact remains that Goethe was no more a philosopher of history than he was a theologian.[115]

Nevertheless, Arnold could still point to significant areas of agreement between himself and Goethe. Arnold's work in the field of religious controversy had two aspects. Firstly he wished to demonstrate the inadequacy of religion as it then was, and secondly to suggest a 'rational' form of religion to suit the modern age. Arnold's endeavours were consequently constructive. He started from the premise of the unsurpassed value of Christian ethics. This premise Goethe accepted:

> No matter how far spiritual culture progresses, however much the sciences grow in range and depth, however much the human mind broadens,–it will never pass beyond the greatness and moral cultural of Christianity as it shines forth in the Gospels![116]

Like Arnold, who saw how grossly the 'strife, jealousy, wrath, contentions and backbitings', which marked the separation of the dissenting Puritan sects from the Established Church, contrasted with Christ's 'sweet reasonableness', and his message of love, joy, peace, patience, mildness, and self-control, Goethe found the spirit of sectarianism, with its hatred and rancour, intolerable.

Arnold's aim in *St Paul and Protestantism* was to show that Puritanism was 'based on a blunder', that for three centuries it has 'been pounding away . . . at St Paul's wrong words, and missing his essential doctrine'. With its insistence on the doctrines of predestination, original sin and justification by faith, Puritanism encouraged its followers 'to look, in religion, not so much for an arduous progress on their own part, and the exercise of their activity, as for strokes of magic, and what may be called a sensational character'.[117] Goethe agreed; he could never approve any doctrine which made human activity and effort at improvement appear futile.[118] To both men the essence of religion was not dogma but 'that which binds and holds us to the practice of righteousness'.[119] Falk reports Goethe as having said:

> If Protestants sought to define more clearly what ought to be loved, done, and taught . . . without compelling any man to assent to dogmas tortured, with afflicting presumption, into a conformity to this or that rule . . . I should myself be the first to visit the church of my brethren in religion, with sincere heart, and to submit myself with willing edification to the general, practical confession of a faith which connected itself so immediately with action.[120]

For Arnold the control of personal conduct was always the main consideration, 'at the very lowest computation' three-fourths of human life.[121] When in his reading he encountered Goethe's maxim, 'Nothing in life, apart from health and virtue, is to be valued more highly than knowledge and science; nor is anything achieved so easily, purchased so cheaply; the only effort is *being still*, the only cost is *time*, which we cannot save without spending', he copied it into his note-book with the comment of agreement: 'Primacy of Tugend [Virtue]'.[122]

Given this common belief in the necessity of religion to address primarily the moral life of man, one is not surprised to find that Goethe and Arnold shared a similar high regard for the Bible–the Bible properly conceived, that is. Goethe saw that the Bible contained contradictions,.but he hated the destructive, mocking criticism of sceptics.[123] The Bible was dear to him because he owed to it, he claimed, almost his entire moral education as a child.[124] Arnold stressed that the real–i.e., moral–value of the Bible was unimpaired by the 'unscientific' nature of the narrative. It was important to read the Bible aright: popular religion was in error in taking the figurative language of the Bible literally, while the learned religion of the Bishops and theologians was wrong in attempting to construct from it a system of metaphysics. Arnold copied into his note-book under 1879 Goethe's maxim on the role of the Bible in education:

> There is, and will continue to be, much argument about the use and harm of teaching the Bible. To me it is clear: it will do harm, as it always has, if used dogmatically and fantastically; it will do good, as it always has, if received didactically and sensitively.[125]

And under 1878 he copied a comment made by a contemporary of Goethe; 'He [Goethe at the age of twenty-four] has high respect for Christian religion, but not in the form represented by our theologians'.[126] There are other parallels too. For example, Arnold could justifiably feel that he had Goethe's support in regarding any religion as 'but an *approximation* to the truth'.[127] Or again: in spite of his high regard for men's religious sense, Arnold still set religion as such below culture, for culture–as the best that has been thought and known–included religion within itself. Goethe seemed to agree; at least, the sentence of Goethe's which Arnold liked to quote, 'He who has art and science has religion too' could reasonably be interpreted to imply the subordination of religion to culture.[128]

It would, however, be wrong to infer from the general similarity of attitude which I have outlined above, that Arnold was in the formulation of his attitude deeply indebted to Goethe, or was, in any sense, following him. Arnold's works on religion are detailed expositions of a carefully worked out and defined point of view, and there is nothing in Goethe's writings to compare with them. The sources of most of Arnold's quotations from Goethe in the religious writings are the conversations with Eckermann, Riemer, and von Müller, and the aphorisms of the 'Maximen und Reflexionen'. The very nature of the sources precludes a really profound influence; the conversations are usually desultory and mainly concerned with topics other than religion, and an aphorism–however, wise, concise and suggestive–could hardly have stimulated Arnold to produce such a bulky work as *Literature and Dogma*. Arnold's references to Goethe in his religious writings undoubtedly indicate the pleasure he felt in discovering an ally of stature and authority, but it is unlikely that his religious works would have been very different, either in shape or substance, had Goethe's agreement not been there. D. J. DeLaura has expressed the view that 'Arnold is nowhere more Goethean than in his adoption of the role as healer and reconciler' of Hellenic and Judaic-Christian positions, but this seems to me to distort and to exaggerate Goethe's relevance to Arnold's religious thinking.[129] While DeLaura is certainly correct in describing Goethe's and

Arnold's position as 'mediatorial', a crucial distinction is overlooked. Arnold's position was consciously and actively mediatorial. His writings are addressed to a primarily Christian audience and attempt to convince it of the values of Hellenism. Goethe was never an apostle for any cause, and his position was mediatorial only in so far as it drew upon the culture of both Jew and Greek alike. Certainly, this must have been a source of Goethe's attractiveness for Arnold, but for the real relationship of Goethe to Arnold's religious thought we must turn our attention again to the idea of 'naturalism'.

This is the opinion of W. Robbins also: 'The "profound naturalism" of Goethe is throughout *Literature and Dogma* brought to bear upon man's anthropomorphism and the tendency to see in religious *Aberglaube* [superstition] the science rather than the poetry of life'.[130] Robbins does not elaborate, but he has at least raised an interesting question, for 'naturalism' of a sort does indeed run throughout all Arnold's religious writings. Arnold's expressed aim was to establish religion on 'the firm basis of observation and experiment'.[131] To achieve this aim would be to find for religion a real source of authority, and the only authority which the modern intelligence would accept. The modern supporter of religion, therefore, must assert nothing which cannot be 'verified', and the only adequate verification is reference to experience: 'observation', 'experience', 'real', 'verify', 'verifiable' are words which are repeated constantly through *Literature and Dogma*. This is the essence of Arnold's naturalism, and in principle it accords absolutely with Goethe's. Falk said of him:

> All conclusions, observations, doctrines, opinions, articles of faith, have value in his eyes only in so far as they connect themselves with this territory of experience, which he has so fortunately conquered.[132]

The same opposition of authority and experience is stressed by Riemer in his account of Goethe's 'faith', which was not, he says, 'the usual, traditionary Christianity of the Church, accepted on authority without verification or testing'; his aspiration was to approach 'the Highest' by observation of Nature—*Naturbetrachtung und Naturerforschung*.[133] Basically, therefore, Arnold and Goethe did indeed profess allegiance to the same principle, but clearly it is no less important to enquire whether they applied this naturalism in a similar way, and whether they arrived at similar conclusions.

When Arnold examined the intellectual basis on which religion in his day rested he found it totally inadequate. Religion as it then was, he argued, would inevitably lose its hold over the masses as the dissolving influence of the scientific outlook made itself felt. The central objection to Christian dogma, of whatever Church, was that it was not 'sure', that it assumed what could not be 'verified'. The fundamental error lay in its notion of God as, in Arnold's scornful phrase, 'a magnified and non-natural man', a notion which remained the same even when dressed up in the impressive but vacuous language of theology as 'a Great Personal First Cause . . . the moral and intelligent Governor of the universe'.[134] All of this, says Arnold, adapting a maxim of Goethe's, is merely *Aberglaube*–superstition, 'over-belief'.[135] The idea of a personal God is 'poetry', not fact; it is no more–and again a Goethean maxim was appropriate–than the product of man's anthropomorphic consciousness.[136]

What then remains of religion when its mythic accretions are stripped away? Arnold intended his answer to be reassuring, for what remains is morality. Morality, he insists, does not require the supernatural sanction of a wrathful God dispensing eternal measures of punishment and reward. Its authority can be established and verified by reference to experience. This is Arnold's message of joy for his troubled, uncertain contemporaries, but it is at this point, when he tries to show that religion can after all be rebuilt upon a firm basis of observation and experiment, that he is least convincing.[137] Arnold realized that morality alone was too austere ever to attract and hold the mass of mankind; but religion 'lighted up' morality, touched it with emotion, and thus made it a force capable of influencing for the better the actions of all men, not just the exceptional few.[138] Arnold viewed his task as two-fold: he had firstly to show that the tenets of Christian ethics were verifiable, and secondly that the reduced form of religion which he proposed would still be capable of exerting on human behaviour the required restraint.

Arnold's strategy in pursuing the second of these tasks is interesting. He tried to retain the emotionally charged language of the old religion, in particular the term 'God', while applying it to his new naturalistic conceptions. Until 'we are agreed as to what we mean by *God*, we can never . . . understand one another or discuss seriously'. He considers it impossible any longer to believe in a 'personal first cause', but not impossible to believe that 'all things . . . have what we call a law of their being, and . . . to tend to fulfil it'. Whether or not we call this law by the name of 'God' is a matter of choice, but, if we do so, then at least we have the advantage of having given the name to 'a certain and admitted reality'.[139] Leaving aside the question whether this law is as certain as Arnold supposes, one wonders at the purpose of juggling like this with the word 'God'. Of course, Arnold wishes to make the term 'scientific', but it is hard to see how this impersonal law could ever be a substitute for the old personal God as an object of religious devotion. Not only is Arnold at pains to retain the language of religion, but even its forms. Thus, he envisaged a renovated Church of England accepting the new conception of God, but continuing as 'a great national society for the promotion of goodness', and in the essay 'A Comment on Christmas' (1885) he foresaw the survival of the Christian calendar even under the dynasty of science.[140] The festivals of Christmas, Lent, and Whitsuntide would continue to be celebrated in homage to the eternal ideas of 'pureness', 'temptation', and 'spirit'.[141]

It might be remarked that Arnold's speculations on the future of religion are inappropriate in a professed naturalist, but the 'prophetic' aspect of his thought is comparatively unimportant. Much more central to Arnold's naturalism is his contention that the essential moral tenets of Christianity represent necessary and eternal facts of nature, truths of reason, which can be verified and will survive.

Though Arnold was not the first to make such claims as these—Butler and Coleridge before him argued the natural truth of Christianity—they are nevertheless remarkable from someone committed to the principle of 'verifiability'. In *God and the Bible* Arnold described 'experience' in a way which seems almost to place him in the empiricist tradition of such philosophers as Locke, Hume, J. S. Mill, and Bertrand Russell, as 'that source of all our knowledge'.[142] But the crux of the matter is precisely what is meant by, or allowed as, experience. One must wonder, for example, what sort of experience could conceivably verify the proposition that there is an 'enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness',—which Arnold held to be a certain and admitted reality.[143] Clearly, this is not the 'experience' spoken of by Locke and Hume, nor is it something that can be put under a microscope or examined in a laboratory.

It can of course be objected in Arnold's favour that there are other kinds of experience than the experience provided by the senses, and it is to these kinds of experience that he constantly refers. One has an example of this in *St Paul and Protestantism*, when Arnold considers the message of St Paul, the message of Resurrection. He maintains that Puritanism has misinterpreted St Paul, taking 'Resurrection' wrongly to refer to a rising to new life after death. In fact, Arnold says, the primary meaning of Resurrection in St Paul's mature theology was a rising to new life on this side of the grave; that it was possible for men to 'die' to their old inferior selves, and to 'rise again' to a new self in the superior life of righteousness. St Paul's message, Arnold claims, can be verified by reference to experience. But it is essentially one's own experience of one's own inner moral life; the message is verified by 'science', but the science of 'psychology'.[144]

Here, then, is the root of Arnold's dilemma—a dilemma of which he seems never to have been conscious—and it is expressed succinctly in Robbins's comment, 'The empirical experience of a moral power operative in human life is too subjective to sustain the kind of objectification Arnold wants'.[145] Arnold wrote:

> For, as man advances in his development, he becomes aware of two lives, one permanent and impersonal, the other transient and bound to our contracted self; he becomes aware of two selves, one higher and real, the other inferior and apparent; and that the instinct in him truly to live, the desire for happiness, is served by following the first self and not the second.[146]

If one now imagines any individual retorting to this statement that these perceptions do not form part of *his* awareness, one can appreciate the problem which would face Arnold, for statements of this kind cannot be verified. There is no objective evidence to support them. The very phrasing of the above passage, by presenting the point of view as beyond dispute, inhibits the objection I have envisaged. But the proposition that 'man has two selves etc.' is clearly not a fact of human nature of the same order of demonstrability as the proposition that 'blood circulates round the body through the veins and arteries'. Nevertheless, this is what

Arnold implicitly claims for it when he describes it as 'scientific' or 'verifiable'. Arnold would have us believe it a great natural truth that 'To righteousness belongs happiness'.[147] He speaks of the 'natural victoriousness of virtue, even in this world'; he tells us that 'nations and men, whoever is shipwrecked, is shipwrecked on conduct'; that it is 'moral causes which govern the standing and the falling of States'.[148] Statements of this sort are not scientific. A naturalist of a more rigorous sort, Marx, suggested that the standing and falling of nations had something to do with economic causes.[149]

Arnold's attempt to find for morality a rigorously scientific—but not materialistic—basis was unsuccessful. In the effort to support statements such as those I have quoted above he was driven inevitably to cite literary authorities. Thus the biblical narrative of Israel has, we are told, 'evidential force' for the importance of righteousness, and to lend weight to the idea of 'self-renouncement' Arnold produces an impressive array of witnesses in Horace, Aristotle, Plato, and, of course, Goethe.[150] Goethe was a favourite 'witness'. A stanza from the poem 'Selige Sehnsucht' containing the words 'Stirb und werde'—'Die and become'—is used by Arnold as evidence for St Paul's conception of 'necrosis'—dying to the old self—and resurrection, while a maxim from Riemer's *Mittheilungen* helps to reveal the 'profound natural truth of the idea of [sexual] pureness'.[151] Whatever name one gives to 'evidence' of this sort, it is not naturalism. Goethe, a greater naturalist, would probably have been flattered by the use Arnold made of his name, but he would not have approved of Arnold's method:

> The time will come when men will believe in me, and quote me as authority for this and that I had rather, however, they would assert their right, and open their *own* eyes, so that they might see what lies before them.[152]

Arnold did not find it easy to reconcile the authoritarian principles of classicism and the individualistic ones of naturalism.

Having thus examined what Arnold understood by naturalism, and his attempt to apply its criteria of verification in the statement of his own religious beliefs, it is now possible to consider his idea of 'immortality' and to relate it to Goethe's thinking on the same subject. Arnold made the fullest statement of his position in *Literature and Dogma*. He conceded that continuance after death cannot be proven, pointing to the lack of solidity in the arguments of Plato's *Phaedo*, but he alleges that, in considering 'immortality', hope and anticipation 'may well be permitted to come in'. Arnold does not seek a better argument, he seeks only to provide a 'true basis' for this permissible hope, a basis which will be compatible with the 'experimental process' that he advocates. Abandoning the 'fairy-tales' of popular religion, he begins with 'certainties'.

> And a certainty is the sense of *life*, of being truly *alive*, which accompanies righteousness. If this experimental sense does not rise to the sense of being inextinguishable, that is probably because our experience of righteousness is really

> so very small . . . At any rate, we have in our experience this strong sense of *life from righteousness* to start with; capable of being developed, apparently, by progress in righteousness into something immeasurably stronger.[153]

Here Arnold leaves it deliberately vague whether he envisages what Allott has called 'conditional immortality'–i.e., immortality for the few, extinction for the many. One is uncertain whether those individuals whose experience of righteousness is 'small' are included in the scheme of Arnold's immortality, or not. Is immortality only for those with righteousness, or is it for all regardless of their moral achievement? Arnold seems to be arguing only that, if we do not sense the inextinguishability of life, it is because we are not sufficiently advanced in 'righteousness'.

One might not have suspected that the notion of 'conditional immortality' was at all involved in Arnold's account, if one had not already known that the idea appealed to him. It is present, in essence, in his letter to Clough of 29 September 1848:

> Farewell, my love, to meet I hope at Oxford: not alas in Heaven: tho: thus much I cannot but think: that our spirits retain their conquests: that from the height they succeed in raising themselves to, they can never fall. Tho: this uti possedetes principle may be compatible with entire loss of individuality and of the power to recognize one another.[154]

Here, immortality is only for those who 'raise themselves'. In 'Rugby Chapel' Arnold addresses his late father:

> O strong soul, by what shore
> Tarriest thou now? For that force,
> Surely, has not been left vain!
> Somewhere, surely, afar,
> In the sounding labour-house vast
> Of being, is practised that strength,
> Zealous, beneficent, firm!

The connexion of immortal life with the 'force' manifested in this life, is further developed by Arnold in the sonnet 'Immortality':

> No, no! the energy of life may be
> Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
> And he who flagged not in the earthly strife,
>
> From strength to strength advancing–only he,
> His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
> Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.[155]

Allott has pointed out that the idea of immortality for the few behind these lines appears to be connected with a remark which Goethe made to Eckermann.[156]

I do not doubt our continued existence, for Nature cannot do without the

> entelechy. But we are not all immortal in the same way, and to manifest oneself as a great entelechy in the future, one has to be one here.[157]

However, Goethe's statement implies, it seems to me, not that some do achieve immortality whereas others do not, but rather that all achieve it in some measure. What is 'conditional' is not the fact of continued existence, but its quality: to have a 'great' future existence, one must achieve 'greatness' here. And this idea is closer to that expressed by Arnold in his letter to Clough of 1848–our spirits retain the height they have succeeded in raising themselves to.[158],

The profounder connexion of Arnold's idea with Goethe's lies surely elsewhere. On the whole, Goethe was less tentative on the question of immortality than Arnold. 'I have the firm conviction that our spirit is a being of quite indestructible nature'.[159] The proof of immortality, Goethe told von Müller, lay in each man's breast–'it was impossible for a thinking creature to conceive of non-being'–but as soon as one tried to prove this inner perception objectively and philosophically for dogmatic purposes, one became lost in contradictions.[160] Nevertheless, Goethe desired, like Arnold, to suggest a naturalistic basis for the belief in immortality, and this he found in the concept of 'activity':

> My conviction that our existence continues after death stems from the concept of activity; for if I work unceasingly until the end, then nature is bound to allot me a new form of existence, when the present form is no longer able to endure my spirit.[161]

It was with this thought that he comforted his friend Zelter, whose only surviving son died in 1827: 'The entelechic monad has only to persevere in unresting activity', he wrote, 'if this becomes its second nature, then it will not lack occupation in eternity'.[162] Prompted by Wieland's death in 1813, Goethe discussed these ideas again with Falk, whose account of the conversation Arnold read in 1865. (The 'Immortality' sonnet was 'probably written in July or August 1863', see *Poems*, p. 488.) Goethe stressed that 'ideas which are without a firm foundation in the sensible world . . . bring no conviction to me; for that, in what concerns the operations of nature, I want to *know*, not merely to conjecture or believe'. Still, he thought, the hypothesis which he put forward did not contradict observation:

> . . . it is something to have attained to that pitch of refined wit, of tender, elegant thought, which predominated so delightfully in Wieland's soul; it is something to have possessed that industry, that iron persistency and perserverance, in which he surpassed us all . . . *The destruction of such high powers of soul is a thing that never, and under no circumstances, can even come into question.*[163]

The entelechy or monad (the terms are interchangeable) was the life-principle, the principle of activity in any organism, and it was this principle–orthodox theology would probably call it the 'soul'–which continued in existence after the organism itself had passed away.[164] In the conversation with Falk Goethe speculates that the monad may manifest itself in any new form, for example, as a 'star' or 'ant', and in the letter to Zelter quoted above he leaves it to God whether the entelechy would have any remembrance of this life. Clearly, then, Goethe was considerably bolder in his speculations about immortality than Arnold, and the doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, to which Goethe's idea comes close, held little attraction for the English naturalist. Nevertheless, in 'Rugby Chapel' and 'Immortality' the core of Arnold's indebtedness to Goethe lies in his assertion that it was 'activity'–his father's 'force'–rather than personality which survived the body's decay. The fact that Arnold did not make more of these ideas in his account of immortality in *Literature and Dogma* is not surprising. They were imaginative notions suitable to be entertained in poems, but they were not verifiable.

There can be no doubt that Arnold's demand for observation and experiment as the only adequate basis for religious belief was made out of deference to the scientific *Zeitgeist*, and one can be equally sure that Arnold thought of himself as a follower or continuator of Goethean naturalism. In a sense he was quite right, but in this matter there are differences between the two men which are quite as fundamental as any similarities. Arnold's 'nature'–and, as he himself lamented, what pitfalls there are in that word–was emphatically not Goethe's.[165] Even in youth the English poet had only a faint sense of material nature; poems such as 'Resignation', 'The Youth of Nature' and 'The Youth of Man' attest to his interest in 'nature', but in 'nature' primarily as an intellectual conception of universal necessity rather than in the physical reality. His 'nature' was, oddly for a poet, a basically philosophical notion, and the feeling of dissatisfaction with which one reads a poem like 'The Youth of Man' derives surely from Arnold's failure to connect his idea closely with any observed reality. In the religious works of Arnold's later years the conception of nature is, despite his claim that it is scientific, even more decidedly ethical and philosophical.

It is doubtful whether in questions of ethics the criteria of scientific verification can ever provide more than an interesting analogy. Goethe certainly looked upon the moral and religious–*das Sittliche, Religiöse*–as areas quite separate from the study of nature, and to this extent at least Arnold can be said to have misunderstood the naturalism of the German poet.[166] Indeed, Arnold's relationship with the natural sciences was never a satisfactory one. He professed admiration for the interesting discoveries of science, although one cannot avoid the suspicion that this was mainly lip-service, but really he could not see that science had very much to do with culture or education. Nothing illustrates this better than a reference which Arnold made to Goethe in *God and the Bible*:

> If Goethe could say that all which was really worth knowing in all the sciences he had ever studied would go into one small envelope, how much more may one say this of . . . biblical criticism.[167]

Goethe did indeed make such a remark:

> If I were to write down the sum of all that is worth knowing in the various sciences

> with which I have employed myself throughout my life, the manuscript would be so small that you might carry it home in your pocket in the cover of a letter.[168]

One can imagine the kind of statement the manuscript would include that Newton was wrong, light being one and indivisible, or that man's intermaxillary bone (discovered by Goethe) proved that man was a creature akin to animals and not, as theology taught, an altogether separate creature. Goethe's remark was intended as no disparagement of science, and it is useful to remember that he could also say of the earth's motion round the sun that it was the greatest, most sublime discovery ever made, in his eyes more important than the entire Bible![169]

For Goethe, 'nature' was that which could be apprehended by the senses, and hence he was in this respect closer to Wordsworth with his 'rocks and stones and trees' than to Arnold. Only later in the century when Darwin revealed the actual process of natural development as a remorseless struggle for survival could men begin to see nature as she really is, 'red in tooth and claw'. Goethe's scientific studies, in optics, natural history, botany, geology, and morphology, which were so central to his outlook and were really the essence of his naturalism, were totally foreign to Arnold. True, both men 'saw' God in Nature, but it was a different God and a different Nature. Arnold saw God in 'the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being'.[170] But impressive as this statement sounds, it is essentially empty, because Arnold was really concerned only with 'man', whose 'law of being' he deemed to be righteousness, and not with 'all things'; it is empty because Arnold's observation of life had not breadth enough to supply it with the content it requires. In short, steadily as Arnold saw life, he did not see it whole. Goethe was filled with an admiring sense of nature's unceasing activity, her overflowing fecundity:

> Why is nature always lovely? everywhere lovely? everywhere meaningful? eloquent . . . Is it not because nature is in eternal movement, eternally creating anew . . .?[171]

It was nature's 'open secret', the mystery and apparent inexplicability of her creative laws, that fascinated Goethe and prompted him to take up the natural sciences; and it was in this creativity that God, he believed, could be discerned. To observe and comprehend nature's laws—the law by which the flower grows from seed through stem and leaf to culminate in bloom—was actually to *see* God in operation, and in so far as these laws were universal and 'necessary', binding, as it were, even on God, then Nature and God were one.[172]

These few remarks on Goethe's 'nature' do no more than scratch the surface of a huge topic, but for my purposes it is enough, since it suggests the great differences between Goethe's view and Arnold's. But to stress these differences does not imply a criticism of Arnold, even if the Englishman does suffer by the comparison, because they were made inevitable by the years which separated the lives of the two men. Arnold could not learn from Goethe's science because it had been largely superseded. That profound sense of awe before the ‘simplest’ natural phenomenon, Arnold could not feel; the once haunted air was empty, mystery conquered, ironically, by the experimental method which both he and Goethe had advocated. From Goethe Arnold had indeed learned that naturalism which was his main intellectual habit, but unlike Goethe he applied it primarily to man’s inner moral life. The visible, external world had in Arnold’s day become the territory of the scientist, and Arnold had neither the talent nor the training to venture there. This fact represents the most significant difference between the two men, and also the main limitation on the immense usefulness which Goethe had for Arnold.

CONCLUSION

As a contemporary poet, Ted Hughes, has remarked, the 'whole business of influences is mysterious'.[173] Where possible I have tried to avoid the word 'influence' in my account of Arnold's relationship with Goethe, because it seems inevitably to imply the idea of 'likeness'. Yet it is obviously possible for one writer to be influenced by another and still produce works bearing little resemblance to those from which he has learned. This is the case with Arnold. Writing in 1928 J. B. Orrick concluded that, contrary to Arnold's own opinion, the English poet and critic did not learn from Goethe any intellectual habits, methods or ruling ideas.[174] Orrick's conclusion is, I think, quite erroneous but he produced his piece at a time when Arnold's note-books and reading-lists were unpublished and the definitive editions of Lowry, Tinker, Super, and Allott had not appeared–at a time, in other words, when the basic materials with which a sound assessment could be made were unavailable.

It is not possible to sum up Arnold's relationship with Goethe in a neat formula. It was, as I have tried to show, a shifting and complex affair. Arnold certainly learned from Goethe and was indebted to him for several important insights. But no less important was the feeling of confidence, which Arnold derived from his intimate acquaintance with Goethe's thought, that–as a continuer of Goethe's path–his own work was central and relevant, truly modern. Arnold felt a deep kinship with the greatest critic of modern life, and this perhaps is why he was able to adopt such an assured and magisterial public manner. Whether this feeling of kinship derived from his reading of Goethe or from some profounder temperamental affinity is hard to say:– Yeats, often a shrewd judge, fixed both Arnold and Goethe in the same phase of his cycle of incarnations.[175] And, indeed, Goethe was more to Arnold than a source of ideas, he was–in Yeats's phrase–'a portion of his mind and life, as it were', and to study Goethe's meaning for Arnold is to approach very close to the centre of his intellectual life.

But Goethe would have been sceptical perhaps. Sharing Hughes's sense that 'influence' in literature is a problematical thing, he disdained the efforts of those who tried to unravel the complexities of his own relationship with Schiller:

> We composed many distichs together, often I had the idea and Schiller made the verse, often it was vice versa, often Schiller wrote one line, I the other. How can there be any talk here of 'mine' and 'yours'! One would really have to be stuck fast in philistinism to attach even the slightest importance to such problems.

And source-hunting in general?

Most ludicrous; one might just as well ask a well-nourished man after the cattle, sheep, and pigs which he has eaten and which give him strength.[176]

APPENDIX A
(See p. 26)

A recent critic of Arnold, G. R. Stange, has again called Marguerite's existence into question. His case for regarding Marguerite as a 'fictional' character (*Matthew Arnold, The Poet as Humanist* (1967), p. 215) is effectively answered by A. D. Culler, *Imaginative Reason*, pp. 117-20. Apart from the circumstantial evidence for Marguerite's existence in Arnold's letter to Clough (29 September 1848), where he refers to his desire to linger in Switzerland for the sake of the blue eyes of one of the guests at his hotel, Arnold's development after 1849 can only be explained if we admit the reality of a painful act of renunciation in the September of that year. In rejecting Marguerite's existence Stange is constrained to view the 'Switzerland' group of poems as simply an experiment in poetic technique, and his suggestion (p. 222) that Arnold was attempting a *Liederzyklus* after the fashion of Wilhelm Müller, Adalbert von Chamisso, and Heinrich Heine, is an important element in his case. There is not a shred of evidence for believing that Arnold knew any works by the first two writers, least of all in their 'musical settings' (p. 223), and the supposed similarities between the 'Switzerland' poems and Heine's 'Nordsee' poems are difficult to see. Heine's lyric cycles proper, 'Heimkehr' and 'Lyrisches Intermezzo', are totally unlike the 'Switzerland' group. In spite of wide variations in the tone of individual poems a Heine cycle has a clear and consistent underlying narrative framework, but as Lionel Trilling has pointed out (*Matthew Arnold*, p. 122) the very contradictions in Arnold's poems, the very confusion as to what really happened and why, attest to the actuality of the affair. Furthermore, as late as May 1848 Arnold was still openly contemptuous of Heine (see *Letters*, I, 9). It is hard to believe that in just over one year Arnold's views had changed so dramatically that he now chose Heine's poems as models for his own works.

APPENDIX B
(See p. 38)

What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise? (ll. 71-72)

In these lines Arnold seems to be recalling a comment on the harmfulness of the present age made by Goethe in the series of maxims entitled 'Betrachtungen im Sinne des Wanderers' contained in Book Two of *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (1829). Goethe speaks there of 'das Unheil unserer Zeit, die nichts reif werden läßt'. 'the mischief of our age which allows nothing to grow ripe' (*Werke*, XXII, 225. See also 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Werke*, XLIX, 25, where the maxim is reprinted). It is worth noting that Arnold must have known the maxim in the original German. Carlyle had translated *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* in 1827, but he worked from the version of 1821. The 'Betrachtungen im Sinne des Wanderers', however, were included only in the version of 1829. Arnold could not have known this maxim through Carlyle, although we know that it was in Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* that Arnold first read the novel.

APPENDIX C

(See p. 51)

No recent critic has made more extensive claims concerning Goethe's influence on Arnold than G. R. Stange. But before I proceed to examine in detail the evidence Stange presents in support of his views, some general comments are required on Stange's method. The great weakness of *Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist* as a whole is its preoccupation with discovering consistency and unity of opinion in Arnold's poetry.[1] These qualities, which are not necessarily virtues, do not exist there. If Lionel Trilling is correct, as I believe him to be, in his view of Arnold's poetry as an exploration of the two modern intellectual traditions, romanticism and rationalism, which had failed him, and as a search for alternatives in the face of 'the diminution of the power of Christianity', then it is futile to look to his poetry for a single consistent set of ideas.[2] Arnold is a poet of ideas; he takes them up and lets them drop, he uses them as the occasion demands without asking whether they contradict other ideas expressed elsewhere. Furthermore, he was fully aware of this and admitted it to his sister Jane in 1849:

> Fret not yourself to make my poems square in all their parts, but like what you can . . . The true reason why parts suit you while others do not is that my poems are fragments . . . a person therefore who endeavoured to make them accord would only lose his labour.[3]

Arnold is not indulging here in self-deprecating modesty but is speaking the plain truth and a critic must take him seriously.

This preoccupation with finding 'consistency' in Arnold's ideas in his poems leads to a further weakness. Stange's book demonstrates only the slightest sense of any change, progression, or development in Arnold's poetry and reveals a degree of indifference to the importance of its biographical and cultural background which is surprising. This weakness is manifested most strikingly in Stange's denial of Marguerite's existence, but it is also manifested in his failure to relate Goethe's supposed influence on Arnold to what Arnold had actually read of Goethe at the time, or to what Arnold was saying about Goethe in his letters, poetry and criticism.

Stange believes that Arnold assumes 'a knowledge of Goethe on the part of his readers, [and] designs his poems as extensions or adaptations of Goethe's motifs'. He says:

> I should consider Goethe's work to stand more or less explicitly behind all of Arnold's treatment of poetic man and his place in nature.

As to the specific nature of this influence Stange concludes:

> In the writings of Goethe, then, Arnold could find the conception of two natures—one the mutable and amoral; the other, the high cosmic order—and of an ultimate source of value within the individual.[4]

This conclusion is based on the following evidence.

(1) Stange claims that Arnold's sonnet 'In Harmony with Nature' 'echoes' Goethe's poem 'Das Göttliche'.[5] The reader is apparently meant to understand 'echoes' in a loose sense since Stange shows no close verbal parallels between the two poems. It is, therefore, the 'idea' of the poem which is echoed. Both poems supposedly assert the superiority of human values to 'natural' values: both are expressions of a humanist faith. There is a modicum of truth in this, but the likeness is of so general a kind that, in the absence of strong verbal similarities, one is not entitled to regard 'Das Göttliche' as a source of 'In Harmony with Nature', or the latter as an 'extension' of the former. Furthermore, as soon as one passes beyond the level of superficial resemblance profound differences between the ideas of the two poems begin to appear. Arnold asserts the superiority of human values by attributing to 'nature' unpleasant qualities of cruelty, fickleness, and stubbornness (ll. 7-9). Some qualities man might usefully emulate—nature's strength and coolness (l. 4)—but in general man must be superior to 'nature'. In Goethe's poem 'nature' makes only a passing appearance and her morality is neutral. Man cannot look to this 'nature' for exemplary moral values, because she has none whatsoever, neither positive nor negative:

> For nature is unfeeling. The sun shines on Good and Evil alike, and the moon and the stars shine on the criminal no less than on the best of men. Wind and rivers, thunder and hail roar on their way and hurrying by seize one after the other.[6]

Goethe's poem exhorts, therefore, not by deprecating nature as Arnold's does, but by celebrating man as he might be. At his best man could be a pattern (Vorbild) of those divine beings whose existence we surmise. There is no mention of the 'divine' in Arnold's poem; a fact which Stange admits is a disparity.[7]

(2) 'For the essentials of his concept of the general life Arnold is once more indebted to Goethe and Spinoza, and ultimately to Lucretius and Heraclitus'.

As I have shown (see above pp. 44-52) Arnold's concept of the 'general life' is related to Spinoza and Goethe, so it may seem an act of hostility to quarrel with Stange over an apparent point of agreement. Unfortunately, it is necessary. Stange writes:

> Underlying all of Arnold's formulations [with respect to the idea of the 'general life'] is Goethe's notion of the *Weltall* and of the exalted oneness with nature which the wise man could achieve. In his essay on Winckelmann, Goethe spoke of that rare state in which man's healthful nature works as a whole, when through the

enjoyment of this harmony he feels an ecstatic unity with the universal all.[8]

In the first place *Weltall* is the normal German word for 'universe' and is not 'Goethe's notion'. Secondly, the passage in the 'Winckelmann' essay to which Stange refers does not support his argument. Stange quotes the passage (in a footnote) in German but does not translate. A correct translation would read as follows:

> When the healthy nature of man functions, as a whole, when he feels himself in the world as in a grand, lovely, worthy and precious whole, when harmonious contentment grants him a pure and free delight, then the universe if it were conscious of itself would leap with joy at having arrived at its goal, and would gaze with admiration at the culmination of its own being and development. For what other purpose has all this expense of suns and planets and moons, of stars and milky ways, of comets and nebulae, of worlds past and future, unless at last a happy man unconsciously rejoices in his existence.[9]

It is quite plain from Stange's paraphrase of this passage that he has misunderstood it. Goethe makes no mention whatsoever of any feeling of 'ecstatic unity with the universal all'. It is clear from the context that the passage must be interpreted as referring to that state of creative activity enjoyed by the artist when all faculties operate in harmony with each other. Such a 'state' is indeed 'rare', but not in the sense which Stange means 'rare'–i.e. rare for an individual who might be lucky if he experienced such moments two or three times in a life-time. Goethe's discussion is historical. It is the historical periods when such a 'state' is possible that are rare. Moreover, Goethe's affirmation of a joyous man as the end and purpose of the universe represents an anthropocentric conception of the world to which Arnold would not have subscribed. (It is only fair to add, however, that the ideas are more extravagantly expressed than is usual for Goethe).

Stange's next example of the idea of the 'general life' in Goethe is equally dubious. Stange quotes (inaccurately) the final stanza of the poem 'Dauer im Wechsel':

> Laß den Anfang mit dem Ende
> Sich in Eins zusammenziehn!
> Schneller als die Gegenstände
> Selber dich vorüberfliehn.
> Danke, daß die Gunst der Musen
> Unvergängliches verheißt.
> Den Gehalt in deinem Busen
> Und die Form in deinem Geist.[10]

Stange comments (p. 132) that this stanza has given commentators a lot of trouble, but, alas, he is no exception for (apart from two errors of transcription) he badly mistranslates:

> Let, then, the beginning and the end unite themselves more swiftly than the material forms themselves fly past. Give thanks that the gracious gift of the Muses

assures eternity for that which is held within your heart, and the form conceived by your spirit.

A more accurate translation would read:

Let the beginning join with the end. And let yourself pass more quickly than (natural) objects. Give thanks that the Muses' favour promises something untransient, the content from your heart, the form from your mind.

At first sight it is difficult to see how this stanza contains any notion similar to Arnold's 'general life', but Stange explains:

Goethe's poet is strikingly like the wise poet of *Resignation*: he too sees the flux of things as a 'continuous whole' (this I take to be the meaning of Goethe's beginning and end united) and in a manner only implied in Arnold's poem, but triumphantly affirmed in *Dauer im Wechsel*, the artist may achieve a vision of eternity, but in order to do so his art must be *whole*, drawing on moral worth (*Gehalt*) with the heart and *Form*, which is of the intellect. This union of faculties is, of course, precisely that which Arnold continually stressed.[11]

This reading of the stanza is, to put it mildly, eccentric. His linking of Goethe's 'beginning and end united' with the 'continuous whole' of Arnold's poem 'Resignation' is wholly arbitrary, for he offers no evidence that Arnold understood it in this way. Goethe's poem makes no suggestion of 'wholeness' and there is no hint of any 'vision of eternity'. Furthermore, it is difficult to perceive why 'Gehalt' (content, subject matter) should be understood as 'moral worth'.

Stange argues further that Arnold's description in 'Resignation' of 'each moment' as 'but a quiet watershed/Whence, equally, the seas of life are fed' (l. 257) is 'little more than an extension of Goethe's conception' of 'the process of universal creation and destruction in which the moment only appears to stand still'. Stange refers here to the last lines of Goethe's poem 'Eins und Alles':

Das Ewige regt sich fort in allen:
Denn alles muß in Nichts zerfallen,
Wenn es im Sein beharren will.[12]

Again, in the absence of any verbal similarity between Arnold's and Goethe's lines, one is forced to conclude that the proposed link is an arbitrary conjunction; there is no evidence in support of it and no consciousness that evidence is required. Stange once again proves his misunderstanding of the German by a glaring error in translation. He offers:

The Eternal moves continually through all things, for all things must fall into nothingness if they persist in being.

The delightful paradox which is the point of Goethe's lines is quite lost. A more accurate translation would be:

The Eternal moves in all things: for all things must fall to nothing if they are to remain in being.

When Stange goes on to quote Goethe's poem 'Vermächtnis' and tell us that the line 'No being can fall into nothing' (Kein Wesen kann zu nichts zerfallen) *also* underlies Arnold's 'Resignation' then one begins to wonder whether Stange is really being serious; 'Vermächtnis' was written as an answer to 'Eins und Alles', which Goethe called 'dumm'. The lines from 'Resignation' which Stange believes express the same idea are, 'That general life, which does not cease, / Whose secret is not joy but peace' (ll. 191-92). According to Stange these lines define 'a world process different from Goethe's only in being more pronouncedly Stoical'.[13]

(3) Stange quotes from 'Self-Dependence' the following lines:

'Unaffrightened by the silence round them, [the Stars and Sea]
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

'And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul's,

'Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see.' (ll. 17-28).

He comments:

Again, as in *Resignation*, the poetry celebrates a peace which arises from an awareness of and a resting in the universal process. The conception is to be found in Goethe–and in Goethe when he is most indebted to Spinoza's thought. One of the epigrams, the so-called *Zahme Xenien*, which has for some time been cited as an analogue to *Quiet Work*, applies even more directly to *Self-Dependence*:

Wie das Gestirn,
Ohne Hast,
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigene Last.[14]

A certain similarity between the lines from 'Self-Dependence' quoted by Stange, and Goethe's epigram is undeniable. The 'stars' in both instances are models for emulation by human beings: they are 'self-poised' and 'undistracted' by things around them (although this is implied rather than stated in the German piece). However, there are so many details in Arnold's lines which are without equivalent in Goethe's epigram, the 'Sea' for example, that one must be sceptical about whether or not the proposed source is a genuine one. It is, moreover, highly doubtful whether the epigram as such can be made the vehicle for a conception of the 'peace which arises from an awareness of and a resting in the universal process', as Stange claims. With respect to his suggestion that in these few lines Goethe was never more indebted to Spinoza, one can only remark on the complete lack of supporting evidence. But Stange's greatest error again occurs when he attempts to translate the epigram:

> Like the stars, without haste, but without rest, let each one go his rounds with his own burden.

The literal meaning of the epigram is plain enough:

> Like the stars, without haste, but without rest, let each revolve about his own mass.

What Goethe in fact means is a matter for interpretation, but Stange's translation falls between two stools: it attempts to stay close to a literal rendering ('revolve', *drehen* has become 'go his rounds', and 'about his own mass' *um die eigene Last* has become 'with his own burden') while simultaneously suggesting an interpretation—'let every man go about his own business without bothering about anyone else'. The result is inelegant, to say the least.

Stange then quotes the last stanza of 'Self-Dependence':

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
'Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,
Who finds himself, loses his misery!' (ll. 29-32).

Stange's comment on these lines is sensible:

> The operative word in the concluding couplet is *be*. Romantic self-awareness, the paths of feeling or of psychological knowledge are not the ways to serenity; man's problem is one of being.

But then he proceeds to find a source for the lines in Goethe:

> One of Goethe's lyrics, Proömion, affirms the possible unity between the higher self of man and the universe of things; the concluding stanza of Goethe's poem, though it refers to the idea and knowledge of what the poet calls God, contains—I think—the germ of Arnold's notion.

Im Innern ist ein Universum auch:
Daher der Völker löblicher Gebrauch,
Daß jeglicher das Beste, was er kennt,
Er Gott, ja seinen Gott benennt,
Ihm Himmel und Erden übergibt,
Ihn fürchtet, und womöglich liebt.[15]

This could be translated as:

> There is also a universe within man: hence the laudable custom among nations that

> each man calls the Best that he knows 'God'–his God–offers Him heaven and earth, fears Him and, if possible, loves Him.

Exactly how this stanza contains the germ of Arnold's notion, as explicated by Stange, is not altogether clear. However, he continues:

> The conception of a universal order which man may discover within himself has in Goethe's poetry a moral and humanistic cast which is much closer to Arnold's spirit than is the passivity of Hindu thought. The inner *Universum* is the source of our knowledge of *das Beste*. In his very late 'Testament' (*Vermächtnis*, 1829) Goethe returned to the metaphor of an internal cosmos, a center of absolute calm, a universe of which man's moral consciousness (Gewissen) is the sun:
>
> Sofort nun wende dich nach innen:
> Das Zentrum findest du da drinnen,
> Woran kein Edler zweifeln mag.
> Wirst keine Regel da vermissen:
> Denn das selbständige Gewissen
> Ist Sonne deinem Sittentag.[16]

Stange's comments on the two stanzas of Goethe are reasonably sound. What is not sound is to claim that the stanzas are significantly connected with the final stanza of 'Self-Dependence'. To imply that the line 'A cry like thine in my own heart I hear' contains Goethe's idea of a moral cosmos within man is highly dubious. This single line cannot bear the weight of meaning Stange tries to impose upon it.

On the basis of these examples Stange maintains that Arnold found in Goethe two conceptions of nature; nature as a mutable, amoral being, and nature as a source of moral values within the individual. It is, I think, obvious that nothing Stange says really supports his claim. What Stange offers as 'evidence' is usually so vitiated by errors of understanding in the German, that it hardly merits the name of evidence at all. *Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist* contributes little to our understanding of the nature or manner of Goethe's influence on Arnold.

APPENDIX D
(see p. 76)

In the unpublished work previously referred to, V. E. Horn has suggested that Arnold's dissatisfaction with 'Empedocles on Etna' may have been due in part to a section from *Wilhelm Meister* which he had translated and copied into his 1847 note-book:

> In the 'Roman' should be set forth chiefly *states of mind* and *Events*: in the Drama *Characters* and *Acts* . . . The 'Roman'-hero must be passive, at least not in a high degree active: of the Drama-Hero we demand operation and acts.[1]

'Empedocles on Etna' clearly sets forth the hero's state of mind, and his role in the play, though not strictly passive, is lacking in 'Operations and acts'. On Goethe's theory, Empedocles would have made a better subject for a novel. Goethe's distinction between '*states of mind*' and '*Acts*' is perhaps reflected in Arnold's statement in the 1853 Preface that an 'allegory of the state of one's own mind' is not 'the highest problem of an art which imitates actions' (CPW, I, 8). It should be noted, however, that Goethe is here speaking not of the subjective 'state of mind' of the novelist but of the states of mind of the characters which the novelist invents. There is hence no direct relevance to the argument of the Preface, unless one reads the passage as an affirmation of the objective nature of dramatic and narrative literature.

APPENDIX E

(See p. 77)

The emphasis in the 1853 Preface on objective forms of art is illustrated in a minor way by Arnold's use of the phrase 'pragmatic poetry'. His own explanation of the expression is not very helpful: it refers, he says, to 'the more serious kinds' of poetry, which apparently excludes comedy and 'the lighter kinds of poetry' (CPW, I, 7). The exact signification of the phrase is not made clear by this. Arnold attributes the expression to Polybius (who speaks only of 'pragmatic history') but it derives in fact, as Allott has pointed out,[1] from Goethe's essay 'Ueber den Dilettantismus'. A brief examination of Arnold's source will give us a better understanding of the ideas behind the term. When speaking of the harmfulness of dilettantism in literature, Goethe divides poetry into two categories, 'lyric' and 'pragmatic' (see *Werke*, XLIV, 290 and 292). It appears from his discussion of pragmatic poetry (*Ibid*., p. 279) that the all-important character of the object is lost by the dilettante because he is capable only of expressing his subjective feelings about the object. The dilettante 'will never delineate the object. He flies the character of the object. All productions of [the] Dilettante in pragmatic poetry will have a pathological character, and only express the likes and dislikes of their originator' (Arnold's translation). It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that by 'pragmatic poetry' Goethe meant the objective forms of poetry, narrative and dramatic, as opposed to the subjective form, lyric poetry. Arnold knew Goethe's essay well and had translated the relevant passages into his 1847 note-book, so that it is highly probable that Goethe's meaning has carried over into Arnold's use of the expression. If this is the case Arnold's use of the expression is highly revealing. Perhaps lyric poetry too, like 'comedy', is 'lighter' and less 'serious' than tragic drama or epic poetry? This would appear to be the implication.

APPENDIX F: 'HALT'

(See p. 95)

It is a measure of Arnold's deep knowledge of Goethe's writings that he had observed how the word *Halt* is endowed with a specific, and characteristically Goethean meaning. *Halt*–as the moral qualities of steadiness and seriousness defined by Goethe–is referred to explicitly by Arnold in his essay on 'Maurice de Guérin' (1862), his reviews of Curtius's *History of Greece* for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and in 'A Speech at Eton' (1879).[1] Super's note on the 'Maurice de Guérin' essay points to two sources for the idea, the first from the *Campagne in Frankreich* (see above, p. 94), the second from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*: 'Ebenso nöthig scheint es mir gewisse Gesetze auszusprechen und den Kindern einzuschärfen, die dem Leben einen gewissen Halt geben'.[2] (It seems to me equally necessary to spell out and to instil into children certain rules which give life a certain steadiness.) Super's examples may, however, be supplemented by two from Goethe's correspondence, and one from his conversations with Eckermann:

Sehr schlimm ist es dabey, daβ das Humoristische, weil es keinen Halt und kein Gesetz in sich selbst hat, doch zuletzt früher oder später in Trübsinn und üble Laune ausartet . . .[3] (It is also very bad that the humorous, because it has within itself no steadiness and no governing law, always ends sooner or later in dejection and evil spirits.)

In a letter to Schiller Goethe wrote of the Schlegel brothers:

Die übrigen Späße werden Leser genug herbeilocken, und an Effect wird es auch nicht fehlen. Leider mangelt es beiden Brüdern an einem gewissen innern Halt der sie zusammenhalte und festhalte.[4] (The rest of their pranks will attract readers enough, and there will be no lack of effect. Unfortunately both brothers are wanting a certain inner steadiness which could sustain and support them.)

Eckermann reported Goethe saying in conversation:

Die Frau von Genlis hat daher vollkommen recht, wenn sie sich gegen die Freiheiten und Frechheiten von Voltaire auflegte. Denn im Grunde, so geistreich alles sein mag, ist der Welt doch nichts damit gedient; es läβt sich nichts darauf gründen. Ja, es kann sogar von der gröβten Schädlichkeit sein, indem es die Menschen verwirrt und ihnen den nötigen Halt nimmt.[5]

(So Mme de Genlis was perfectly right when she reacted against the liberties and impudencies of Voltaire. For when all is said and done, no matter how witty everything is, the world is not in the least helped by it; nothing can be built on it.

Indeed, it can even be of the greatest harmfulness by confusing men and robbing them of the necessary steadiness.)

This last example probably made a particularly strong impression on Arnold for it reflected his own judgement on the French critic–admiration tempered by feelings of reservation about Voltaire's levity:

> A court of literature can never be very severe to Voltaire: with that inimitable wit and clear sense of his, he cannot write a page in which the fullest head may not find something suggestive: still, because, handling religious ideas, he yet, with all his wit and clear sense, handles them wholly without the power of edification, his frame as a great man is equivocal.[6]

Arnold evidently knew Goethe's remark on Voltaire because, in his essay on 'Joubert', Arnold praises Joubert's 'real definitive judgement' on Voltaire as 'nearly identical' with Goethe's. Joubert had described Voltaire as lacking 'weight', and said that 'under no circumstances can Voltaire be of any use'.[7]

Again we observe how the neo-classic prejudice that the humorous and comic are inherently lower and inferior to the tragic because less 'serious' was shared by both Arnold and Goethe. There is also, of course, something puritanical about this distrust of wit–as Bishop Jeremy Taylor insisted, Jesus Christ never laughed.[8]

APPENDIX G

TRANSLATED QUOTATIONS IN ORIGINAL GERMAN

. . . kein Widerkrist, kein Unkrist, aber doch ein dezidirter Nichtkrist . . . (p. 23).

Gleichsam wie einen Gott hat das Schicksal den Dichter über dieses alles hinüber gesetzt. Er sieht das Gewirre der Leidenschaften, Familien und Reiche sich zwecklos bewegen . . . Er fühlt das Traurige und das Freudige jedes Menschenschicksals mit. (p. 26).

Uneigennützig zu seyn in allem, am uneigennützigsten in Liebe und Freundschaft, war meine höchste Lust, meine Maxime, meine Ausübung . . . (p. 26).

. . . die Muse . . . sucht die Gesellschaft des heiter Entsagenden, sich leicht Wiederherstellenden auf, der jeder Jahreszeit etwas abzugewinnen weiß, der Eisbahn wie dem Rosengarten die gehörige Zeit gönnt, seine eignen Leiden beschwichtigt . . . (p. 29).

. . . fragt euch nur bei jedem Gedicht: ob es ein Erlebtes enthalte, und ob dieß Erlebte euch gefördert habe?

Ihr seyd nicht gefördert, wenn ihr eine Geliebte, die ihr durch Entfernung, Untreue, Tod, verloren habt, immerfort betrauert. Das ist gar nichts werth, und wenn ihr noch so viel Geschick und Talent dabei aufgeopfert. (p. 30).

Junge Leute werden viel zu früh aufgeregt und dann im Zeitstrudel fortgerissen; Reichtum und Schnelligkeit ist was die Welt bewundert . . . (p. 31).

Nur muß ich nichts wieder unternehmen was außer dem Kreise meiner Fähigkeit liegt, wo ich mich nur abarbeite und nichts fruchte. (p. 37).

. . . dasjenige was mich erfreute oder quälte, oder sonst beschäftigte, in ein Bild, ein Gedicht zu verwandeln und darüber mit mir selbst abzuschließen, um sowohl meine Begriffe von den äußeren Dingen zu berichtigen. Die Gabe hierzu war wohl niemand nöthiger als mir, den seine Natur immerfort aus einem Extreme in das andere warf. (p. 37).

Mein eigentliches Glück war mein poetisches Sinnen und Schaffen. Allein wie sehr war dieses durch meine äußere Stellung gestört, beschränkt und gehindert! Hätte ich mich mehr vom öffentlichen und geschäftlichen Wirken und Treiben zurückhalten und mehr in der Einsamkeit leben können, ich wäre glücklicher gewesen und würde als Dichter weit mehr gemacht haben. (p. 43).

Ich hätte vielleicht ein halb Dutzend Trauerspiele mehr geschrieben . . . .
. . . ein Dutzend Theaterstücke zu schreiben; an Gegenständen fehlte es nicht, und die Produktion ward mir leicht. (p. 44).

. . . es ist ein gränzenloses Verdienst unsres alten Kant um die Welt, und ich darf auch sagen um mich, daß er, in seiner Kritik der Urtheilskraft, Kunst und Natur nebeneinander stllt und beiden das Recht zugesteht: aus großen Principien zwecklos zu handeln. So hatte mich Spinoza früher schon in dem Haß gegen die absurden Endursachen geglaubiget. Natur und Kunst sind zu groß um auf Zwecke auszugehen . . . (pp. 45-46).

Glücklicher Weise hatte ich . . . in mich das Daseyn und die Denkweise eines außerordentlichen Mannes aufgenommen, zwar nur unvollständig und wie auf den Raub, aber ich empfand davon doch schon bedeutende Wirkungen. Dieser Geist, der so entschieden auf mich wirkte, und der auf meine ganze Denkweise so großen Einfluß haben sollte, war Spinoza. Nachdem ich mich nämlich in aller Welt um ein Bildungsmittel meines wunderlichen Wesens vergebens umgesehen hatte, gerieth ich endlich an die Ethik dieses Mannes. Was ich mir aus dem Werke mag herausgelesen, was ich in dasselbe mag hineingelesen haben, davon wüßte ich keine Rechenschaft zu geben, genug ich fand hier eine Beruhigung meiner Leidenschaften, es schien sich mir eine große und freie Aussicht über die sinnliche und sittliche Welt aufzuthun. Was mich aber besonders an ihn fesselte, war die gränzenlose Uneigennützigkeit, die aus jedem Satze hervorleuchtete. Jenes wunderliche Wort: "Wer Gott recht liebt, muß nicht verlangen, daß Gott ihn wieder liebe", mit allen den Vordersätzen worauf es ruht, mit allen den Folgen die daraus entspringen, erfüllte mein ganzes Nachdenken. Uneigennützig zu seyn in allem, am uneigennützigsten in Liebe und Freundschaft, war meine höchste Lust, meine Maxime, meine Ausübung . . . Uebrigens möge auch hier nicht verkannt werden, daß eigentlich die innigsten Verbindungen nur aus dem Entgegengesetzten folgen. Die alles ausgleichende Ruhe Spinozas contrastirte mit meinem alles aufregenden Streben, seine mathematische Methode war das Widerspiel meiner poetischen Sinnes= und Darstellungsweise, und eben jene geregelte Behandlungsart, die man sittlichen Gegenständen nicht angemessen finden wollte, machte mich zu seinem leidenschaftlichen Schüler, zu seinem entschiedensten Verehrer. (p. 46).

Ich erinnerte mich noch gar wohl, welche Beruhigung und Klarheit über mich gekommen, als ich einst die nachgelassenen Werke jenes merkwürdigen Mannes durchblättert. Diese Wirkung war mir noch ganz deutlich, ohne daß ich mich des Einzelnen hätte erinnern können; ich eilte daher abermals zu den Werken, denen ich so viel schuldig geworden, und dieselbe Friedensluft wehte mich wieder an. Ich ergab mich dieser Lectüre und glaubte, indem ich in mich selbst schaute, die Welt niemals so deutlich erblickt zu haben . . . (p. 46).

Unser physisches sowohl als geselliges Leben, Sitten, Gewohnheiten, Weltklugheit, Philosophie, Religion, ja so manches zufällige Ereigniß, alles ruft uns zu: *daß wir entsagen sollen* . . . (p. 46).

Diese schwere Aufgabe jedoch zu lösen, hat die Natur den Menschen mit reichlicher Kraft, Thätigkeit und Zähigkeit ausgestattet. Besonders aber kommt ihm der Leichtsinn zu Hülfe . . . Hierdurch wird er fähig, dem Einzelnen in jedem Augenblick zu entsagen wenn er nur im nächsten Moment nach etwas Neuem greifen darf; und so stellen wir uns unbewußt unser ganzes Leben immer wieder her. Wir setzen eine Leidenschaft an die Stelle der andern; Beschäftigungen, Neigungen, Liebhabereyen, Steckenpferde, alles probiren wir durch, um zuletzt auszurufen, *daß alles eitel sei*. Niemand entsetzt sich vor diesem falschen, ja gotteslästerlichen Spruch; ja man glaubt etwas Weises und Unwiderlegliches gesagt zu haben. Nur wenige Menschen gibt es, die solche unerträgliche Empfindung vorausahnen, und, um allen partiellen Resignationen auszuweichen, sich ein für allemal im Ganzen resigniren.

Diese überzeugen sich von dem Ewigen, Nothwendigen, Gesetzlichen, und suchen sich solche Begriffe zu bilden, welche unverwüstlich sind, ja durch Betrachtung des Vergänglichen nicht aufgehoben, sondern vielmehr bestätigt werden. (pp. 46-47).

Es gibt keine andre Philosophie, als die Philosophie des Spinoza. (p. 47, note 72).

Wenn ich mich nach jemand nennen soll, so weiß ich keinen andern. (p. 48).

Dein Büchlein habe ich mit Anteil gelesen, nicht mit Freude. Es ist und bleibt eine Streitschrift eine Philosophische und ich habe eine solche Abneigung vor allen litterarischen Händeln, daß Raphael mir einen mahlen und Schäkespear ihn dramatisiren könnte und ich würde mich kaum daran ergötzen, was alles gesagt ist. (p. 48).

Er beweist nicht das Daseyn Gottes, das Daseyn ist Gott. Und wenn ihn andere deshalb *Atheum* schelten, so mögte ich ihn *theissimum* und *christianissumum* nennen und preisen. (p. 48).

Du weißt daß ich über die Sache selbst nicht deiner Meinung bin. Daß mir Spinozismus und Atheismus zweyerley ist. Daß ich den Spinoza wenn ich ihn lese mir nur aus sich selbst erklären kann, und daß ich, ohne seine Vorstellungsart von Natur selbst zu haben, doch wenn die Rede wäre ein Buch anzugeben, das unter allen, die ich kenne, am meisten mit der meinigen übereinkommt, die *Ethik* nennen müsse. (p. 48).

Übrigens bist du ein guter Mensch, daß man dein Freund seyn kann ohne deiner Meinung zu seyn, denn wie wir von einander abstehen hab ich erst recht weider aus dem Büchlein selbst gesehen. Ich halte mich fest und fester an die Gottesverehrung des Atheisten . . . und überlasse euch alles was ihr Religion heißt und heißen müßt . . . Wenn du sagst man könne an Gott nur glauben . . . so sage ich dir, ich halte viel aufs schauen, und wenn Spinoza von der *Scientia intuitiva* spricht, und sagt: *Hoc cognoscendi genus procedit ab adaequata idea essentiae formalis quorundam Dei attributorum ad adaequatam cognitionem essentiae rerum*: so geben mir diese wenigen Worte Muth, mein ganzes Leben der Betrachtung der Dinge zu widmen die ich reichen und von deren "*essentia formali*" ich mir eine adäquate Idee zu bilden hoffen kann, ohne mich im mindesten zu bekümmern wie weit ich kommen werde . . . (p. 49).

. . . wie konnte mir das Buch eines so herzlich geliebten Freundes willkommen seyn, worin ich die These durchgeführt sehen sollte: die Natur verberge Gott. Mußte, bei meiner reinen tiefen angeborenen und geübten Anschauungsweise, die mich Gott in der Natur, die Natur in Gott zu sehen unverbrüchlich gelehrt hatte, so daß diese

Vorstellungsart den Grund meiner ganzen Existenz machte, mußte nicht ein so seltsamer, einseitig-beschränkter Ausspruch mich dem Geiste nach von dem edelsten Mann, dessen Herz ich verehrend liebte, für ewig entfernen? Doch ich hing meinem schmerzlichen Verdruße nicht nach, ich rettete mich vielmehr zu meinem alten Asyl, und fand in Spinoza's Ethik auf mehrere Wochen meine tägliche Unterhaltung . . . (p. 49).

Ich für mich kann, bey den mannigfaltigen Richtungen meines Wesens, nicht an einer Denkweise genug haben; als Dichter und Künstler bin ich Polytheist, Pantheist hingegen als Naturforscher, und eins so entschieden als das andere. Bedarf ich eines Gottes für meine Persönlichkeit, als sittlicher Mensch, so ist dafür auch schon gesorgt. (p. 50).

. . . ich sonst so an den Gegenständen klebte und heftete . . . (p. 50).

Manchmal gedenke ich Rousseau's und seines hypochondrischen Jammers, und doch wird mir begreiflich, wie eine so schöne Organisation verschoben werden konnte. Fühlt' ich nicht solchen Antheil an den natürlichen Dingen und säh' ich nicht daß in der scheinbaren Verwirrung hundert Beobachtungen sich vergleichen und ordnen lassen . . . ich hielte mich oft selbst für toll. (p. 50).

Ich bin nicht zum tragischen Dichter geboren, da meine Natur conciliant ist; daher kann der rein-tragische Fall mich nicht interessiren, welcher eigentlich von Haus aus unversöhnlich seyn muß, und in dieser übrigens so äußerst platten Welt kommt mir das Unversöhnliche ganz absurd vor. (p. 55, note 101).

Die wahre Poesie kündet sich dadurch an, daß sie, als ein weltliches Evangelium, durch innere Heiterkeit, durch äußeres Behagen, uns von den irdischen Lasten zu befreien weiß, die uns drücken. (p. 55).

. . . die [Poesie] uns doch eigentlich dazu gegeben ist, um die kleinen Zwiste des Lebens auszugleichen und den Menschen mit der Welt und seinem Zustand zufrieden zu machen. (p. 55).

Des Menschen Seele
Gleicht dem Wasser
Vom Himmel kommt es,
Zum Himmel steigt es,
Und wieder nieder
Zur Erde muß es,
Ewig wechselnd.

Seele des Menschen
Wie gleichst du dem Wasser!
Schicksal des Menschen,
Wie gleichst du dem Wind! (p. 59).

Er hätte mir nur sagen dürfen, daß es im Leben bloß aufs Thun ankomme, das Genießen und Leiden finde sich von selbst. Indessen darf man die Jugend nur gewähren lassen; nicht sehr lange haftet sie an falschen Maximen; das Leben reißt oder lockt sie bald davon wieder los. (p. 61).

Ein kleiner Ring
Begränzt unser Leben,
Und viele Geschlechter
Reihen sich dauernd
An ihres Daseyns
Unendliche Kette.

Nach ewigen, ehrnen,
Großen Gesetzen
Müssen wir alle
Unseres Daseyns
Kreise vollenden. (p. 61).

Edel sey der Mensch,
Hülfreich und gut!
Denn das allein
Unterscheidet ihn
Von allen Wesen,
Die wir kennen. (p. 62).

Was unterscheidet
Götter von Menschen? (p. 62).

Denn der innere Gehalt des bearbeiteten Gegenstandes ist der Anfang und das Ende der Kunst. Man wird zwar nicht läugnen, daß Genie, das ausgebildete Kunsttalent, durch Behandlung aus allem alles machen und den widerspänstigsten Stoff bezwingen könne. Genau besehen entsteht aber alsdann immer mehr ein Kunststück als ein Kunstwerk, welches auf einem würdigen Gegenstande ruhen soll, damit uns zuletzt die Behandlung . . . die Würde des Stoffes nur desto glücklicher und herrlicher entgegenbringe. (p. 66).

Freilich hatte dieser Gegenstand einen inneren Mangel . . . . (p. 66).

“Ja”, sagte Goethe, “was ist auch wichtiger als die Gegenstände, und was ist die ganze Kunstlehre ohne sie. Alles Talent ist verschwendet, wenn der Gegenstand nichts taugt.” (p. 66).

Unter den Gegenständen, die er behandelt hat, ist nicht ein einziger, der nicht an sich interessant und bedeutend wäre; und die Wahl der Gegenstände zeigt immer, was einer für ein Mann und wes Geistes Kind er ist. (p. 66).

. . . wie denn überhaupt die griechische Mythologie einen unerschöpflichen Reichtum göttlicher und menschlicher Symbole darbietet.

. . . die Vortheile solcher Sujets sind sehr groß, indem sie bedeutende Zustände darbieten, edle große Bildung noch nah an der Natur sowie eine gränzenlose Mythologie zu dichterischer Ausbildung. (p. 66).

Ich rate sogar zu schon bearbeiteten Gegenständen. (p. 67, note 12).

Junge Leute werden viel zu früh aufgeregt und dann im Zeitstrudel fortgerissen; *Reichtum* und *Schnelligkeit* ist was die Welt bewundert und wornach jeder strebt;

Eisenbahnen, Schnellposten, Dampfschiffe und alle mögliche Fazilitäten der Kommunikation sind es worauf die gebildete Welt ausgeht, sich zu überbilden und dadurch in der Mittelmäßigkeit zu verharren ... eine mittlere Kultur gemein werde ... (p. 67).

Eigentlich ist es das Jahrhundert für die fähigen Köpfe, für leichtfassende praktische Menschen, die, mit einer gewissen Gewandtheit ausgestattet, ihre Superiorität über die Menge fühlen, wenn sie gleich selbst nicht zum Höchsten begabt sind. Laß uns soviel als möglich an der Gesinnung halten in der wir herankamen, wir werden, mit vielleicht noch Wenigen, die Letzten seyn einer Epoche die so bald nicht wiederkehrt. (p. 67).

Wer übrigens nicht glauben will, daß vieles von der Größe Shakespeares seiner großen kräftigen Zeit angehört, der stelle sich nur die Frage, ob er denn eine solche Staunen erregende Erscheinung in dem heutigen England von 1824, in diesen schlechten Tagen kritisierender und zersplitternder Journale für möglich halte? (p. 69).

Jenes ungestörte, unschuldige, nachtwandlerische Schaffen wodurch allein etwas Großes gedeihen kann, ist gar nicht mehr möglich ... Die täglich an funfzig verschiedenen Orten erscheinenden kritischen Blätter und der dadurch im Publikum bewirkte Klatsch lassen nichts Gesundes aufkommen. Wer sich heutzutage nicht ganz davon zurückhält und sich nicht mit Gewalt isoliert, ist verloren ... dem hevorbringenden Talent ist es ein böser Nebel, ein fallendes Gift, das den Baum seiner Schöpfungskraft zerstört, vom grünen Schmuck der Blätter bis in das tiefste Mark und die verborgenste Faser. (p. 69).

Und dann, wie zahm und schwach ist seit den lumpigen paar hundert Jahren nicht das Leben selber geworden! Wo kommt uns noch eine originelle Natur unverhüllt entegen! ... Das wirkt aber zurück auf den Poeten, der alles in sich selber finden soll, während von außen ihn alles im Stich läßt. (p. 69).

Also, mein Guter, ich wiederhole: es kommt darauf an, daß in einer Nation viel Geist und tüchtige Bildung in Kurs sei, wenn ein Talent sich schnell und freudig entwickeln soll. (p. 70).

Für den, der etwas Productives in sich fühlte, war es ein verzweiflungsvoller Zustand. (p. 70).

... war ich genöthigt, alles in mir selbst zu suchen. Verlangte ich nun zu meinen Gedichten eine wahre Unterlage, Empfindung oder Reflexion, so mußte ich in meinen Busen greifen. (p. 71).

Die größte Achtung die ein Autor für sein Publicum haben kann, ist, daß er niemals bringt was man erwartet, sondern was er selbst, auf der jedesmaligen Stufe eigner und fremder Bildung für recht und nützlich hält. (p. 72).

—Die Kunst gibt sich selbst Gesetze und gebietet der Zeit.
—Der Dilettantismus folgt der Neigung der Zeit. (p. 72).

Der "Faust" ist doch etwas Inkommensurabeles, und alle Versuche, ihm dem Verstand näher zu bringen, sind vergeblich. Auch muß man bedenken, daß der erste Teil aus einem etwas dunkelen Zustand des Individuums hervorgegangen. Aber eben dieses Dunkel reizt die Menschen, und sie mühen sich daran ab, wie an allen unauflösbaren Problemen. (pp. 73-74).

. . . auch kommt es bei einer solchen Komposition bloß darauf an, daß die einzelnen Massen bedeutend und klar seien, während es als ein Ganzes immer inkommensurabel bleibt, aber eben deswegen, gleich einem unaufgelösten Problem, die Menschen zu wiederholter Betrachtung immer wieder anlockt. (p. 74).

Da die verschiedenen Teile dieses Gedichts, in Absicht auf die Stimmung, verschieden behandelt werden können, wenn sie sich nur dem Geist und Ton des Ganzen subordinieren, da übrigens die ganze Arbeit subjectiv ist, so kann ich in einzelnen Momenten daran arbeiten und so bin ich auch jetzt etwas zu leisten imstande. (p. 74).

Und so begann diejenige Richtung, von der ich mein ganzes Leben über nicht abweichen konnte, nämlich dasjenige was mich erfreute oder quälte, oder sonst beschäftigte, in ein Bild, ein Gedicht zu verwandeln und darüber mit mir selbst abzuschliessen . . . Alles was daher von mir bekannt geworden, sind nur Bruckstücke einer großen Confession . . . (p. 76).

Was sich täglich im Dichter von Gedanken und Empfindungen aufdrängt, das will und soll ausgesprochen sein . . . Alle meine Gedichte sind Gelegenheitsgedichte, sie sind durch die Wirklichkeit angeregt und haben darin Grund und Boden. Von Gedichten, aus der Luft gegriffen, halte ich nichts. (p. 76).

. . . wie denn überhaupt zum objectiven Behandeln eines Gegenstandes mehr Kraft und Genie gehört, als man denkt. So hat auch Byron, trotz seiner stark vorwaltenden Persönlichkeit, zuweilen die Kraft gehabt, sich gänzlich zu verleugnen, wie dieser an einigen seiner dramatischen Sachen und besonders an seinem "Marino Faliero" zu sehen. Bei diesem Stück vergißt man ganz, daß . . . ein Engländer es geschrieben. Wir leben darin ganz und gar zu Venedig, und ganz und gar in der Zeit, in der die Handlung vorgeht. Die Personen reden ganz aus sich selber und aus ihrem eigenen Zustande heraus, ohne etwas von subjectiven Gefühlen, Gedanken und Meinungen des Dichters an sich zu haben. Das ist die rechte Art! (p. 77).

. . . denn sie sind an mir gewahr worden, daß wie der Mensch von innen heraus leben, der Künstler von innen heraus wirken müsse, indem er, gebärde er sich wie er will, immer nur sein Individuum zu Tage fördern wird. (p. 78).

Der Mehrzahl unserer jungen Poeten fehlt weiter nichts, als daß ihre Subjectivität nicht bedeutend ist und daß sie im Objectiven den Stoff nicht zu finden wissen. Im höchsten Falle finden sie einen Stoff, der ihnen ähnlich ist, der ihrem Subjekte zusagt; den Stoff aber um sein selbst willen, weil er ein poetischer ist, auch dann zu ergreifen, wenn er dem Subjekt widerwärtig wäre, daran ist nicht zu denken. (p. 78)

Solange er bloß seine wenigen subjektiven Empfindungen ausspricht, ist er noch keiner zu nennen; aber sobald er die Welt sich anzueignen und auszusprechen weiß, ist er ein Poet. Und dann ist er unerschöpflich und kann immer neu sein, wogegen aber eine subjektive Natur ihr bißchen Inneres bald ausgesprochen hat und zuletzt in Manier zugrunde geht. (p. 78).

. . . ein Jeder . . . sich gedrängt fühlt, seine Gedanken und Urtheile, sein Erkennen und Fühlen mit einer gewissen Leichtigkeit mitzutheilen.

Schwer, vielleicht unmöglich wird es aber dem Jüngern einzusehen, daß im höhern Sinne noch wenig gethan ist. (p. 78).

Ich kann es meinen jungen Freunden nicht ernst genug empfehlen, daß sie sich selbst beobachten müssen, auf daß bei einer gewissen Facilität des rhythmischen Ausdrucks sie doch auch immer an Gehalt mehr und mehr gewinnen.

Poetischer Gehalt aber ist Gehalt des eigenen Lebens . . . (pp. 78-79).

Allerdings ist in der Kunst und Poesie die Persönlichkeit alles. (p. 79).

Das ist auch ein Mensch danach, dessen Darstellung und dessen Inneres etwas wert ist. Bei ihm findet sich der Gehalt einer bedeutenden Persönlichkeit. (p. 80, note 62).

Der junge Dichter spreche nur aus was lebt und fortwirkt, unter welcherlei Gestalt es auch seyn möge; er beseitige streng allen Widergeist, alles Mißwollen, Mißreden, und was nur verneinen kann: denn dabei kommt nichts heraus. (p. 81).

Daß er sich vom Herkömmlichen, Patriotischen lossagte, hat nicht allein einen so vorzüglichen Menschen persönlich zugrundegerichtet, sondern sein revolutionärer Sinn und die damit verbundene beständige Agitation des Gemüts hat auch sein Talent nicht zur gehörigen Entwickelung kommen lassen. Auch ist die ewige Opposition und Mißbilligung seinen vortrefflichen Werken selbst, so wie sie daliegen, höchst schädlich. Denn nicht allein, daß das Unbehagen des Dichters sich dem Leser mitteilt, sondern auch alles opponierende Wirken geht auf das Negative hinaus, und das Negative ist nichts. Wenn ich das Schlechte schlecht nenne, was ist da viel gewonnen? Nenne ich aber das Gute schlecht, so ist viel geschadet. Wer recht wirken will, muß nie schelten, sich um das Verkehrte gar nicht bekümmern, sondern nur immer das Gute tun. Denn es kommt nicht darauf an, daß eingerissen, sondern daß etwas aufgebaut werde, woran die Menschheit reine Freude empfinde. (p. 81).

Die Griechen, nach denen wir immer als unsern Meistern hinaufschauen müssen . . . (p. 82).

. . . überzeugt daß die Quelle wahrer Bildung nur allein bei den Alten zu suchen sey . . . (p. 82).

. . . im Bedürfnis von etwas Musterhaften müssen wir immer zu den alten Griechen zurückgehen, in deren Werken stets der schöne Mensch dargestellt ist. Alles übrige müssen wir nur historisch betrachten und das Gute, soweit es gehen will, uns daraus aneignen. (p. 82).

Und doch ließe sich dieser Widerstreit sehr leicht heben, wenn man bedenken wollte, daß jeder, der von Jugend an seine Bildung den Griechen und Römern verdankt, nie ein gewisses antikes Herkommen verläugnen, vielmehr jederzeit dankbar anerkennen wird, was er abgeschiedenen Lehrern schuldig ist, wenn er auch sein ausgebildetes Talent der lebendigen Gegenwart unaufhaltsam widmet und, ohne es zu wissen, modern endigt, wenn er antik angefangen hat. (p. 82).

Er ist gar zu reich und gewaltig. Eine produktive Natur darf alle Jahr nur *ein* Stück von ihm lesen, wenn sie nicht an ihm zugrunde gehen will . . . Shakespeare gibt uns *in silbernen Schalen goldene Äpfel*. (pp. 82-83).

Wenig Deutsche, und vielleicht nur wenige Menschen aller neuern Nationen, haben Gefühl für ein ästhetisches Ganze; sie loben und tadeln nur stellenweise; sie entzücken sich nur stellenweise. (p. 84).

Da sind Stellen darin, wie sie nicht besser sein können . . . Aber es sind nur schöne Stellen, als Ganzes will es niemanden behagen. (p. 84).

. . . es [das Bild] wohl im einzelnen ganz gut gerathen, im ganzen aber nicht gut componirt sey . . . (p. 84).

Das Griechische Gedicht, im hohen Styl, sich selbst darstellend, nur das Nothdürftige bringend und sogar in Beschreibungen und Gleichnissen allen Schmuck ablehnend, auf hohe mystische Ur-Ueberlieferungen sich gründend. (p. 85).

Ich ehre den Rhythmus wie den Reim, wodurch Poesie erst zur Poesie wird, aber das eigentlich tief und gründlich Wirksame, das wahrhaft Ausbildende und Fördernde ist dasjenige was vom Dichter übrig bleibt, wenn er in Prose übersetzt wird. Dann bleibt der reine vollkommene Gehalt, den uns ein blendendes Aeußere oft, wenn er fehlt, vorzuspiegeln weiß, und wenn er gegenwärtig ist, verdeckt. (p. 90, note 100).

Der Mensch vermag gar manches durch zweckmäßigen Gebrauch einzelner Kräfte, er vermag das Außerordentliche durch Verbindung mehrerer Fähigkeiten; aber das Einzige, ganz Unerwartete leistet er nur, wenn sich die sämmtlichen Eigenschaften gleichmäßig in ihm vereinigen. Das letzte war das glückliche Loos der Alten, besonders der Griechen in ihrer besten Zeit; auf die beiden ersten sind wir Neuern vom Schicksal angewiesen.

Wenn die gesunde Natur des Menschen als ein Ganzes wirkt, wenn er sich in der Welt als in einem großen, schönen, würdigen und werthen Ganzen fühlt, wenn das harmonische Behagen ihm ein reines, freies Entzücken gewährt; dann würde das Weltall, wenn es sich selbst empfinden könnte, als an sein Ziel gelangt aufjauchzen und den Gipfel des eigenen Werdens und Wesens bewundern. (p. 92).

. . . der Mensch ist nicht bloß ein denkendes, er ist zugleich ein empfindendes Wesen. Er ist ein Ganzes, eine Einheit vielfacher, innig verbundener Kräfte und zu diesem Ganzen der Menschen muß das Kunstwerk reden, er muß dieser reichen Einheit, dieser einigen Mannichfaltigkeit in ihm entsprechen. (p. 93).

Im ganzen ist der Stil eines Schriftstellers ein treuer Abdruck seines Innern; will jemand einen *klaren* Stil schreiben, so sei es ihm zuvor klar in seiner Seele; und will jemand einen *großartigen* Stil schreiben, so habe er einen großartigen Charakter. (p. 94).

. . . jedes künstlerisch Hervorgebrachte versetzt uns in die Stimmung, in welcher sich der Verfasser befand. War sie heiter und leicht, so werden wir uns frei fühlen; war sie beschränkt, sorglich und bedenklich, so zieht sie uns gleichmäßig in die Enge . . . ein jedes Erzeugniß uns Freude macht, was dem Künstler mit Bequemlichkeit und Leichtigkeit gelungen. (p. 94).

Das Studium der Kunst wie das der alten Schriftsteller gibt uns einen gewissen Halt, eine Befriedigung in uns selbst; indem sie unser Inneres mit großen Gegenständen und Gesinnungen füllt, bemächtigt sie sich aller Wünsche die nach außen strebten, hegt aber jedes würdige Verlangen im stillen Busen. (pp. 94-95).

. . . ein gutes Kunstwerk kann und wird zwar moralische Folgen haben, aber moralische Zwecke vom Künstler fordern, heißt ihm sein Handwerk verderben. (p. 95).

Wir sind gewohnt die Aeußerungen eines Dichters, von welcher Art sie auch seyn mögen, in's Allgemeine zu deuten und sie unseren Umständen, wie es sich schicken will, anzupassen. Dadurch erhalten freilich viele Stellen einen ganz anderen Sinn als in dem Zusammenhang woraus wir sie gerissen. (p. 97).

Wodurch ist Deutschland groß, als durch eine bewundernswürdige Volkscultur, die alle Teile des Reichs gleichmäßig durchdrungen hat. Sind es aber nicht die einzelnen Fürstensitze, von denen sie ausgeht und welche ihre Träger und Pfleger sind? (p. 101).

. . . ein Gefäß, worin ich alles, was ich so manches Jahr über die Französische Revolution und deren Folgen geschrieben und gedacht, mit geziemendem Ernst niederzulegen hoffte. (p. 101).

Der geringste Mensch kann complet seyn, wenn er sich innerhalb der Gränzen seiner Fähigkeiten und Fertigkeiten bewegt; aber selbst schöne Vorzüge werden verdunkelt, aufgehoben und vernichtet, wenn jenes unerläßlich geforderte Ebenmaß abgeht. (p. 109).

Der Bürger ist so frei wie der Adelige, sobald er sich in den Gränzen hält, die ihm von Gott durch seinen Stand, worin er geboren, angewiesen. (p. 110).

Gesetzgeber oder Revolutionärs, die Gleichsein und Freiheit zugleich versprechen, sind Phantasten oder Charlatans. (p. 111).

Wie hätte ich nun Lieder des Hasses schrieben können ohne Haß!–Und, unter uns, ich haßte die Franzosen nicht, wie wohl ich Gott dankte, als wir sie los waren. Wie hätte auch ich, dem nur Kultur und Barbarei Dinge von Bedeutung sind, eine Nation hassen können, die zu den kultiviertesten der Erde gehört und der ich einen so großen Teil meiner eigenen Bildung verdankte! (p. 112).

Welches Recht wir zum Regiment haben, danach fragen wir nicht: wir regieren. Ob das Volk ein Recht habe, uns abzusetzen, darum bekümmern wir uns nicht: wir hüten uns nur, daß es nicht in Versuchung komme, es zu tun. (p. 112).

Es liegt in meiner Natur, ich will lieber eine Ungerechtigkeit begehen als Unordnung ertragen. (p. 113).

Est ist besser, es geschehe dir Unrecht, als die Welt sei ohne Gesetz. Deshalb füge sich jeder dem Gesetze. (p. 113).

Hat einer nur so viel Freiheit, um gesund zu leben und sein Gewerbe zu treiben, so hat er genug, und so viel hat leicht ein jeder. (p. 116).

Ich dächte, jeder müsse bei sich selber anfangen und zunächst sein eigenes Glück machen, woraus denn zuletzt das Glück des Ganzen unfehlbar entstehen wird. (p. 116).

Aber denken Sie nur nicht, man könnte etwas Natürliches und Schönes populär machen. (p. 117).

Die Menge, die Majorität ist notwendig immer absurd und verkehrt. (p. 117).

. . . den Geschmack kann man nicht am Mittelgut bilden, sondern nur am Allervorzüglichsten. Ich zeige Ihnen daher nur das Beste; und wenn Sie sich daran befestigen, so haben Sie einen Maßstab für das übrige, das Sie nicht überschätzen, aber doch schätzen werden. (p. 120).

Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen. (p. 121).

Wer die deutsche Sprache versteht und studirt, befindet sich auf dem Markte wo alle Nationen ihre Waren darbieten, er spielt den Dolmetscher, indem er sich selbst bereichert. (p. 122).

Was die Kultur der Natur abgewonnen habe, dürfe man nicht wieder fahren lassen, es um keinen Preis aufgeben. So sei auch der Begriff der Heiligkeit der Ehe eine solche Kulturerrungenschaft des Christentums und von unschätzbarem Wert, obgleich die Ehe eigentlich unnatürlich sei. (p. 124).

Das Leben, so gemein es aussieht, so leicht es sich mit dem Gewöhnlichen, Alltäglichen zu befriedigen scheint, hegt und pflegt doch immer gewisse höhere Forderungen im Stillen fort, und sieht sich nach Mitteln um sie zu befriedigen. (p. 125).

Und so hätten sich die Deutschen, bei denen überhaupt das Gemeine weit mehr überhand zu nehmen Gelegenheit findet als bei andern Nationen, um die schönste Blüthe der Sprache, um das nur scheinbar fremde aber allen Völkern gleich angehörige Wort vielleicht gebracht wenn nicht der, durch eine tiefere Philosophie wieder neugegründete Sinn fürs Höchste und Beste, sich wieder glücklich hergestellt hätte. (p. 126).

. . . der Mensch ist so geneigt, sich mit dem Gemeinsten abzugeben, Geist und Sinne stumpfen sich so leicht gegen die Eindrücke des Schönen und Vollkommenen ab, daß man die Fähigkeit, es zu empfinden, bei sich auf alle Weise erhalten sollte. (p. 126).

Man sagt: studire Künstler die Natur! Es ist aber keine Kleinigkeit aus dem Gemeinen das Edle, aus der Unform das Schöne zu entwickeln. (p. 126).

Die vornehmste Forderung die an den Künstler gemacht wird, bleibt immer die: daß er sich an die Natur halten, sie studiren, sie nachbilden, etwas, das ihren Erscheinungen ähnlich ist, hervorbringen solle.

Wie groß, ja wie ungeheuer diese Anforderung sey, wird nicht immer bedacht, und der wahre Künstler selbst erfährt es nur bei fortschreitender Bildung. Die Natur ist von der Kunst durch eine ungeheure Kluft getrennt, welche das Genie selbst, ohne äußere Hülfsmittel, zu überschreiten nicht vermag. (p. 127).

Alles was wir um uns her gewahr werden, ist nur roher Stoff . . . (p. 127).

. . . das Glück, das junge Männer von Talent jetzt genießen, indem sie sich früher ausbilden, eher zu einem reinen, dem Gegenstande angemessenen Styl gelangen können, wem sind sie es schuldig als ihren Vorgängern, die in der letzten Hälfte dieses Jahrhunderts mit einem unablässigen Bestreben, unter mancherlei Hindernissen, sich jeder auf seine eigene Weise ausgebildet haben? Dadurch ist eine Art von unsichtbarer Schule entstanden, und der junge Mann, der jetzt hineintritt, kommt in einen viel größeren und lichteren Kreis, als der frühere Schriftsteller . . . (p. 127).

Sieht man einen großen Meister, so findet man immer, daß er das Gute seiner Vorgänger benutzte und daß eben dieses ihn groß machte. Männer wie Raffael wachsen nicht aus dem Boden. Sie fußten auf der Antike und dem Besten, was vor ihnen gemacht worden. (p. 127).

Jeder glaubt, er müsse es doch selber am besten wissen, und dabei geht mancher verloren und mancher hat lange daran zu irren. Es ist aber jetzt keine Zeit mehr zum Irren, dazu sind wir Alten gewesen; und was hätte uns alle unser Suchen und Irren geholfen, wenn Ihr jüngeren Leute wieder dieselbigen Wege laufen wolltet? Da kämen wir ja nie weiter! Uns Alten rechnet man den Irrtum zugute, weil wir die Wege nicht gebahnt fanden; wer aber später in die Welt eintritt, von dem verlangt man mehr, der soll nicht abermals irren und suchen, sondern er soll den Rat der Alten nutzen und gleich auf gutem Wege fortschreiten. (p. 128).

Die Religion selbst, wie die Zeit, wie Leben und Wissen, in stetem Fortschritt und Fortbildung begriffen ist. (p. 130).

Mag die geistige Kultur nun immer wieder fortschreiten, mögen die Naturwissenschaften in immer breiterer Ausdehnung und Tiefe wachsen und der menschliche Geist sich erweitern, wie er will,–über die Hoheit und sittliche Kultur des Christentums, wie es in den Evangelien schimmert und leuchtet, wird er nicht hinauskommen! (p. 131).

. . . deßhalb der Mensch auf seine eignen Kräfte durchaus Verzicht zu thun, und alles von der Gnade und ihrer Einwirkung zu erwarten habe. (p. 131, note 118).

Nichts im Leben, außer Gesundheit und Tugend, ist schätzenswerter als Kenntnis und Wissen; auch ist nichts so leicht zu erreichen und so wohlfeil zu erhandeln; die ganze Arbeit ist ruhig seyn und die Ausgabe Zeit, die wir nicht retten ohne sie auszugeben. (p. 131).

Man streitet viel und wird viel streiten über Nutzen und Schaden der Bibelverbreitung. Mir ist klar: schaden wird sie wie bisher, dogmatisch und phantastisch gebraucht; nutzen wie bisher, didaktisch und gefühlvoll aufgenommen. (p. 132).

Vor der Christlichen Religion hat er Hochachtung, nicht aber in der Gestalt, wie sie unsere Theologen vorstellen. (p. 132).

Der Aberglaube ist die Poesie des Lebens, deßwegen schadet es dem Dichter nicht abergläubisch zu seyn. (p. 134, note 135).

Der Mensch begreift niemals wie anthropomorphisch er ist. (p. 134, note 136).

Ich zweifle nicht an unserer Fortdauer, denn die Natur kann die Entelechie nicht entbehren. Aber wir sind nicht auf gleiche Weise unsterblich, und um sich künftig als große Entelechie zu manifestieren, muß man auch eine sein. (pp. 137-38).

. . . ich habe die feste Überzeugung, daß unser Geist ein Wesen ist ganz unzerstörbarer Natur. (p. 138).

Es sei einem denkendem Wesen durchaus unmöglich, sich ein Nichtsein, ein Aufhören des Denkens und Lebens zu denken; in so fern trage jeder den Beweis der Unsterblichkeit in sich selbst und ganz unwillkürlich. (p. 138).

Die Überzeugung unserer Fortdauer entspringt mir aus dem Begriff der Tätigkeit; denn wenn ich bis an mein Ende rastlos wirke, so ist die Natur verpflichtet, mir eine andere Form des Daseins anzuweisen, wenn die jetzige meinem Geist nicht ferner auszuhalten vermag. (p. 138).

Die entelechische Monade muß sich nur in rastloser Thätigkeit erhalten; wird ihr diese zur andern Natur, so kann es ihr in Ewigkeit nicht an Beschäftigung fehlen. (p. 138).

Die Bewegung der Erde um die Sonne—was kann dem Augenschein absurder sein? Und doch ist es die größte, erhabenste, folgenreichste Entdeckung, die je der Mensch gemacht hat, in meinen Augen wichtiger als die ganze Bibel. (p. 140, note 169).

Warum ist die Natur immer schön? überall schön? überall bedeutend? sprechend . . . Ist's nicht, weil die Natur sich ewig in sich bewegt, ewig neu erschafft . . . ? (p. 140).

Wir haben viele Distichen gemeinschaftlich gemacht, oft hatte ich den Gedanken und Schiller machte die Verse, oft war das Umgekehrte der Fall, und oft machte Schiller den einen Vers und ich den andern. Wie kann nun da von Mein und Dein die Rede sein! Man müßte wirklich selbst noch tief in der Philisterei stecken, wenn man auf die Entscheidung solcher Zweifel nur die mindeste Wichtigkeit legen wollte. (p. 142).

Das ist ebenso lächerlich! Man könnte ebensogut einen wohlgenährten Mann nach den Ochsen, Schafen und Schweinen fragen, die er gegessen und die ihm Kräfte gegeben. (p. 143).

Denn unfühlend
Ist die Natur;
Es leuchtet die Sonne
Ueber Bös' und Gute,
Und dem Verbrecher,
Glänzen, wie dem Besten,
Der Mond und die Sterne.
Wind und Ströme,
Donner und Hagel,
Rauschen ihren Weg,
Und ergreifen,
Vorüber eilend,
Einen um den andern. (p. 147).

Wenn die gesunde Natur des Menschen als ein Ganzes wirkt, wenn er sich in der Welt als in einem großen, schönen, würdigen und werthen Ganzen fühlt, wenn das harmonische Behagen ihm ein reines, freies Entzücken gewährt; dann würde das Weltall, wenn es sich selbst empfinden könnte, als an sein Ziel gelangt aufjauchzen und den Gipfel des eigenen Werdens und Wesens bewundern. Denn wozu dient alle der Aufwand von Sonnen und Planeten und Monden, von Sternen und Milchstraßen, von Kometen und Nebelflecken, von gewordenen und werdenden Welten, wenn sich nicht zuletzt ein glücklicher Mensch unbewußt seines Daseyns erfreut. (p. 148).

Im Roman sollen vorzüglich *Gesinnungen* und *Begebenheiten* vorgestellt werden; im Drama *Charaktere* und *Thaten* . . . Der Romanheld muß leidend, wenigstens nicht im hohen Grad wirkend seyn; von dem dramatischen verlangt man Wirkung und That. (p. 153).

Der Dilettant wird nie den Gegenstand, immer nur sein Gefühl über den Gegenstand schildern. Er flieht den Charakter des Objects. Alle dilettantischen Geburten in dieser Dichtungsart werden einen pathologischen Charakter haben und nur die Neigung und Abneigung ihres Urhebers ausdrücken. (p. 154).

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NOTES

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

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5. *Edinburgh Review*, 22 (1813), 201.
6. See O. W. Long, 'English translations of Goethe's *Werther*', *JEGP*, 14 (1915), 169-203, and R. A. Charles, 'French Intermediaries in the Transmission of German Literature and Culture to England 1750-1815' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1952), p.41.
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18. Mme de Staël, *Germany*, 3 vols (1813), II, 226.
19. G. H. Lewes, *The Life and Works of Goethe: with Sketches of his Age and Contemporaries from Published and Unpublished Sources*, 2 vols (1855), II, 273 (Book VI, Chapter 6).
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21. *Westminster Review*, 1 (1824), 382 and 374.
22. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 15 (1824), 631.
23. See W. F. Hauhart, *The Reception of Goethe's Faust in England in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (1909), p. 32.
24. *Faustus: From the German of Goethe* (1821), preface, p. viii.
25. *Faust: a drama by Goethe and Schiller's Song of the Bell* (1823), p. 19.
26. *Westminster Review*, 47 (1847), 242.
27. *Faust: a Dramatic Poem by Goethe*, translated by A. Hayward (1834), preface, p. xxxvi. The 1833 edition was anonymous.
28. G. H. Lewes, *Life of Goethe*, II, 423 (Book VII, Chapter 6). In later editions Chapter 7.
29. *Edinburgh Review*, 26 (1816), 304-37.
30. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 4 (1818), 212.
31. *European Magazine*, 86 (1824), 442, and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 15 (1824), 619-20.

Notes to Chapter I, Continued

32. De Quincey's review was published in two parts, *London Magazine*, 10 (1824), 189-197 and 291-307 (pp. 297-302).
33. See Wolfgang Menzel, *German Literature*, translated by T. Gordon, 4 vols (1840), translator's preface, p. iv.
34. *Auswahl von Goethes lyrischen Gedichten*, edited by E. C. Hawtrey (1834), preface.
35. *The Poems of Goethe* (1853), preface, p. vi.
36. *Foreign Quarterly Review*, 27 (1841), 200.
37. *Characteristics of Goethe*, 3 vols (1833), I, preface, pp. xxi-xxvi.
38. See *Foreign Quarterly Review*, 16 (1835), 16 and *Edinburgh Review*, 63 (1836), 445.
39. *Life of Goethe*, I, 409 (Book IV, Chapter 8). In later editions, Chapter 7.
40. *Athenaeum*, No. 1057 (1848), p. 101.
41. See A. P. Stanley, *Life of Thomas Arnold D. D., Headmaster of Rugby*, Popular edition (1904), pp. 39-40.
42. According to Crabb Robinson Hare's library contained the 'best collection of modern German authors I have ever seen in England. See *Diaries, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, II, 293.
43. See B. G. Niebuhr, *History of Rome*, translated by J. Hare, C. Thirlwall, W. Smith, and L. Schmitz, 3 vols (1828, 1832, 1842), III, 125-26, footnote.
44. See Stanley, *Life of Thomas Arnold*, p. 78, p. 236, p. 349, p. 352, and pp. 568-9.
45. *Life of Thomas Arnold*, p. 121.
46. I am grateful to the late Professor Kenneth Allott for making available to me a photocopy of this diary, which is unpublished.
47. Quoted by Mrs Arnold in a letter to her son Thomas in New Zealand, dated 17 July 1848. This unpublished letter was brought to my attention by Professor Allott.
48. See *Letters of Matthew Arnold 1848-1888*, edited by G. W. E. Russell, 2 vols (1895), II, 293-4 and 305. Hereafter abbreviated *Letters.*
49. See Stanley, *Life of Thomas Arnold*, p. 418.
50. Not included in the published diaries edited by Sadler, but quoted by F. Norman, 'Henry Crabb Robinson and Goethe', Part II, *PEGS*, New Series, 8 (1931), 82. See also p. 90.
51. See Stanley, *Life of Thomas Arnold*, p. 434.
52. See *Diaries, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, III, 168.
53. Walter Bagehot, 'Henry Crabb Robinson' (1869) in *Literary Studies*, Everyman's Library Edition, 2 vols (1950), II, 299-300.
54. *Diaries, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, III, 523.
55. See *Letters*, I, 351.
56. T. Arnold, *Passages in a Wandering Life* (1900), pp. 56-57.
57. Walford's letter is quoted in *The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough*, edited by H. F. Lowry (1932), pp. 23-24. Hereafter abbreviated *Clough Letters.*
58. See *The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough*, edited by F. L. Mulhauser, 2 vols (1957), I, 93 and 98. Hereafter abbreviated Mulhauser.
59. CPW, X, 166-7.
60. See *Clough Letters*, p. 111 and p. 151.
61. See *The Works of Thomas Carlyle*, Centenary Edition, edited by H. D. Traill, 30 vols (1896-1900), I, 153. It is a command of which Goethe would hardly have approved, and although Goethe may have displaced Byron in Arnold's poetical allegiance, Arnold never did quite 'close' his *Byron*.
62. See Kenneth Allott, 'Matthew Arnold's Reading Lists in Three Early Diaries', *Victorian Studies* 2 (1959), pp. 254-66.
63. *Letters*, II, 144.
64. CPW, VIII, 257.
65. See 'Goethe' (1828), *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, I, 283 and 308.
66. See Lionel Trilling, *Matthew Arnold*, fourth edition (1963), pp. 15-35.
67. See *Clough Letters*, p. 99 and p. 130.
68. Quoted in the Earl of Lytton's *Life of Edward Bulwer first Lord of Lytton*, 2 vols (1913), II, 446. The period referred by by Arnold must be between 1841 and 1845.
69. See J. C. Shairp, *Glen Desseray and Other Poems*, edited by F. T. Palgrave (1888), p. 218. Shairp was a member of the 'Decade' and a friend of both Arnold and Clough.
70. *Clough Letters*, p. 20.
71. CPW, I, 167-8.
72. CPW, I, 149.

Notes to Chapter I, Continued

73. *Clough Letters*, p. 81. Goethe's works are referred to in the edition owned by Arnold, *Werke*, Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand, 60 vols (1828-1840). Hereafter abbreviated *Werke*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. See above, p. 17 and note 57.
2. See *The Poems of Matthew Arnold*, edited by Kenneth Allott (1965), p. 46, headnote. Hereafter abbreviated *Poems*.
3. See C. K. Shorter, *Charlotte Brontë and her Circle* (1896), p. 459.
4. 'Heinrich Heine', *Essays in Criticism* (first series, 1865), CPW, III, 110. Hereafter abbreviated EC, I.
5. Letter of 29 July 1782. *Briefe von Goethe an Lavater, Aus den Jahren 1774 bis 1783*, edited by H. Hirzel (1833), p. 144. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from Goethe are given in the author's English translation. The original German is given in Appendix G.
6. *Poems*, p. 29.
7. See *Imaginative Reason* (1966), p. 106.
8. *Poems*, p. 25.
9. *Poems*, p. 89.
10. Carlyle's translation, *Works*, XXIII, 112.
11. *Dichtung und Wahrheit, Werke*, XXVI, 290-91 (Part III, Book 14).
12. See *The Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, edited by his wife, 2 vols (1869), I, 377-78, and Mulhauser, I, 251.
13. See Appendix A.
14. See 'A Question: to Fausta', *Poems*, p. 48.
15. *Clough Letters*, p. 110.
16. *Poems*, p. 134.
17. See 'A Farewell', *Poems*, p. 126.
18. CPW, I, 4 and 8.
19. I am grateful to the late Professor Kenneth Allott for placing at my disposal a photocopy of the note-book.
20. Arnold's translation. See *Werke*, XLV, 426-27.
21. *Clough Letters*, p. 84.
22. *Clough Letters*, p. 95.
23. *Clough Letters*, pp. 129-30.
24. Arnold's translation. See *Werke*, XLV, 431.
25. See *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und Zelter*, edited by F. W. Riemer, 6 vols (1833-34), IV, 43-44. Hereafter abbreviated *Goethe und Zelter*. Arnold owned a copy of this correspondence, but the first reference to the work in his reading-lists occurs in September 1854. See *Note-Books*, p. 640 and p. 556. This does not invalidate the point, however, as Arnold had certainly read Goethe's letters to Schiller and Frau von Stein before they appear on his reading-lists.
26. EC, I (1865), CPW, III, 274.
27. 'Absence', *Poems*, p. 138.
28. V. E. Horn (in unpublished work) has pointed out that the phrase 'I struggle towards the light' could have been suggested by a sentence from Goethe's review of C. H. Schlosser's *Universal-historische Übersicht der Geschichte der alten Welt und ihrer Cultur* (1826): 'The author is one of the number of those who struggle out of obscurity into clear light: amongst which persons I reckon myself' (Arnold's translation, see *Werke*, XLV, 408). Horn also points to Arnold's use of the same metaphor in a letter to his mother of 3 March 1865: 'but I think, as Goethe thought, that the right thing is . . . to keep pushing on one's posts into the darkness, and to establish no post that is not perfectly in light and firm' (*Letters*, I, 249). The echo is further evidence of the extent to which Arnold had absorbed the critical writings of Goethe which he had translated into his note-book. C. H. Schlosser was the nephew of Goethe's brother-in-law, J. G. Schlosser.
29. 'Courage', *Poems*, p. 141.
30. 'Tristram and Iseult', *Poems*, p. 204 (Part I, ll. 232-33).
31. *Poems*, pp. 278-79.
32. See 'Isolation: To Marguerite', *Poems*, p. 122.

Notes to Chapter II, Continued

33. *Poems*, p. 124.
34. *Poems*, p. 155 (Act I, Scene 1, l. 151).
35. *Poems*, p. 160 (Act I, Scene 2, l. 91).
36. *Poems*, p. 180 (Act II, ll. 92-94).
37. *Clough Letters*, p. 111 and p. 136.
38. See *Poems*, p. 149, footnote.
39. *Clough Letters*, p. 128.
40. *Clough Letters*, p. 116.
41. *Poems*, p. 186 (Act II, ll. 251-57) and p. 180 (Act II, l. 98).
42. *Poems*, p. 152 (Act I, Scene 1, l. 83) and p. 184 (Act II, ll. 198-210 and ll. 224-26).
43. *Clough Letters*, p. 109.
44. See *Werke*, XXIX, 85-86.
45. *Werke*, XXV, 108-09 (Part II, Book 7).
46. *Clough Letters*, p. 110.
47. *Letters*, I, 239.
48. *Poems*, p. 132-33. See also Appendix B.
49. *Clough Letters*, p. 65. For further discussion, see below pp. 85-92.
50. *Matthew Arnold*, p. 85.
51. *Poems*, pp. 227-28.
52. *Poems*, p. 341 (ll. 182-91).
53. *Letters*, I, 239 (22 September 1864) and I, 127 (17 December 1860).
54. See *The Time-Spirit of Matthew Arnold* (1970), p. 101.
55. *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, I, 251.
56. See K. Allott, 'Matthew Arnold's Reading-Lists in Three Early Diaries', *Victorian Studies*, 2 (1959), 264.
57. See *Clough Letters*, p. 63.
58. *Clough Letters*, p. 99 and p. 136.
59. *Letters*, I, 127.
60. *Clough Letters*, p. 109.

61 *Letters*, I, 14 and I, 26 (to his wife, March 1853).

62. *Letters*, I, 63.
63. J. P. Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*, edited by P. Stapf, Tempel-Klassiker (1958), p. 85 (Part I, 27 January 1824). Hereafter abbreviated *Gespräche*.
64. *Gespräche*, I (1 February 1827), p. 243.
65. *Gespräche*, I (26 July 1826), p. 186.
66. *Clough Letters*, p. 117.
67. 'Spinoza and Professor Arnold', *Spectator*, 36 (3 January 1863), 1474.
68. EC, I, CPW, III, 175-77.
69. *Goethe und Zelter*, V, 381 (29 January 1830).
70. *Werke*, XXVI, 290-91 (Part III, Book 14).
71. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part IV, Book 16), *Werke*, XLVIII, 9-10.
72. Arnold quotes from his *Briefwechsel* in a letter to Clough and in the same letter refers to his study of Spinoza. See *Clough Letters*, p. 116 (23 October 1850). The reading of both works at the same time is unlikely to be coincidence. In 'Spinoza and the Bible' (1863), Arnold quotes Lessing's statement: 'There is no possible view of life but Spinoza's'. See EC, I, CPW, III, 182. Arnold discovered this, as R. H. Super points out in his note to the passage, in *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza*. See F. H. Jacobi, *Werke*, 6 vols in 7 (1812-1825), IV (i), (1819), 55.
73. See *Werke*, XXVI, 292 (Part III, Book 14).
74. *Geist der Goethezeit*, 5 vols (1958-60), II, 17.
75. See *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza, Werke*, IV (i), 54 and 68.
76. *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und F. H. Jacobi* (1846), p. 104 (5 May 1786).
77. The German phrase is 'eine verständige persönliche Ursache der Welt'. See *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza, Werke*, IV (i), 59.
78. *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und F. H. Jacobi*, p. 85, p. 94, pp. 105-06, and p. 86.
79. *Tag- und Jahreshefte 1811, Werke*, XXXII, 72-73. Arnold's unpublished 1851 diary shows that he read these Journals in that year. He was probably referring to them when he wrote in 'Spinoza and the Bible': 'Goethe has told us how he was calmed and edified by him in his youth, *and how he again went to him for support in his maturity*'. (My

italics). EC, I, CPW, III, 182. But R. H. Super, in his note to the passage, points out that Eckermann may have been Arnold's source. See *Gespräche*, II (28 February 1831), pp. 483-84.

80. *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und F. H. Jacobi*, p. 261.
81. See below pp. 88-89 and pp. 139-40.
82. See *Werke*, XXIX, 111 (5 October 1787).
83. See A. Whitridge, *Dr Arnold of Rugby* (1928), p. 119.
84. *Italienische Reise* (17 May 1787), *Werke*, XXVIII, 241 and (17 March 1787) p. 60. Translation by W. H. Auden.
85. 'Stanzas in Memory of . . . "Obermann" ' (l. 56), *Poems*, p. 132.
86. *Clough Letters*, p. 97. The letter is undated but belongs to 1848-49.
87. 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse' (l. 98), *Poems*, p. 289.
88. *Matthew Arnold*, p. 79.
89. 'Stanzas in Memory of . . . "Obermann" ' (ll. 65-72), *Poems*, pp. 132-3.
90. My belief that Goethe's conception of nature was not helpful to Arnold is challenged by G. R. Stange in his book *Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist* (1967) particularly in Chapter II. See Appendix C.
91. I am not suggesting that Arnold had read no Spinoza before this time, but simply that the study of the philosopher which he began in 1850 was prompted by Goethe and that it was conducted with a definite purpose in view. Arnold probably read *Dichtung und Wahrheit* in 1849. See *Letters*, I, 11 (29 July 1849).
92. EC, I, CPW, III, 177.
93. *Note-Books*, p. 187. 'Thou must do without! do without! That is the eternal song which assails the ears of every man, which each hour sings hoarsely to us our whole life through.'
94. *Letters*, I, 55.
95. See *Note-Books*, p. 10. The editors have identified the source as Goethe's letter to Schiller, 13 December 1803. *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe*, 6 vols (1828-20), III, 230. Hereafter abbreviated *Schiller und Goethe.*
96. CPW, I, 102 and note, p. 242.
97. 'Schiller, Goethe and Madame de Staël', *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, III, 393.
98. CPW, I, 1-3.
99. See *Poems*, p. 592, footnote.
100. 'Nachlese zu Aristoteles Poetik', *Werke*, XLVI, 20.
101. See *Goethe und Zelter*, VI, 328 (31 October 1831).
102. CPW, I, 2.
103. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part III, Book 13), *Werke*, XXVI, 215-16.
104. *Gespräche*, I (24 January 1827), p. 275. Arnold quotes the passage in his 1879 note-book. See *Note-Books*, p. 323.
105. CPW, I, 1-2.
106. See 'The Scholar-Gipsy' (l. 192), *Poems*, p. 341 and 'Spinoza and the Bible', EC, I, CPW, III, 177.
107. *Tradition and Reaction in Modern Poetry*, English Association Pamphlets, 63 (1923), p. 12.
108. See *Matthew Arnold*, pp. 143-44 and footnote.
109. See headnote to 'The Youth of Nature', *Poems*, pp.244-45.
110. *Poems*, pp. 264-64.
111. *Werke*, II, 58-60.
112. See above pp. 42-47.
113. *Note-Books*, p. 452. See *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part I, Book 5), *Werke*, XXV, 12.
114. *Werke*, II, 85 and 87.
115. *Poems*, p. 447 (11. 58-9).
116. *Werke*, II, 85.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. W. A. Madden, *Matthew Arnold: A Study of the Aesthetic Temperament in Victorian England* (1967), p. 16 (hereafter abbreviated *Aesthetic Temperament*) and headnote to the Preface in *Poems*, p. 590.

Notes to Chapter III, Continued

2. The critic was conjecturally identified by Arnold as the journal's editor R. S. Rintoul. See Arnold's letter to his sister Jane, *Unpublished Letters*, p. 22 (December 1853).
3. CPW, I, 3-7.
4. See *Poems*, p. 593.
5. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part II, Book 7), *Werke*, XXV, 104.
6. *Werke*, XXV, 82.
7. *Gespräche*, I (3 November 1823), p. 66. Arnold quotes part of this passage in his note-book of 1880. See *Note-Books*, p. 346. The relevance of this passage to Arnold was first pointed out by Madden, *Aesthetic Temperament*, p. 15.
8. *Gespräche*, III (25 January 1830), p. 731.
9. CPW, I, 6.
10. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part III, Book 15), *Werke*, XXVI, 316.
11. See *Werke*, XLVI, 197.
12. See *Gespräche*, I (18 September 1823), pp. 50-51.
13. See CPW, I, 5.
14. CPW, I, 14.
15. See 'Memorial Verses' (1850), l. 17 in *Poems*, p. 227.
16. See *Gespräche*, I (29 January 1826), p. 175 and p. 177.
17. See above p. 31.
18. *Goethe und Zelter*, IV, 43.
19. See *Gespräche* II (13 February 1831), pp. 463-64. Compare also Goethe's letter to Zelter (24 August 1823), *Goethe und Zelter*, III, 330-31.
20. *Clough Letters*, p. 111 (23 September 1849).
21. 'Empedocles on Etna', Act II, ll. 92-95 in *Poems*, p. 180.
22. See *Clough Letters*, p. 126, p. 99 and p. 131.
23. See letter to Jane Forster (6 August 1858), *Letters*, I, 63.
24. *Clough Letters*, p. 143.
25. When Arnold re-read this conversation in later life he copied from it two quotations into his note-book for 1881. See *Note-Books*, p. 357.
26. *Gespräche*, III (2 January 1824), pp. 560-61.
27. *Gespräche*, III (3 May 1827), p. 649.
28. EC, I, CPW, III, 260.
29. *Clough Letters*, pp. 64-65. Letter undated, but of December 1847 or early 1848.
30. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part II, Book 7), *Werke*, XXV, 80 and 108.
31. See *Werke*, XLV, 131-33. Lionel Trilling (*Matthew Arnold*, p. 197) was the first to point out these parallels.
32. *Victorian Studies*, 7 (1964), 243-46.
33. CPW, I, 8 and 13.
34. See 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Werke*, XLIX, 12 (Arnold's translation).
35. See CPW, I, 13 and R. H. Super's note, p. 223.
36. *Matthew Arnold*, p. 148.
37. See 'Über den Dilettantismus' (1799), *Werke*, XLIV, 271 (Arnold's translation).
38. 'Theories of Poetry and a New Poet', *North British Review*, 19 (1853), p. 338. Arnold supposed the author of the article to be J. M. F. Ludlow, but Super has identified the writer as David Masson. See also S. B. M. Coulling, *Victorian Studies*, 7 (1964), p. 236.
39. CPW, I, 8.
40. See *Gespräche*, III (3 May 1827), p. 646.
41. *Gespräche*, II (10 January 1830 and 13 February 1831), p. 396 and p. 461.
42. *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe*, 6 vols (1828-29), III, 129-30.
43. See *Unpublished Letters*, p. 20.
44. See *Poems*, p. 598, footnote.
45. *North British Review*, 19 (1853), 317-18.
46. *Clough Letters*, p. 104.
47. *Unpublished Letters*, p. 17.
48. *Aesthetic Temperament*, p. 95.
49. See 'Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface', *Review of English Studies*, 17 (1941), 313-14.
50. *Werke*, XXV, 108-09 (Part II, Book 7).
51. *Gespräche*, I (18 September 1823), pp. 47-49.
52. Aristotle's definition of Tragedy as an 'imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life', as R. H. Super has pointed out (CPW, I, 219), is certainly in the background here,

Notes to Chapter III, Continued

but Arnold is thinking more widely of both narrative and dramatic art in general. Arnold may also have had in mind a comment made by Goethe in *Wilhelm Meister*. See Appendix D.

53. That Arnold's unconscious emphasis on 'objective' art is closely associated with his reading of Goethe's criticism is shown by his use in the Preface of the phrase 'pragmatic poetry'. For a discussion of its significance, see Appendix E.
54. *Gespräche*, III (10 March 1830), p. 751.
55. 'Heinrich Heine', EC, I (1865), CPW, III, 110.
56. See *Werke*, XLV, 429.
57. *Gespräche*, I (24 November 1824 and 29 January 1826), p. 129 and p. 177.
58. See *Werke*, XLV, 426 and 430 (Arnold's translation).
59. *Gespräche*, II (13 February 1831), p. 464.
60. *Clough Letters*, p. 144.
61. Quoted by Allott in headnote to 1853 Preface, in *Poems*, p. 589. The young men referred to were probably poets of the 'Spasmodic School', and specifically Alexander Smith.
62. Arnold may have been thinking of Goethe's remark to Eckermann about the French poet Béranger: 'There is a man whose representation and whose inner life is worth something. With him there is the content of a significant personality'. *Gespräche*, III (10 March 1830), p. 752.
63. CPW, I, 14.
64. *Clough Letters*, p. 142.
65. See *Werke*, XLV, 430 (Arnold's translation).
66. *Gespräche*, I (24 February 1825), pp. 152-53. Arnold quotes the sentence which I have italicized in his 1876 note-book. See *Note-Books*, p. 242.
67. CPW, I, 9.
68. *Werke*, XXXIX, 292, and XLV, 138.
69. *Goethe und Zelter*, IV, 289.
70. *Gespräche*, I (31 January 1827), p. 235.
71. See S. B. M. Coulling, *Victorian Studies*, 7 (1964), 251-52.
72. 'Neueste Italienische Literatur, I: Classiker und Romantiker', *Werke*, XXXVIII, 247.
73. See *Poems*, p. 599 (footnote) and *Gespräche*, I (25 December 1825), p. 173.
74. CPW, I, 9.
75. See *Werke*, XLIV, 271.
76. CPW, I, 9. This insight into the primacy of '*architectonicè*', became a permanent part of Arnold's critical vocabulary. In *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867) he maintained that the Celts had no great poetry of their own because they lacked the patience for such 'a steady, deep-searching survey, a firm conception of the facts of human life' as gives rise to the *architectonicè* capable of producing works like the *Divine Comedy* (see CPW, III, 345). In his essay 'John Keats' (1880) Arnold judged him not 'ripe' for the architectonics of poetry, 'the faculty which presides at the evolution of works like the *Agamemnon* or *Lear*' (see EC, II (1888), CPW, IX, 215). In 'Milton' (1888) Arnold praised *Paradise Lost* for displaying the architectonics of Milton's art (CPW, XI, 331).
77. CPW, I, 5.
78. Arnold had used it twice before in a letter to Clough of March 1849 (see *Clough Letters*, p. 100) and again in May 1850, when he wrote: 'I have at Quillinan's sollicitation (sic) dirged W. W(ordsworth) *in the grand style*' (*Clough Letters*, p. 115). Arnold is referring to his poem 'Memorial Verses'.
79. See *Aesthetic Temperament*, p. 15 and *Werke* XIX, 159.
80. *Gespräche*, I (18 September 1823), p. 48.
81. *Werke*, XXIV, 243 (Part I, Book 4).
82. See *Clough Letters*, p. 97.
83. See *Poems*, p. 595 (footnote).
84. *Goethe und Zelter*, I, 68-70 (28 July 1803).
85. *Goethe und Zelter*, III, 447.
86. See *Werke*, XLVI, 6-7 and *On Translating Homer* (1861), CPW, I, 116-17.
87. *Gespräche*, I (1 February 1827), p. 241.
88. *Clough Letters*, p. 97.
89. EC, I, CPW, III, 261.
90. Arnold attributed the concept of adequacy to Spinoza, but as R. H. Super has pointed

out, for Spinoza 'adequate' meant essentially the same as 'true'. See CPW, III, 181 and 450. In other words, the relativism implied by the concept was Arnold's own.

91. See 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse', *Poems*, p. 288: 'Wandering between two worlds, one dead,/The other powerless to be born' (ll. 85-86).
92. See below pp. 106-08.
93. *Poems*, p. 106. Arnold used the expression 'he saw life steadily, and saw it whole' in connexion with Goethe also. See Mulhauser, I, 270.
94. CPW, I, 28.
95. Published in W. T. Arnold's essay 'Thomas Arnold the Younger', *Century Magazine*, 66 (1903), 124. For the dating of the letter, see R. L. Lowe, 'Two Arnold Letters', *Modern Philology*, 52 (1955), 262-64.
96. CPW, I, 22.
97. CPW, X, 62.
98. CPW, I, 20.
99. CPW, X, 64.
100. *Clough Letters*, p. 124. Lionel Trilling (*Matthew Arnold*, p. 31) has rightly pointed out that Arnold's emphasis on the importance of content in poetry is Goethean: 'I honor both the rhythm and the rhyme by which poetry first becomes poetry; but . . . what is truly educative and inspiring, is what remains of the poet when he is translated into prose'. Goethe's statement in the essay 'Für junge Dichter' that 'poets must ever be gaining more and more in *content*' (Arnold's italics) is also relevant here. See above pp. 78-79. Had Trilling continued the quotation he could have shown that Arnold's disapproval of ornateness is also Goethean: 'Then only the pure, perfect content is left which a dazzling exterior can, if the content is absent, persuade us is present, or if it is present, can obscure'. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Part III, Book 11), *Werke*, XXVI, 73.
101. EC, II (1888), CPW, IX, 161.
102. 'Arnold and Pater', *Selected Essays*, third enlarged edition (1969), p. 431.
103. See EC, I (1865), CPW, III, 13.
104. CPW, III, 380-81.
105. 'Literature and Science', *Discourses*, CPW, X, 72.
106. *Werke*, XXXVII, 19-20.
107. *Werke*, XXXVII, 21.
108. See *Werke*, XXV, 11 (Part II, Book 6).
109. 'Der Sammler und die Seinigen', *Werke*, XXXVIII, 103.
110. *Clough Letters*, pp. 100-101 (1 March 1849).
111. CPW, I, 13.
112. EC, I (1865), CPW, III, 234.
113. *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, CPW, III, 346.
114. See 'Dante and Beatrice', EC, I, CPW, III, 9 and 'Byron', EC, II, CPW, IX, 225-28. Arnold claimed that his judgement of Byron had Goethe's authority and indeed Goethe, who esteemed Byron highly, did remark that 'as soon as he (Byron) reflects, he is a child': 'sobald er reflektiert, ist er ein Kind'. See *Gespräche*, I (18 January 1825), p. 144. Goethe's many remarks on Byron are scattered throughout his letters, essays, and conversations, and widely dissimilar judgements of the English poet could be supported on the basis of them. Certainly Arnold stresses Byron's want of intellectual power with rather more insistence than Goethe.
115. *Gespräche*, I (14 April 1824), p. 112.
116. 'Antik und Modern' (1818), *Werke*, XXXIX, 76-77.
117. *Note-Books*, p. 490 and CPW, I, 13. Arnold's source was *Werke*, XXX, 192, but compare also *Gespräche*, I (3 December 1824), p. 132.
118. See Appendix F.
119. See CPW, III, 341 and IX, 62.
120. *Werke*, XXVI, 148 (Part III, Book 12).
121. See Mulhauser, I, 270 (30 June 1849).
122. *'Die elegischen Dichter der Hellenen'*, *Werke*, XLV, 410. Arnold's translation.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. 'A French Critic on Goethe', *Mixed Essays* (1879), CPW, VIII, 255.

Notes to Chapter IV, Continued

2. 'Emerson', *Discourses*, CPW, X, 167.
3. CPW, VIII, 273-75.
4. CPW, I, 59.
5. See Arnold's letter to his brother Tom printed in 'Thomas Arnold the Younger', *Century Magazine*, 66 (1903), 124.
6. 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', EC, I, CPW, III, 259-60.
7. *Letters*, I, 5.
8. *Letters*, I, 17.
9. EC, I, CPW, III, 109-11.
10. *Gespräche*, III (23 October 1828), p. 726.
11. *Tag- und Jahreshefte, Werke*, XXXI, 84 (1799).
12. Arnold's reading-lists suggest that he did not re-read the *Gespräche* until 1866. See *Note-Books*, p. 580.
13. *Note-Books*, p. 572.
14. CPW, VIII, 275.
15. See *Note-Books*, p. 576 and p. 580.
16. See above p. 10.
17. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 12-13, 27-28, 30, and 33.
18. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, Preface pp. XVII-XXII and 18-20.
19. *Characteristics of Goethe*, II, 284-86.
20. See 'Matthew Arnold and the Nightmare of History', in *Victorian Poetry*, edited by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, 15 (1972), pp. 48-49.
21. EC, I, CPW, III, 282, 274, 270.
22. *Letters*, II, 304 (4 December 1885).
23. *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) CPW, V, 93.
24. CPW, V, 292-93.
25. *The Spheres and Duties of Government*, translated by R. Coulthard (1854), p. 139.
26. *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), CPW, V, 93.
27. CPW, VII, 140. Arnold was quoting from *Goethes Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler Friedrich von Müller*, edited by C. A. H. Burkhardt (1870). Hereafter abbreviated *Unterhaltungen*.
28. CPW, II, 10.
29. *Unterhaltungen*, p. 91.
30. *Werke*, XLIX, 24.
31. *Gespräche*, I (18 January 1827), p. 222.
32. *Friendship's Garland* (1871), CPW, V, 45.
33. See *England and the Italian Question* (1859), CPW, I, 84, and 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' (1864), EC, I, CPW, III, 266.
34. See *Briefe von und an Goethe*, edited by F. W. Riemer (1846), p. 310, and *England and the Italian Question*, CPW, I, 81.
35. *Friendship's Garland*, CPW, V, 22.
36. *Mixed Essays*, CPW, VIII, 304.
37. CPW, II, 29.
38. 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Goethes Werke*, Hamburger Ausgabe (1948-60), XII, 380.
39. 'A Word about America' (1882), CPW, X, 4.
40. See *Culture and Anarchy*, CPW, V, 203 and 205.
41. 'The Future of Liberalism' (1880), CPW, IX, 157.
42. 'Equality' (1878), CPW, VIII, 304.
43. *Culture and Anarchy*, CPW, V, 204.
44. 'The Problem of Spiritual Authority in the Nineteenth Century', in *The Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society* (1970).
45. 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Goethes Werke*, Hamburger Ausgabe, XII, 380.
46. *Gespräche*, III (10 March 1830), p. 756.
47. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 18 and II, 284.
48. *Belagerung von Mainz* (1820), *Werke*, XXX, 321.
49. 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Goethes Werke*, Hamburger Ausgabe, XII, 379.
50. See *Hermann und Dorothea, Werke*, XI, 293 (Canto VI, ll. 76-80).
51. *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), CPW, V, 526. Arnold omitted this sentence from all later editions of the work.

Notes to Chapter IV, Continued

52. CPW, V, 135-36.
53. 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', EC, 1, CPW, III, 265-66.
54. *Culture and Anarchy*, CPW, V, 223.
55. *Discourses*, CPW, X, 163.
56. 'The Future of Liberalism', *Irish Essays* (1882), CPW, IX, 142.
57. CPW, V, 235; see also pp. 93-95, 130, 244.
58. *The Spheres and Duties of Government*, pp. 11-12.
59. See *Letters*, I, 204 and *Note-Books*, pp. 581-83.
60. *Gespräche*, I (18 January 1827), p. 222, and III (20 October 1830), p. 776.
61. See above p. 107.
62. *Poems*, p. 180.
63. *Letters*, I, 4.
64. CPW, V, 152.
65. Arnold's 'remnant' of the 'Numbers' essay in *Discourses* is plainly connected with his notion of the 'best self' in *Culture and Anarchy*.
66. See *Note-Books*, p. 358, and *Gespräche*, III (1 May 1825), p. 601.
67. See CPW, X, 162, and *Unterhaltungen*, p. 126.
68. CPW, III, 235.
69. CPW, III, 341.
70. See *Letters*, II, 346; 'Civilisation in the United States' (1888), CPW, XI, 358; 'Common Schools Abroad' (1886), CPW, XI, 89, and 'A Last Word on the Burials Bill' (1876), CPW, VIII, 90.
71. CPW, V, 239.
72. See *Gespräche*, I (18 September 1823), p. 50.
73. CPW, I, 6 and 15. Allott (*Poems*, p. 607) has pointed out that Arnold's 'wholesome regulative laws' is a phrase derived from Goethe's essay 'Ueber den sogenannten Dilettantismus'.
74. EC, II, CPW, IX, 162 and 168.
75. *Gespräche*, I (26 February 1824), p. 98.
76. 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', CPW, III, 284.
77. EC, II, CPW, IX, 38.
78. See *Letters*, II, 83 (8 May 1872). Arnold's source was 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Werke*, XLIX, 44.
79. In his review 'Le Tasse, par M. Alexandre Duval' (1827), Goethe expressed the opinion that 'es bilde sich eine allgemeine *Weltliteratur*'. And in his essay 'Edinburgh Review und Foreign– und Foreign Quarterly Reviews vom Jahre 1828', he wished that these journals would contribute to 'einer gehofften allgemeinen Weltliteratur'. See *Werke*, XLVI, 145 and 267. In a letter to Zelter he wrote of 'der anmarschierenden Weltliteratur'. See *Goethe und Zelter*, V, 183 (4 March 1829).
80. See 'Bezüge nach außen' (1827), *Werke*, XLVI, 147 and 149, and 'German Romance' (1827), *Werke*, XLVI, 263-67.
81. 'The Literary Influence of Academies', EC I, CPW, III, 236-7.
82. See *Culture and Anarchy*, CPW, V, 158 and 237 and CPW, III, 245.
83. *Culture and Anarchy*, CPW, V, 88.
84. 'Democracy' (1861), CPW, II, 7.
85. *Culture and Anarchy*, CPW, V, 207.
86. 'Alles ruft uns zu: daß wir entsagen sollen'. See *Note-Books*, p. 187.
87. CPW, V, 207.
88. 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', EC, I, CPW, III, 281.
89. Quoted by J. Dover Wilson in his introduction to *Culture and Anarchy*, first paperback edition (1960), editor's introduction, pp. xxxi-xxxii.
90. CPW, VII, 228-9.
91. *Letters*, I, 249.
92. See, for example, *Gespräche*, II (2 March 1831), pp. 484-5, where Goethe stresses the inexplicable, but also creative aspect of 'Das Dämonische'. The *locus classicus*, however, is *Dichtung und Wahrheit, Werke*, XLVIII, 176 (Part IV, Book 20).
93. 'Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist II' (1875), CPW, VIII, 38 and 42.
94. *Werke*, XLIX, 54. The quotations from the 'Maximen und Reflexionen' appear in Arnold's note-books suddenly in 1870 when Arnold copied out no fewer than twenty-four aphorisms. He had presumably re-read the collection in this year. After 1870 the

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maxims appear regularly in his note-books.
95. CPW, XI, 358.
96. *Werke*, XLVIII, 150.
97. *Werke*, XIX, 139-40 (Book V, Chapter I).
98. 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Werke*, XLIX, 64.
99. See *Note-Books*, p. 131 (1870).
100. 'Einleitung in die Propyläen', *Werke*, XXXVIII, 9-10.
101. *Werke*, XLV, 133.
102. *Gespräche*, I (4 January 1827), p. 204, and I (18 September 1823), p. 48.
103. See *Werke*, XLV, 236-7.
104. CPW, I, 15.
105. *The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold* (1959), p. 222. Hereafter abbreviated *Ethical Idealism.*
106. See above p. 23.
107. *Briefe von Goethe an Lavater* (1833), p. 144 (29 July 1782).
108. *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und F. H. Jacobi* (1846), p. 261 (6 January 1813).
109. This conclusion attaches less weight to Goethe's influence on Arnold's religious views than W. Robbins, *Ethical Idealism* pp. 57-58. Robbins rightly stresses Arnold's indebtedness to Spinoza's biblical criticism, but too readily assumes that Spinoza's religion was Goethe's also. See *Ethical Idealism*, p. 104.
110. *God and the Bible* (1875), CPW, VII, 333.
111. *St. Paul and Protestantism* (1870), CPW, VI, 92.
112. The term was first used by Arnold in a letter to Clough of 20 July 1848, *Clough Letters*, p. 86. See 'The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold', *PMLA*, 72 (1957), pp. 977-96.
113. See D. Forbes, *The Liberal Anglican Idea of History* (1952). To what extent the 'eternal verities' of religion were subject to 'development' was, of course, a subject of profound disagreement. Forbes shows that the Liberal Anglican conception of history was significantly influenced by Niebuhr, but derived ultimately from Vico.
114. See *Note-Books*, p. 85 and *Mittheilungen über Goethe*, edited by F. W. Riemer, 2 vols (1841), I, 130.
115. See E. Heller, *The Disinherited Mind*, Penguin Books edition (1961), p. 22.
116. *Gespräche*, III (11 March 1832), pp. 797-8.
117. *St. Paul and Protestantism*, CPW, VI, 115-16, 69, 72 and 19.
118. Goethe rejected the doctrine that 'man must renounce his own powers and expect everything of Grace . . .'. See *Dichtung und Wahrheit, Werke*, XXVI, 307 (Part III, Book 15).
119. *St Paul and Protestantism*, CPW, VI, 33.
120. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 102-03.
121. *Literature and Dogma* (1873), CPW, VI, 173.
122. See *Note-Books*, pp. 135-36 (1870), and 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Werke*, XLIX, 119.
123. See *Dichtung und Wahrheit, Werke*, XXVI, 100 (Part III, Book 12).
124. See *Dichtung und Wahrheit, Werke*, XXV, 96 (Part II, Book 7), and *Gespräche*, I (1 February 1827), p. 245.
125. *Note-Books*, p. 142, and 'Maximen und Reflexionen', *Werke*, XLIX, 85.
126. *Note-Books*, p. 294.
127. See CPW, VII, 108, and *Gespräche*, II (28 February 1831), pp. 482-83.
128. See *Note-Books*, p. 112 (1865), and *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 177. Basil Willey is, I believe, wrong when he imputes to Arnold the belief that 'religion was the highest form of culture and of poetry'. See *Nineteenth Century Studies*, Penguin Books (1964) p. 264.
129. *Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England: Newman, Arnold and Pater* (1969), p. 173.
130. *Ethical Idealism*, p. 57.
131. 'Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist I', CPW, VIII, 33.
132. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 28.
133. See *Mittheilungen über Goethe*, I, 115 and 117.
134. See *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 360-61 and 372.
135. Arnold quotes the maxim, 'Superstition is the poetry of life; therefore, it does not harm a poet to be superstitious', in his note-book of 1870. See *Note-Books*, p. 130, and *Werke*, XLIX, 61.
136. *Note-Books*, p. 131. 'Man never understands how anthropomorphic he is'. Arnold refers

often to this maxim. See *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 184 and 242.

137. F. H. Bradley in *Ethical Studies* (1876) was particularly severe on Arnold's logic, and Trilling (*Matthew Arnold*, pp. 358-9) finds Bradley's strictures just. Robbins tends to agree, but doubts whether Bradley had anything better to offer (*Ethical Idealism*, pp. 110-11, and p. 134).
138. See *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 176.
139. *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 372 and 190. See also Super's note, p. 496.
140. 'The Church of England' (1876), CPW, VIII, 67.
141. CPW, X, 230-31.
142. CPW, VII, 192.
143. *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VII, 200.
144. *St Paul and Protestantism*, CPW, VI, 33.
145. *Ethical Idealism*, p. 111.
146. 'Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist II', CPW, VIII, 44.
147. *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 226.
148. CPW, VIII, 60; CPW, VI, 386; CPW, X, 163.
149. Arnold copied into his note-book under 1888 Marx's sentence: 'Society is a sort of organism on the growth of which conscious efforts can exercise little effect'. *Note-Books*, p. 438. The sentence is followed by Arnold's last entry, taken from *The Imitation of Christ*.
150. *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 198 and 295.
151. See *St Paul and Protestantism*, CPW, VI, 56, and 'Preface to *Last Essays on Church and Religion*' (1877), CPW, VIII, 157-58.
152. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 44.
153. CPW, VI, 403-04.
154. *Clough Letters*, p. 93.
155. *Poems*, p. 446 and pp. 488-89.
156. 'Conditional Immortality: Matthew Arnold and Goethe', *Notes and Queries*, 19 (1972), p. 253.
157. *Gespräche*, II (1 January 1830), p. 394.
158. Arnold probably acquired the *Gespräche* in 1848 and could, therefore, have read it by the time of writing to Clough.
159. *Gespräche*, I (2 May 1824), p. 118.
160. See *Unterhaltungen*, p. 70.
161. *Gespräche*, II (4 February 1829), p. 318.
162. *Goethe und Zelter*, IV, 279 (19 March 1827).
163. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 67-68.
164. See *Gespräche*, II (3 March 1830), p. 413.
165. *Literature and Dogma*, CPW, VI, 389.
166. See *Gespräche*, II (17 February 1829), p. 328.
167. CPW, VII, 245.
168. *Characteristics of Goethe*, I, 67-68.
169. *Unterhaltungen*, p. 151.
170. *St Paul and Protestantism*, CPW, VI, 10.
171. 'Verschiedenes über Kunst &c', *Werke*, XLIV, 4.
172. See 'F. H. Jacobi's auserlesener Briefwechsel', *Werke*, XLV, 293, and *Unterhaltungen*, p. 137.
173. 'Ted Hughes and Crow', *London Magazine*, 10 (January, 1971), p. 14.
174. 'Matthew Arnold and Goethe', *PEGS*, New Series, 4 (1928), p. 50.
175. *A Vision*, second corrected edition (1962), p. 145.
176. *Gespräche*, II (16 December 1828), p. 309.

NOTES TO APPENDIX C

1. See *Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist* (1967), p. 11.
2. See *Matthew Arnold*, pp. 79-80.
3. *Unpublished Letters*, p. 18. The letter is wrongly dated 1853 by the editor.
4. *The Poet as Humanist*, p. 116, p. 118, and p. 147.
5. *The Poet as Humanist*, p. 116.

Notes to Appendix C, Continued

6. 'Das Göttliche', *Werke*, II, 86-87.
7. *The Poet as Humanist*, p. 118.
8. *The Poet as Humanist*, pp. 130-31.
9. 'Winckelmann' (1805), *Werke*, XXXVII, 20.
10. 'Dauer im Wechsel, *Werke*, I, 133 and III, 88.
11. *The Poet as Humanist*, pp. 132-33.
12. See *The Poet as Humanist*, pp. 133-34 and *Werke*, III, 90.
13. *The Poet as Humanist*, p. 134.
14. *The Poet as Humanist*, pp. 143-44. See 'Zahme Xenien II', Werke, III, 259.
15. *The Poet as Humanist*, pp. 144-46, and *Werke*, II, 228 and III, 84. Arnold entered the last four lines of this stanza in his 1866 note-book. See *Note-Books*, p. 32.
16. *The Poet as Humanist*, pp. 146-47, and *Werke*, XXIII, 261. Stange's translation is again misleading; he renters 'selbstständige Gewissen' ad 'independent consciousness' instead of 'independent conscience'. Perhaps, however, 'moral consciousness' is understood. The stanza means: 'Now turn immediately inwards. There inside you will find the centre in which no noble man can doubt. You will find no rule missing there: for the independent conscience is the sun of your moral day'.

NOTES TO APPENDIX D

1. Arnold's translation. See *Werke*, XIX, 181.

NOTES TO APPENDIX E

1. *Poems*, p. 593, footnote.

NOTES TO APPENDIX F

1. See CPW, III, 16; CPW, V, 271, 281, and 283; CPW, IX, 28.
2. *Werke*, XX, 178.
3. *Goethe und Zelter*, I, 341 (30 October 1808).
4. *Schiller und Goethe*, V, 160 (17 August 1799).
5. *Gespräche*, I (12 October 1825), p. 169.
6. 'Spinoza and the Bible, EC, I, CPW, III, 179.
7. EC, I, CPW, III, 205-06.
8. See Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, Mercury Books (1966), p. 25.

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