MATTHEW ARNOLD'S POETIC IMAGERY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

WENDELL STACY JOHNSON, B.A., M.A.

The Ohio State University

1952

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Approved by:

J. Raymond Derby
Adviser
In the first place, any essay on the subject of poetic imagery must begin by meeting the problem of definition, the problem of limiting the area in which it works. The term image has had various senses for various rhetoricians and critics of literature. In the simplest rhetorical sense, an image is the figurative representation of anything either concrete or abstract; and, while figurative might be taken to mean only visual representation, the adjective is more usually, and more usefully, taken to cover the representation by means of any suggested sensation: sound, smell, feeling (of several kinds) and so on. Wellek and Warren emphasize that "imagery is not visual only," and R. H. Fogle considers this extremely important, especially in connection with the English Romantic poets. I. A. Richards points out that the vividness of the sensation which is communicated by the image is not so important to its efficacy as "its character as a mental event peculiarly connected with sensation." Connection is the key idea here: traditionally, imagery means the joining of two notions, one of which expresses the immediacy of sensation. Ezra Pound, theorizing for the "imagist" movement in poetry, defines an image as "a unification of disparate ideas." That is, the image either is or implies a figure of speech, a comparison.
But what of the term which only implies? Must a sight or sound described in poetry be more or less explicitly representative of an idea, feeling or element in experience other than its literal self in order to qualify as an image? For an older tradition in rhetoric, the narrowest definition would distinguish the image on the basis of its explicitness. But in much modern criticism, plainly, the word has taken on wider meaning. "The image may exist as description or ... as metaphor." A feeling that the distinction between metaphor and picture has become largely if not entirely technical -- a feeling inspired in great part, no doubt, by the Freudian interpretation of dream-events, the modern scholarly investigations of myth and iconography, the depth psychology and integrative analysis of Jung and his followers -- makes for this broader use of the word image, to include metaphor, symbol and the literal describing of sensation. Still, this extended meaning is far from being universal in scholarly practice. In recent studies of imagery in Shakespeare, Milton, Keats and Shelley, the more restricted sense of image as metaphorical only is adhered to. These studies pass over the wholly literal descriptions in poetry. On the other hand, such dissimilar studies as Rosemond Tuve's *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* and Robert Heilman's *This Great Stage* both deal with words and phrases which merely represent sense-objects: Professor R. B. Heilman declares that his essay "has as its subject not images as such but the structure of
a meaning in which images, whether the image words are used literally or figuratively, have an important role," and his statement suggests the great scope which any essay upon the imagery of a single play or a single poet must give itself when the term is so understood.

The limitations of the word determine the limitations of the approach. Furthermore, a final working definition for such a term can probably best be decided on the basis of the particular job which is to be done by the term. Working on this assumption, and supposing that the aim of this essay is to discover as fully as possible the patterns which are embodied in (metaphorical) images and which give Matthew Arnold's poetry both sense and intensity, one sees that the preliminary problem is how one may best establish an operational definition. A category sufficiently limited for examination and sufficiently inclusive to lead toward important general observations on a body of verse: This is the desideratum. It is necessary to examine what qualities those metaphorical expressions which are universally termed images have in common, and then to see if other constructions have the same or similar qualities and can, pragmatically and for the sake of determining related functions and effects in the poetry, be included in a single category.

As the practice of the various critics mentioned would suggest, it is generally agreed that, no matter what else the word may denote, an image in its narrowest possible meaning is
a sensible likeness, a counterpart or representation; and therefore that any metaphor (in the broadest sense of any figure of speech) which communicates a specific impression of the senses in poetry is a poetic image.

What kind of sense-impression communicated in poetry — sight, sound, odor, movement — could be said to imply another term, another conception, simply by being given in a certain way in a certain context? When the poet speaks of being at a crossroads and of taking one road rather than another, his reader has no doubt of the more than literal significance in such a statement, and yet the picture of the crossroads cannot be called a metaphorical image: it is, first of all, quite literal; and the second term — decision or choice — is not given at all. In a more difficult case, when a poet pictures himself standing in a garden which is also a graveyard, just before and after his vision of a heaven of jewels and light, the reader has a feeling, whether he is entirely conscious of it or not, that the garden-grave is earth (as opposed to heaven) in a literal but also a more than literal sense. One is inclined to call these pictures symbols and to let the matter rest there. But there is some difficulty with that term which may justify distinguishing it from one necessary to cover a larger area.

The most useful modern discussion of the symbol in poetry, one which has considerably affected critical usage, is Robert Penn Warren's. According to Professor Warren's
definition, a symbol is an object standing for a whole class in which it is included. Thus an albatross may symbolize all devices for keeping time (but not time itself), all mechanical objects, all man-made things. Matthew Arnold's "sea of life," according to this, would be a symbol, for it represents earthly objects and, ultimately, the whole of elemental nature. But the "stream of life," representing man's movement from birth to death, could not be a symbol: rather, it must be an implied image (sometimes it is explicitly metaphorical, sometimes not) which, being associated with the larger image or symbol, suggests the relationship between man and nature. Likewise, the crossroads would not be symbolic. For the symbol, in this sense, is only the organic representative: a part of the body for which it stands. Another difficulty of applying the term symbol to any physical impression in poetry which apparently represents something other than itself arises from a persistent association of conscious intent with the word. It is impossible to be sure whether the medieval poet who placed himself in a garden-grave intended that place to be understood as representing the earthly cycle, death, and as suggesting the profoundly effective contrast between this vegetative nature and the brilliant constancy of the heavenly order. If one calls the Pearl poet's erbare a symbol, a learned skeptic is certain to reply that there is in fact a whole poetic tradition behind this sort of description and that the likelihood of the poet's intending any such profound
symbolism is a slight one. Of course he is right, having missed the point; and a term like symbol invites some minds to miss the point, suggesting – as a phrase like "image which represents the natural order" may not – the poet's intention to symbolize.

Symbols, then, if we limit the word to mean those organic representations discussed by Robert Penn Warren (whether intended to be representations by their creators, or not) are in a sense images: they are implicit, but not metaphorical, images, implying the metaphor and therefore serving the same essential function as an image in the strictest and most formal meaning of that rhetorical term. But there is a larger class of objects in poetry, too, which are not symbols, being non-organic, and which yet serve this very function. These objects, these words and phrases in poem after poem, can hardly be classified except as images in a broad sense, even though they are not presented in the guise of explicit or organic representations for given ideas, actions, objects, or general characteristics. In a poem about a man standing at the crossroads, to turn again to a trite figure which Frost has managed to revivify, the two roads plainly do mean something beyond the literal, and thus the poetic object is not simply pictorial but also imaginative.

But if such objects are allowed to be images, how is it possible to decide when a poem actually does present these objects? How is the representative quality to be determined?
If a poem does not tell the reader that it uses the sea to represent all natural life and the stream to represent man's life, if, that is, the reader is not given that identification of one term with another which makes up what common consent denominates an image, how is he to be reasonably certain in these identifications? This is where criticism, criticism which is inseparable from a scholarly discipline and grounding, enters in. The critic should prod the reader's imagination—not to be taken in the frivolous sense of fancy or of what the individual can "read into" a poem—by showing him the relationship between one poem and a body of poetry, a temporal environment, a cultural tradition, to bring forward relevant knowledge from the past; by applying what psychologists, anthropologists, folklorists discover through their own means, to bring up knowledge from the depths of that human imagination which must be assumed as common to poet and reader in order for poetry to have an objective existence. This would seem to be a formidable task with a pretentious goal, but it means nothing more than careful and sensitive reading and re-reading and the application of knowledge, most often fairly common knowledge, to new situations in order to see how it fits. There is no reason to suppose that every kind of water in every poem has a profound relation to the baptismal waters; but if this relationship makes good sense in a particular poem, fits into the poem's explicit meaning and adds to a sense of wholeness, then there is no
good reason to reject such a contribution as scientifically impossible to establish. It is absurd to suppose that because one poet uses a tree to represent steadfastness in one poem, every tree in his poetry thereafter also represents steadfastness; but it is also absurd to overlook the possibility and refuse to see if the image, even modified to become a wholly new element with added significance in a new setting, does fit. There are great dangers in this approach to literature, of course, and the only safe discipline for the critic taking it is the constant sense of and return to the literal and explicit things of the poem, those upon which there will be common agreement. Still, there are great dangers for any genuinely critical approach to literature because there are no foolproof formulae for reading. Nothing is more meaningless for the study of meaning -- which is the study of importance -- in poetry than such a suggestion as Una Ellis-Fermor's that imagery can properly be studied and analyzed by the use of severely scientific method. In dealing with the imagination neither science nor any external guide has replaced or ever can replace the human sensibility and good sense of the critic himself.

If it is possible to establish certain evocations of sense-impression in verse as images, then, there can be said to exist several categories within the larger term image, of which this category arrived at by the application of common sense and sensibility to a body of verse is probably the largest. There will be seen to exist, now, good reason for
pushing the bounds of definition for imagery considerably beyond those established by the metaphorical demand. Having gone so far, the explorer may reasonably go further, to the outer bounds of definition, and apply the term in the other of its two major senses, to include every communication of sense-impression, whether literal or metaphorical, representative or simply evocative. Otherwise there must be a good deal of confusion resulting from usage which depends partly on a formal criterion (the form of the metaphor) and more largely on a sense criterion not always easily established.

To sum up the matter of definition: one can distinguish two sorts of images, the literal — which includes every impression of the senses communicated by the poem — and the metaphorical; and, further, one can subdivide the literal into descriptive and representative kinds, into phrases or words which cannot be reasonably supposed to do more than evoke a physical object or setting (every specific noun, as "stone," "tree," "boat," with all its modifiers is this kind of image if nothing more) and those which draw upon associations previously established by the poet or by tradition or by the deep-seated imaginative nature of the psyche which is common to poet and reader.

Again, the metaphorical image can be broken down into three mutually exclusive categories according to the nature of the comparison made between objects. So Professor Wells speaks of the "sunken image" in which the comparison is
clearly implied rather than stated. There are, in fact, two distinct means of implying metaphor, as Professor Wells' examples indicate, and one may speak of the nominal image, which is an explicit metaphor, and the verbal and adjectival, which are implicit or "sunken" images, but still metaphorical in nature. When the poet uses old-fashioned simile or metaphor and compares a woman to a rose, the result is a nominal image. When he says that his heart sings, he implies a comparison between the heart and a single animate being, since only such a being can literally sing, but the implication lies with the verb -- an object behaves in the way that only another object can -- and so we have a verbal image. When he describes "a green thought in a green shade," the comparison is between a thought and a natural object, but it is only implied, and implied by the adjective which describes one term as though it were another; and this is an adjectival image. But it is not necessarily the grammatical form which determines the category. Shakespeare's "ripeness is all" is an adjectival image because of its sense: it means that a man must be ripe, and this is a quality. Just so, "leaping wit" is verbal since it literally describes not a quality but an action.

Here we have a list of the kinds of images distinguished according to the sense which they communicate:

1. The literal image
   a. Descriptive
   b. Representative
2. The metaphorical image
   a. Nominal
   b. Verbal
   c. Adjectival

With the simple descriptive image this essay is not very much concerned; its study would be the study of concrete language in poetry. The representative image presents a considerable problem and is a major concern here. But it may be worthwhile before considering it, to look for examples of how Arnold uses metaphorical imagery, keeping in mind the important fact that frequently literal imagery becomes metaphorical in Arnold: that in "Dover Beach" and in other important poems the description of a natural object is elaborated on and transformed into metaphor. The two categories of description and figure of speech are not always so distinct as they might at first appear to be.

Of nominal images it is hardly necessary to cite many examples. In the "Butler's Sermons" sonnet, man's nature is like a group of islands. In "Shakespeare" the bard is a lofty hill, with his "victorious brow": and here is a kind of "triple-play" image since "brow" may be taken as metaphorical, though common enough, when applied to a hill; the same triple-sense in a nominal image occurs incidentally when Iseult of Brittany, in "Tristram", is called a snowdrop, and to the associations of the white flower are added those of coldness, again because of the commonplace metaphor (the flower's name) grafted onto the poet's own metaphor. The most basic and recurrent metaphorical images in Arnold are nominal
ones: man is like an island, nature is like a sea; the self-conscious mind is like a devouring flame, and history is like a stream. This simple metaphor, $x = y$, is fairly common in most poetry, and probably no more or less than normally so in Arnold's.

The adjectival image, too, is rather frequent, and perhaps more so here than in most poetry. In the "Independent Preacher" sonnet, nature is characterized as strong and cool and stubborn; in later poems nature takes on various other personal qualities, and it is as a reaction against his own tendency to give these qualities to an abstraction or totality, making it behave like an animate being, that Arnold says in "Dover Beach," "The world ... hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain."

One of the attributes most often given nature is silence, and this could hardly be literal. In "Desire," to turn to another abstraction, torpor is "deep." Here is an instance of the adjectival metaphor in its most familiar form, using dimension to represent degree of experience: this kind of association is so common in every-day language -- in phrases like "deep study," "high spirits," "exalted mind," and so on -- that the virtually universal imaginative tendencies it reflects, the tendencies toward uniform associations for up, down, forward, backward, full, empty, heavy, light, inevitably exist in poetry almost on the level of literal rather than figurative language. It is only in the repeated imagery of
loud and silent, light and dark, hot and cold -- for instance, men is hot, nature outside men is cold -- that Arnold's verse gives great emphasis to adjectival imagery and so clearly relates it to the whole imaginative scheme of the poetry.

Verbal imagery is likely to offer a problem in classification, for it is not always easy to distinguish an adjectival and a verbal function. "In Utrumque Paratus" represents Earth as "rocking her obscure body to and fro," and the pronoun quite plainly makes this a personification: earth is like a woman. Ordinarily one associates personification with nominal imagery but it can be achieved through the adjectival ("Earth is human") or, as here, through the verbal function, and it is very often achieved in this way by Arnold. In the "Grande Chartreuse," "no organ's peal/ Invests the stern and naked prayer," and here is a negative verbal metaphor, but one the function of which is unambiguous. Images which represent one term as acting upon another seem to belong more distinctly in this category than those which represent one term as acting as another would. Sometimes the metaphorical sense of an adverbial image derives from a nominal relationship. For example, in "The Terrace at Berne," men are like "driftwood spars" which, on the "sea of life," near each other, meet, and drift apart again. Here is a relatively simple illustration for the essential complexity of most of Arnold's best imagery. Life is like a sea, and men are like
spars, and these are nominal images; but men are actually like spars because they behave as the driftwood does, and the sense of this imagery is verbal. It would be pointless to quibble further about the categories here: the point is that while these distinctions, alluded to now and then, may be useful, the essential metaphor \( x = y \) still underlies and is implied by "\( x \) has the quality of \( y \)" or "\( x \) behaves as \( y \) does"; and the identification, whether literal or implied, is what remains significant.

That identification may be implied not only in the metaphor but in the non-metaphorical image; and now, to turn finally to representative imagery, it must be apparent that metaphors establish much of the basis for finding such significance in literal imagery. If life is a sea according to the figurative language of several poems, it is hard to avoid carrying over some of the figurative sense to a poem where the sea is an element which is not explicitly metaphorical. This practice need not be defended again, nor the controls on it repeated. Examples of representative imagery make up the bulk of material in the main body of this essay, and the only problem which ought perhaps to be brought up here is the question of whether any imagery in a poem can be dismissed as being simply literal (as it was three paragraphs back) with no representative function, no depth in the imagination. From the descriptive passages of "The Strayed Reveller," vivid but with little explicit suggestion of "deeper
meaning," to the richly suggestive elements of "Empedocles," "Tristram," and "Dover Beach," the same imagination is at work. And probably, for a perfect criticism, all the relationships between these various elements -- the literal and the metaphorical -- would be apparent, just as, for the perfect psychology, all actions would be symptomatic. But, for the sake of reasonable clarity and of the greatest possible objectivity, the unapparent has to be ignored and the apparent made doubly so and justified. And so the partly arbitrary set of categories: the purely descriptive and the representative.

The categories, it may at last be noted, are based upon modes of meaning, and of course this is not the only possible kind of analysis. Caroline Spurgeon and many other investigators of imagery, in other poets as well as Shakespeare, have been concerned with specific (literal) subject matter more often than with consistent relationships between image and idea; so their categories have been those of subject: nature, society, religion and so on. And when the interest of critics has turned to the image-idea relationship, for example to the use of the decay and sickness images in Hamlet, there has been little attempt made at a theoretical preliminary distinction between, and relating of, metaphorical and literal images. (But it should be stressed that the use of closely related metaphors and literal images is much more typical of Arnold than of, say, Shakespeare.) The most serious attempt
to break down imagery is that of Henry W. Wells, who deals only with metaphorical imagery and who limits his applications, and presumably the material for deriving categories, also, to Elizabethan literature. Professor Wells elaborates seven kinds of images: the decorative; the sunken (including what are called here the verbal and adjectival); the violent (or shocking: "fustian"); the radical, or "metaphysical," bringing together in one respect two terms which are otherwise incongruous; the intensive, deriving depth from traditional associations, particularly religious (and so closely related to many non-metaphorical images, as they are termed here); the expansive, with a wide range of suggestion perhaps owing to deep psychological associations (again, like many non-metaphorical representative images); and the exuberant, in which there is an indefinite relation between two highly connotative terms. These categories indicate a valuable insight into the means by which imagery functions, and they are useful as applied by Professor Wells in his own admirable study. However, they are much less useful in connection with poetry outside the area of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and as components of a general anatomy of the imagination they are impossibly difficult to follow because they are not consistently based upon a single approach to the subject and so they fail to be mutually exclusive: the "decorative" quality has to do with the whole pattern of imagery, the "sunken" refers to a rhetorical
technique, the "radical" implies the nature of an image's literal referents, the "violent" depends upon psychological criteria, and so on; a single image could be at once decorative, violent and radical, and perhaps sunken and exuberant, too. Another recent approach to imagery is represented by Richard Harter Fogle's study of Keats and Shelley. Here the categories are psychologically determined according to the way in which sensation is perceived and communicated, and to some extent the judgements passed by Professor Fogle depend, quite properly, upon his own reception of the image-stimulus. This is no doubt a valid approach although, again, not one which is based upon exhaustive and mutually exclusive groupings. In contrast with all these methods is the one here used, which implies that the main interest of this essay is not biographical or technical but has instead to do with total meaning. The various examples of images -- nominal, verbal and adjectival -- are intended to illustrate categories which it is perhaps more important to relate according to their function than to distinguish.
These examples have been chosen more or less at random from the body of Arnold's poetry. This essay, however, being concerned primarily with the meaning of individual images in relation to the whole of Arnold's imagination and only incidentally with the problem of categories, will take an approach which appears to be chronological. Each chapter, that is, will represent either a volume of poetry or a period of poetic production. This does not always mean, it should be noted, that the development of the poet's powers is being exactly followed. Within volumes and periods, poems will be grouped according to their imaginative similarities. More important, the dates followed are those of publication rather than those of composition, which are rarely available. In some cases Arnold may have published a poem years after writing it, or, at least, years after beginning it: this is almost certainly true of a few poems and notably of "Dover Beach." Nevertheless, it may be assumed that a poet does not publish verse which he feels to be wholly unrepresentative of his outlook and creative powers at the time of publication. And so in general the result of this roughly chronological handling should be some sense of the development of Arnold's imagination and of the increasing complexity and suggestive richness which Arnold's poetry gains from what has gone before. Nevertheless the emphasis is not so much upon chronology or development as on the achieved imagination.
In this process of examining a poetic imagination there is the danger that one will lose touch with the soul of individual poems by equating particular images in their contexts with others in other places. The aim of this essay is to criticize and reveal single poems as well as to study the imagination behind them. Indeed, the latter purpose has validity only as it contributes to the former. But the relating of particular objects to a field or gestalt may all too easily mean a blurring of the object before it means a re-created and more understanding attention to it, and one can only warn against this tendency as one tries to avoid it. Every image, no matter how old its basic conception, is a new image if it has a genuine function in a poem: "the sea" is a new element with unique significance in every new poem, as one tries to realize even while emphasizing continuity and association more than uniqueness. Still, the consistency with which a poet chooses certain images in similar situations is worth noticing because it provides the terms of an imagination, an important part of the tradition which gives imagery depth and richness, and without which the unique quality would be mere eccentricity.

Here, then, are the elements upon which the analysis is to be built: a conception of imagery in the very broadest sense, including various kinds of representative descriptive figures serving the function of the imaginative power -- the function which is to conceive of large and general
forces in a palpable form and so to come to terms with life in the most coherent possible way; an approach to poems and to the development of one poet's work which assumes imagery to be not only basic to poetry as a view of life but also related to a tradition and to the ultimate sources of the human imagination. Implicit in this conception and this approach is the problem of evaluating imagery, determining whether it is adequate to the experience which it embodies and whether it is foreign to the imagination it expresses, by virtue of being either random and unrelated to an imaginative core or hackneyed and so obvious as to seem not genuinely imaginative but artificial. The first question can be answered tentatively only at the end of the essay in a judgement of how valid and how profound a view of human existence Arnold's imagination succeeds in maintaining. The second question, which is inevitably related to the first, can be applied to every poem. Many fail through triteness of imagery, which means flatness of poetry; many through incoherence, a jumble of unrelated images with nothing but intensity to support them and give them dimensions of meaning.

It is significant that the poems without imaginative center, without a sense of relationship between the physical objects which function as images, are often the ones whose images -- "rootless" images -- are trite. But Arnold's most moving poetry is that which combines the sense of unique and vivid experience with fidelity to the basic and
consistent terms of his imagination. This is why the poet is ordinarily at his best when he has a dramatic subject, one into which he can project his own experience but which does not require a literal biographical approach or a specific exposition of personal ideas: thus he is allowed to create the imaginative elements -- such as the scenes of "Dover Beach," "Tristram," "The Forsaken Merman," "Sohrab and Rustum" -- without a major responsibility to either the moralizing or the literalizing sides of his nature, and the result is a triumph of the liberated and formative imagination. It is this successful poetry, finally, which provides the best justification for the essay at hand. If the nature of Arnold's success (and, incidentally, the nature of his failures) can be pointed up by these remarks in such a way that the depth of this poetry is more certainly experienced and the imaginative meaning of this poetry more precisely and more completely shown, then the essay will have come near to its goal; and, if the premises upon which it is based are not false ones, it will have done something toward establishing the conviction that Matthew Arnold, though he achieved genuinely great poetry in only a few moments -- in "Dover Beach," in much of "The Forsaken Merman," in some of "Sohrab and Rustum," the "Gipsy Child," "The Grande Chartreuse," in most of "Tristram and Iseult" -- displays in these moments one of the very greatest poetic imaginations in all of English literature.
NOTES

Chapter I


9. Neither, though, is the "stream of life" simply an element in allegory, even though it seems to be arbitrarily fixed, without organic relationship between its two terms -- the stream and man's life. In one poem this stream may seem merely allegorical, but in another it becomes apparent that the significance of the stream, its association with the water as a fertility-baptismal element and with the ocean symbol, gives it a more than allegorical depth and multiple suggestiveness. On the other hand, all great allegory has this depth of imaginative suggestiveness which is in a sense beyond allegory; and the fact that there is great allegory, a fact which must baffle some present-day critical theorists, is due to this complex sense of multiple relata in much allegorical imagery.

11 Henry Willis Wells, Poetic Imagery, Illustrated from Elizabethan Literature (New York, 1924), pp. 26 ff.

12 In the following pages literal is sometimes used to mean descriptive or simply literal rather than in the broader sense, and so it is sometimes in contrast with representative.

13 Wells, Introductory Chapter.

14 Fogle, Chapter One, "Poetic Imagery," pp. 3-25.

15 The danger is touched on by Randall Jarrell when he says that "an Encyclopedia of Pseudo-Sciences might define critical method as the systematic (q.v.) application of foreign substances to literature; any series of devices by which critics may treat different works of art as much alike as possible." "The Age of Criticism," Partisan Review, XIX (March-April, 1952), 185-201.
CHAPTER II

BACKGROUNDS

Whether they are always valuable or not, materials for notes and comments on the sources of Arnold's poetry are fairly plentiful, and some of them can suggest dimensions which add meaning to particular images. It may be interesting before proceeding further to look at the ways in which such sources and analogues—in literary and other areas—are relevant to the study of imagery in Arnold, turning first to the poet's immediate predecessors, the English Romantics, and then to less exotic places.

The one recent analysis of imagery in Romantic literature which concerns itself with imaginative meaning is a sketchy but provocative essay by W. H. Auden, The Enchafed Flood. In this essay Auden discusses two images which are recurrent in the Romantics, the sea and the desert of plain. He points out the traditional poetic use of the sea: it represents the primitive, the powerful, freedom from sophistication and from social structures, but solitude, loneliness and alienation, too; standing for the womb, it is a mother-goddess, but it is also, for The Ancient Mariner, a "life-in-death" (p. 38). It is an "estranging sea," in Horace as in Arnold (p. 8), and for society it is not a "friendly symbol": the ship of state is a metaphor employed when society is in danger (pp. 7, 8).
With reference to this image, Auden calls these the "distinctive new notes in the Romantic attitude":

1) To leave the land and the city is the desire of every man of sensibility and honor.

2) The sea is the real situation and the voyage is the true condition of man.

3) The sea is where the decisive events, the moments of eternal choice, of temptation, fall and redemption occur. The shore life is always trivial.

4) An abiding destination is unknown even if it may exist: a lasting relationship is not possible nor even to be desired (p. 13).

Ways in which Matthew Arnold's poetry reflects and criticizes these views, this aspect of the Romantic imagination, should become apparent as the analysis of its imagery, particularly the sea imagery, is developed.⁴

The history of the sea as a significant poetic image is, as Auden indicates, a long one. Another important kind of imagery which Arnold uses, light imagery, also can be traced to ancient writers; and both of these motifs, water and light, have always suggested ideas about universal nature to poets. The fact that both are basic to
religious systems—in the conceptions of light overcoming
darkness, of water giving life—indicates their profound
appeal. In order to gain some sense of the traditions
which lie behind these commonplace images it is necessary
to go back beyond the nineteenth century and the poetry
of the Romantic movement; and it should be interesting
for this purpose to compare a few of the sources, both
ancient and modern, from which Arnold might have drawn
directly or otherwise, with Arnold's own poetry.

The most obvious literary influence on most English
writers is the Bible, particularly the 1611 version, and
in the case of Arnold this influence is undoubtedly a
major one. The idea of God as the water of life, the
living fountain, the source of light, all such tradi-
tional images are involved in the poet's development of
imaginative terms for the created world; for the Spinozan
God, or deified nature, which he sometimes embraces; for
the truth and grandeur and direction which he sees as
the world's reality behind all ancient religious metaphor.
The Bible is the book most often quoted in Arnold's note-
books, with the _Imitatione Christi_ coming second. In
casual phrases—i.e., "The bright and morning star" in
"The New Sireus"—its imagery is echoed, and in larger
conceptions it is so pervasive an influence that it can
best be related to major patterns in Arnold's imagination
rather than specific passages.
The *Imitatione Christi*, that other orthodox source, yields several instances of light imagery in its first two books, which were Arnold's favorites. The work begins with an allusion to Christ as the light of life, and there are various elaborations: in one (I, III, paragraph 3) the phrase "light of understanding" occurs; elsewhere light means simply grace or life. More interesting, though, is this passage (in the Whitford translation) concerning inconstancy of mind: "For as a ship without a rudder is driven hither and thither with every storm, so an unstable man that anon leaveth his purpose in God is diversely tempted" (I, XIII, paragraph 5). This is interestingly close to several of Arnold's poems, particularly to "Human Life," where the image is retained and the philosophy controverted: where man is unable to guide by his own rudder and is swept past temptation by the God of inevitability.

Among philosophical writers, Plato, who is quoted several times in the notebooks, may be taken to have affected Arnold's imagination, often indirectly and perhaps most strikingly through the agency of neoplatonism—both the English and the Greek variety—with its deeply appealing imagery. The poem "In Utrumque Paratus," where life is flowing outward from a fount, a fount to which man must return in order to find his own nature, is strongly reminiscent of Plotinus, whether the idea is transmitted
directly or not. Probably that religious philosopher's frequent images of light and the flowing water of life were a diffused rather than a direct source for the poet; both Spinoza and Emerson echo the neoplatonist and are in turn echoed by Arnold. Spinoza is certainly the philosopher who is most influential on all of Arnold's thinking, and Spinoza is a writer to whom the imagery of water is fairly natural. In the *Ethics* he speaks of the unity of the *substance* in water, to illustrate the unity of the soul, the soul of nature, and the passage is important for a poet who conceives of the grand and eternal nature as a sea unchangeable and undying:

Aquam, quatenus aqua est, dividus conci-pimus, ejusque partes ad invicem separari; at non quatenus substantia est corporea; eatenus enim neque separatur neque dividi-tur. Porro aqua quatenus aqua, generatur et corrumpitur; at quatenus substantia, nec generatur nec corrumpitur.9

(Water, insofar as it is water, we conceive to be divided, its parts mutually separated; but not insofar as the substance is corporeal; as such it is neither separated nor divided. Furthermore, water, insofar as it is water, is generated and and destroyed; but insofar as it is
Arnold's love of the Greek Classics and his frequent attempts at writing poetry which will capture the classical spirit, in contrast with the Romantic, his frequent turning away from the outlook of his contemporaries toward what he feels to be that of the ancients, make the inevitable influence of the classical education which most English poets have enjoyed seem for him an unusually powerful one. And so it is; and not only classical allusions, which are in fact less often used by Arnold than by almost any of the Romantics (and of his contemporaries), but, more important, his attempts to recreate the classical image—the Homeric simile and the tragic, Sophoclean, figure of speech—bear witness to this. Sophocles in "Merope," Homer in "Sohrab" and "Balder Dead" are plain to the reader. The famous sea image in "Dover Beach" is explicitly given as an echo of Sophocles, and in the same poem the battle by night has been traced to Thucydides. But the final influence in these, as in so many cases, comes from the ancients: it is a tradition of poetic imagery, finding an ambivalent nature in the sea, with its danger, its deathlikeness, its life-giving waters, which Arnold follows.

Among the other classical writers who are influential on Arnold's imagination are Horace and Epictetus. In the
Horatian ode the image of the sea is so frequently used in just the way Arnold employs it that the parallels are often very striking. The phrase "sundering sea" or "dividing sea" in Horace may be echoed in Arnold's "Marguerite" poem which ends with the line about "the salt, estranging sea," and the idea of an ocean as the agency which alienates men and threatens them is frequently expressed by both poets. Throughout the odes there are pictures both literal and metaphorical of the sea, but these are perhaps the most relevant: in I:3 (11, 21-4) "gulfs sunder land from land"; in I:4, a poem about a bark making for port, the last line has a "sundering seas"; II:10, "Rectus Vives" speaks of time as flowing and advises that man neither go too far into the deep nor stay too near the shore. The first two suggest Arnold's poems about man as an island in the alien sea, and the last is close to the several poems about man as mariner on life's sea. A case might well be made for these as direct sources. But the significant point is, again, the depth of tradition which underlies the imagery of sea and the shore.

Epictetus exerts a considerable influence on Arnold's thinking and, no doubt, upon his way of writing, too. Probably the most important image in Arnold's poetry which may be traced to him is that of the prison in "A Summer Night." The philosopher makes frequent use of
the prison metaphor to illustrate man's bondage to the senses; he also uses the phrase "in harmony with nature" several times, but the idea behind it is more acceptable to Arnold than the phrase, at least according to the "Independent Preacher" sonnet. Like so many other writers moral and philosophical, from Marcus Aurelius to Bishop Wilson, Epictetus has a general rather than a very specific effect upon the poet's terms. Among the moderns Senancour has something of this pervasive influence, and the mountain scenes in Arnold, usually Alpine, reflect the literal imagery in Obermann, while the association of mountain heights and coldness with isolation from society and a spiritual superiority, which is also pain, may well derive from the melancholy Frenchman.

Two other modern writers who influenced Arnold most profoundly, Emerson and Goethe, can be shown to be probable sources for various passages and single images in the poet. Tinker and Lowry comment in several places upon Emerson's importance for the poetry, and they give one passage in particular as the source for Arnold's sea image in "The Terrace at Berne": in it, again, man is a mariner, storm-tossed, bound for what port he does not know. This aspect of the sea image, no less than the idea of time or history as a stream, seems to appear in a number of times and places, always with certain associations. As Auden says, the ocean is a deeply mysterious and, for the
Romantics an attractive object: imagery involving it must have been familiar to Arnold long before he used it himself, and behind his uses of it and of other water images is a line going backward from Emerson and Spinoza to Plotinus and to Horace and perhaps further. Emerson, though, may very well be one of the most direct sources for Arnold's imagination, for his influence is apparent in almost every poem in the first two volumes Arnold published.

Arnold himself speaks so often of Goethe that scholars have paid a good deal of attention to the influence of the German poet on the prose of the English critic. Yet there has been curiously little mention of the relationship between the two as poets; and just as thorough studies of Emerson's and Spinoza's influences on the poetry are lacking—and would add greatly to a better understanding of Arnold—so an adequate investigation of Goethe in Arnold's verse has never been made. An investigation would indicate a number of interesting parallels in imagery and phrasing; some of the parallel images involve light and particularly the sun, some of the idea of battle, but several of the most striking deal with water again, with streams and the ocean. In his "Gesang der Geister über den Wassern" Goethe, like Spinoza, uses water as a metaphor, to mean the soul: "Das Menschen Seele: Gleicht dem Wasser." In "Seefahrt" he sees man's life as a voyage, and the whole poem is based upon the same central imagery and idea as Clough's "Qua
"Cursum Ventus" and Arnold's "Human Life": it has passages of which Arnold's "Summer Night," with its storm on the wide Ocean of Life," is reminiscent, too, and the conception is developed in so nearly the same way as Arnold's (and Clough's) that one must suspect a direct debt, whether a conscious or unconscious one, to the German poet. In other short poems—in a song "An Mignon," where a ship sails with the stream (as in "A Dream"), in "Mahomets Gesang," where the stream is pictured going from its mountain source to the sea—the situations are very much like Arnold's.20 "Mahomets Gesang" in particular may be compared with Arnold's "The Future" and with the final passage in "Sohrab and Rustum." In Goethe as in Arnold, the stream runs from the mountain to the plain, is slowed and divided by sands, and finally reaches a consummation in the sea, Goethe's "alten Vater" (this phrase may even have suggested to Arnold the use of a river image, following the Father-son conflict and reunion). In both, this movement of life toward a larger life with which it is ultimately merged may be found. No doubt the prose of Goethe and the Faust are major influences on Arnold's thought, but these lyric poems have a great influence, too, and it may well be that the early poetry owes as much to Goethe for its form and imaginative details as it does to Emerson and Spinoza for the ideas with which it deals.

Arnold is dealing imaginatively with ideas and with the images which embody them, and his poetry is a criticism of the imaginations expressed in all these writers and of
the ideas embodied in their imaginations. The whole Romantic attitude which Auden is concerned with is implied in imagery that Arnold examines as he uses it: the implications of seeing the rich life as life in the sea (the view which Swinburne develops sometimes recklessly) are examined poetically by Arnold, and in his poetry there is a constant and searching criticism of these implications. In order to grasp the importance of only the one imaginative tradition of the sea of life it is enlightening to see how the poet's contemporary, friend and fellow poet, Arthur Hugh Clough, used the image, and how the two utilized it for what seems like a kind of poetic correspondence of assertion, reply and rejoinder.

For Arnold the "sea of life" is associated with human and natural vitality and, as they are related to these, with physical continuity and change, with religious faith, and human spontaneity. And apparently this and other water images have something of the same significance for Clough. In a letter to Clough, written from Switzerland, Arnold refers to water as the symbolic "Mediator between the inanimate and man"; because the element has such importance, he cannot bear to see a body of water muddied or clogged. It is not surprising, then, that each of the three most striking images which the poetry of Clough and that of Arnold have in common is related to water. The first includes islands; the second, streams or rivers; the third,
Speaking of Arnold's sonnet "Written in Butler's Sermons," Professors Tinker and Lowry mention that its image of "islands joined beneath the sea" is also used in the Clough poem beginning "Truth is a golden thread," as well as in Arnold's own later work, "To Marguerite- continued."\(^{24}\) Clough's poem speaks of abstract Truth:

Like islands set
At distant intervals on Ocean's face,
We see it in our course; but in the depths
The mystic colonnade unbroken keeps
Its faithful way, invisible but sure.\(^{25}\)

These lines were written in 1838; the Arnold poem, published in 1849, but possibly written some years earlier, personifies human nature as a queen who:

rays her powers, like sister-islands seen:

Linking their coral arms under the sea,
Or cluster'd peaks with plunging gulsfs between.

Spann'd by aerial arches all of gold,
Whereo'er the chariot wheels of life are roll'd
In cloudy circles to eternity.\(^{26}\)

Only the first two lines link this poem to Clough's, but the rest of the poem is in turn related to a later Clough image. In 1852 Arnold published the familiar Marguerite poem which begins "Yes! in the sea of life enisled," and which pictures men as islands isolated from each other by
the "unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea." In this sea

We mortal millions live alone.
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when these island-people see the moonlight and hear the
nightingales sing,

Oh then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent.
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again?

In 1853 Clough produced a poem which reads very much like:
a reply to this one; a poem beginning

The mighty ocean rolls and raves
To part us with its angry waves;
But arch on arch from shore to shore,
In a vast fabric reaching o'er,

With careful labours daily wrought
By steady hope and tender thought,
The wide and wetering waste above—
Our hearts have bridged it with their love.

This is almost exactly the same picture as Arnold's. But
Clough insists that if men were once unified in a single
continent, a single spiritual existence, still "our sundered
spirits come and go," can, that is, communicate with each other from their islands and be at one. Furthermore, the phrase "arch on arch," adding means of communication among these islands, is strongly reminiscent of the "aerial arches all of gold," travelled by the "chariot wheels of life."

And so Clough appears to respond to Arnold's unhappy expression of human isolation with an optimistic picture derived from Arnold's imagery: and partly derived, to make the matter more complex, from the earlier imagery of unity which Clough's own original simile suggested to Arnold.

"Man's one nature," Arnold has said, is "centred in a majestic unity," presumably the human soul; and Clough goes further, to say that "the pure purpose of the soul" can "form of many parts a whole": he insists that Arnold's islands are above and beneath the ocean, united. Thus Arnold takes an image from Clough; later he alters the image to make it a vehicle for his idea of man's inevitable loneliness; Clough then replies, cleverly combining the new with the old picture to express a brighter view and to reject the Arnoldian sense of total human isolation.

A relationship between Clough's and Arnold's imagery in several other poems has been suggested. Almost certainly there is a conscious drawing from the other's work on the part of each poet: the parallels between their pictures of rivers descending to the sea (possibly both are influenced by Goethe), of man as a mariner on the
stormy sea of life, and of the islands in the sea are too striking to be explained otherwise.\textsuperscript{30}

Plainly, the image of the sea as used by Arnold--and, to some extent, the light imagery, too--is nothing entirely original: its very depth is provided by the many associations with which other poets have endowed it. For as T. S. Eliot says,

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance... is... his relation to the dead poets and artists... The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them.\textsuperscript{31}

The other factor in giving depth to such imagery is the set of associations which seem to be almost innate, or at least to be imperceptibly absorbed early by that sensitive organ of the imagination. About this C. G. Jung has much to say, and while it will be more safe than craven to avoid some of the phrases and some of the ideas which he and others have associated with this notion, Jung's belief in a collective unconscious, "an unceasing stream or... an ocean of images and figures which drift into consciousness in our dreams or in abnormal states of mind" is helpful in explaining the consistent and powerful effect of certain image-structures.\textsuperscript{32}
To take only one picture, again that of the sea, and look for it in the guise of myth, religious metaphor, psychological symbol and folklore is to see a new and complex set of relata for the poet's work.

In Freud the image of the sea is often a disguised memory of the womb. At the same time, if going into the water may represent birth (which is coming out of the uterus) it may also be associated with self-destruction; just as the desire to return to a pre-individual stage (as it were), to the womb, is related to a death-wish, so the water as a "symbol" for birth is related to the water which stands for the mystery of death: all the way from Horace (and much earlier times) to Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" and to Outward Bound the sea-as-death motif has been a familiar one to men. Life and death, then, can be associated with this image and folklore research corroborates this general impression. In Stith Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk Literature, for instance, there are many examples of mythical births from the sea, as well as allusions to the water of immortality, water associated with the blood of life, water (instead of dust) as the material of which life is created. Also cited here is the water barrier--stream or lake--to the otherworld, from the river Styx to its frequent medieval counterparts. These are the waters of death. It seems that this substance, like the ocean which embodies it, stands both at the beginning and at the end of man's life, an image of the
mysterious life outside life, beyond life, which is the source and the end of his being.

As an image for what is outside man's life the ocean can be made a consistent symbol for both life and death. It is the outside life, the life beyond, which the sea represents in Moby Dick, for instance, and in so many of the Romantic poets (Coleridge in the Ancient Mariner) and their followers (Swinburne in a hundred poems). In the religious metaphor of Christian tradition, water imagery has this very sense adapted to a special belief: the water of life stands for a life beyond the limited and mortal one, beyond death, a life from which men came and by the power of which (in the sense that Christ, as deity, is the river of the water of life) they were created. Plotinus uses the image of the fountainhead, and so do many Christian poets.36 For the Bible itself is full of the water imagery, and it transforms it from imagery of death to that of life by the addition of faith in a humane God and human immortality. (On the other hand, Spinoza, retaining the religious imagination but not a literal faith, makes his "water," which is only material, stand for "life" in a very special sense which is not that of human life.)

Such a brief discussion as this can hardly do justice even to the tradition of one kind of imagery, but it should suggest the dimensions which lie behind some of Arnold's imaginative figures and the conflicts and resolution to be
traced in them. From all such sources as these are drawn the comparisons and direction-finders which are helpful in dealing with a modern poet's imagery. Horace and Spinoza, Emerson and the Bible, folklore and religious metaphor, Goethe, Coleridge, Wordsworth and the author of the *Imitatione Christi*, all stand behind the creating imagination of Matthew Arnold, all these and others in a tradition which makes it possible for Arnold's imagery to be part of his criticism not only of life and of poetry but of the visions of life which his world could offer.
NOTES

Chapter II


2 Probably the best general discussion of Arnold's attitude toward and relationship with the Romantic poets is Lionel Trilling's.

4. Tinker and Lowry find echoes of both Wordsworth and Coleridge in Arnold's imagery (pp. 81, 156), but no very ambitious study of the important influence of Wordsworth on Arnold has been made. See (for the concept of diversity within unity which is represented by the sea-image) Arthur O. Lovejoy, "Romanticism and the Principle of Plenitude," in *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1950); also Joseph Warren Beach, *The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth Century English Poetry* (New York, Macmillan, 1936), particularly Chapter XIV, "Arnold" (pp. 397-405), on "Man versus Nature," "Nature versus Man" and "Nature versus Supernatural"; and Hoxie Fairchild, *The Romantic Quest* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1931), Chapter VII, "External Nature" (pp. 123-140), with examples of water imagery from Shelley and Byron.


7 Tinker and Lowry (p. 173) find a Platonic influence in "Self-Deception."

8 "The stream of life" (Arnold's very phrase) is sent forth from Divine Mind, in volume III, paragraph 2, *Plotinus: The Divine Mind*, trans. Stephen Mackenna (London, 1926). This is the fourth volume in the series. See Fraser Nieman, "Plotinus and Arnold's 'Quiet Work'" in *Modern Language Notes*, LXV (1950), 52-55, for a possible influence of the third ennead on "Quiet Work" and the suggestion (p. 24) "That a study of Arnold's early poems in connection with Plotinus deserves to be made."

9 Spinoza Opera, ed. Carl Gebhardt (Heidelberg, 1925), II, 59-60 (Ethics, Pars I, Prop. XV, Scholium).

10 Tinker and Lowry, p. 175. That the image in Sophocles here alluded to is in *Antigone*, 586, is suggested by T. C. C., "Matthew Arnold and Sophocles," *Notes and Queries*, GLXXIV (January 22, 1938), 57-58.

12 Tinker and Lowry compare Arnold's "unplumb'd salt estranging sea" and Horace's "oceans dissociabili," p. 156.

13 The odes are translated by Edward Marsh (London, Macmillan, 1943).

14 In his note on "Dover Beach" and Clough's Bothie Paul Turner considers Epode XVI, line 41 as a direct source for Arnold.


16 Iris Esther Sells, in Matthew Arnold and France, traces the end of "Haworth Churchyard" to Obermann (p. 77); she also compares Arnold's and Senancour's use of the stream as an image of man's life or history (pp. 178-181); and her chapter on the imagery of Arnold and Senancour (pp. 220-230) points out their similar uses of water images, moonlight, mountains, and "cold lights."

17 Tinker and Lowry, p. 159.


19 Goethes Samtliche Werke, Jubilaums-Ausgabe (Stuttgart, Sotta'sche, 1940), II, 44.


21 Of course other Victorian poets are conscious of the sea imagery, and particularly Tennyson—in In Memoriam and elsewhere.


23 The two poets' similar uses of water imagery have been briefly remarked by William Knickerbocker in "Semaphore: Arnold and Clough," Sewanee Review, XLI (April, 1933), 153, 173.


27 Arnold, p. 182.

28 Clough, II, 451. These lines were written when Clough was in America, and it is usually assumed that they are addressed to his fiancée, Blanche Smith, in England. But the fact that, like Arnold in the Marguerite poems, he may be expressing his feeling to a real person (and in a situation of literal separation by sea) does not mean that the poem cannot have symbolic meaning and be both a rejoinder to Arnold and an address to someone else.

29 See the Paul Turner and Buckner Trawick articles (notes 11).

30 Some parallels not previously pointed out can be found in Arnold's "The Future" and Clough's "The Stream of Life" (in both, man's life is a river flowing toward the sea); Arnold's "Self-Dependence" and Clough's "Blank Misgivings" (using the image of the ship); Arnold's "Human Life" and Clough's poem beginning "Come home, come home!"


32 Modern Man in Search of A Soul (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1934), p. 216. Richard Chase points out, alluding to Ruth Benedict's and Freud's disagreement with Jung, that the idea of "racial memory" is not supported by anthropological investigation; but one may, perhaps, apply the term "collective unconscious" without implying the innate "racial" character of the imaginations which members of one cultural group (i.e., the western European-American) may have in common. The Quest For Myth (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1949), p. 145.


34 See, in F. F. Communications 117, the Alphabetical Index, VI (Helsinki, 1936), 616-618.

35 For examples of the water barrier in medieval and earlier lore, see Howard Rollin Patch, The Other World According to Medieval Descriptions (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1950).

36 The Pearl poet is one, using the imagery of baptism in his vision of heaven.
The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems, by A., published in 1849, impressed and surprised young Matthew Arnold's friends and family with its serious, sometimes brooding, sometimes despairing, tone. Most of the poems in this volume are concerned with the relationship between man and nature, the theme which runs like a buried stream, to use the poet's own image, through all of Arnold's important verse; and this subject does inevitably lead the poet sometimes to brood, sometimes to despair. His theme is posed here in certain direct questions -- How is man to live with nature? How can he understand natural evil? -- and it is reflected in the images which give each poem its concrete effect and form the basis for answers to these questions. Nature in Arnold is always represented by particular phenomena -- the winds, the sun, the sea -- which carry whatever connotation, attractive or not, is to be given to the term. Thus the imagery of Arnold's poetry marks out the poet's shifting attitudes toward the world of things outside man, the natural order which much early Romanticism glorified, which the poet now begins to see as "red in tooth and claw" and, what is worse, as lacking the human quality of personality, of warmth, that gives purpose to his own existence. Emerson's mystical faith in unity, Wordsworth's projection of mankind into
natural objects, Spinoza's sublimation of desire and personality, each attitude is examined and applied by the imagination as the poet opposes sun to shadow, land to sea, sound to silence, explicitly identifying phenomena as images for the human or the natural, and associating them with various aspects of subject or of object.

In the sonnet at the beginning of this volume, afterward entitled "Quiet Work" and, significantly, prefixed almost as an epigraph to later editions, the predominant imagery is that of sound and silence. One lesson is to be learned of nature: the necessity of uniting "two duties," of "toil unsever'd from tranquility." The "loud world" proclaims that the two, the contemplative and the active lives, are incompatible; but for Arnold, who thinks of the active as the life of man and the silent as the life of nature, the two can and should be as one. Opposed to the "loud world," to "Man's senseless uproar," to "vain turmoil" and "noiser schemes" is labor which emulates nature, "its glorious tasks in silence perfecting." And so, in images contrasting noise and silence the ideal of life patterned after silent nature wins out.¹

The implications of this choice are far-reaching, and one of them is examined in "Mycerinus," which makes use again of the sound and silence motif. The imagery of this fairly long poem is more complex, though, and an equally important motif is that of light and darkness. The inter-
play of these two, the audial and visual concepts, makes up the basic imaginative scheme. Mycerinus (the story is from Herodotus) is a virtuous ruler who has only a few years to live, whose wicked Father lived and reigned long; this seems plainly unjust, and the poem concerns apparent injustice in the world. Mycerinus has supposed that "Man's justice from the all-just Gods was given" (37), but now it is impossible for him to conceive of divinity as sharing in this human idea: if there are gods, they are "careless of our doom" (38); the way of nature, or of the gods, whatever its attractions, cannot be just or ethical by human standards. Mycerinus' now-discarded image of justice is "a light that from some upper fount did beam," "a light that, shining from the blest abodes,/ Did shadow somewhat of the life of Gods." But the true light of nature is for him a harsh one. He now conceives of "some Power" wiser and stronger than even the gods, which controls earth, heaven, men, gods and all, whirling them onward "Like the broad rushing of the Column'd Nile" (40). This "Tyrannous Necessity" is appropriately pictured as a river, and the image is one which recurs throughout Arnold's poetry. In contrast with this vivid picture is the imagery associated with serene and indifferent Gods in a stanza of Shelleyan phrases, exalted, unearthly and imprecise: "mazy tracts of stars," and "thrones of dazzling sheen," and the paradoxical "sounding stillness of the night" (Compare the idea of light's
shadowing "the life of Gods"; Arnold, like Tennyson, uses such oxymorons mainly in his early verse). But for man all this is hidden by "circumambient gloom," and light is uncertain or harsh. The use of light as a symbol for life in this poem is suggested by the image (56-60) of Mycerinus' life as the ray of a star which grows pale and is slowly blotted out by clouds. But life is at the same time associated with nature, the world outside man; and the escape from the world of sun and moon into a sheltered grove, the "cool region" where palm trees, looking sunward, bury their "unsunn'd stems" (88), is a rejection of the natural life. Pointed up by a contrast between the sunlight above and shade below, the beautiful picture of the young ruler's revels in the grove, lighted only artificially, is a picture of man withdrawn into himself; and this withdrawal is associated with sound rather than silence -- "his clear laugh fled ringing through the gloom" (113) -- even though the dark grove itself, like the winter season which reproves Mycerinus and like the "Nature" of "Quiet Work," is characterized as "tranquil" (95). The one way in which this young man may return to nature, to the divine Nature of an Emerson or a Spinoza, is through knowledge of himself: a "silent knowledge" which calms, ennobles, comforts and sustains. In the heart of "loud laughter" may be this silence, asserting itself after all. Like the tone of the whole poem, the effect of the imagery is mild, shadowy
rather than sharp: if the king's grove is never light, its gloom is a "mild dark." A genuine Epicurean in his philosophical moderation, Mycerinus escapes from nature -- from the seasons, from the silence and the painful light of nature -- insofar as he can. But the image which ends the poem reminds the reader of a Power in all this, ruling both the natural world and man: the sounds of mirth echo in the grove and come to his people "mix'd with the murmur of the moving Nile."

If "Mycerinus" is a vision of life which solves no questions, the title poem of this 1849 volume is an even more vivid and confused vision of the same kind of situation -- involving indirectly both the conflict between man's values and nature's cruelty and the sense of a larger life absorbing and ruling all experience -- and it is a vision which ends in moral passivity. Arnold admires Sophoclea, "who saw life steadily and saw it whole," and he feels that his own duty, the poet's duty, is to see rather than to decide. But what he sees is a world of conflict between human ideals and natural facts, and, unable to renounce his human partisanship, he requires an imaginative way of resolving the conflict in his vision, a faith which will bring the two sides together. The need is an ethical one but, for the poet, an aesthetic one, too. The highly sensuous and kaleidoscopic imagery of "The Strayed Reveller" simply presents a panorama of experience. The gods see all and
are indifferent, but the poet sees and feels all, sympathizes with the life about him through the means of his vivid and empathic imagination:

such a price

The Gods exact for song;

To become what we sing (232-234).

He is in this both human and partly divine — divine in vision and human in feeling. This poem celebrates poetry as experience rather than interpretation or criticism of life; and almost inevitably its imagery, while appealing, seems to have little importance beyond itself, little specific connotation or representative quality. The poet tastes the wine which the centaur drinks, feels the spear which wounds the warrior, knows the hard life of the Indian and the Scythian. And the immediacy of all these vividly imagined experiences is the very criterion for effective poetry — "The Strayed Reveller" is, in a sense, an assertion of the belief that images create poetry, but the final significance of Circe's cup is only experience for its own sake. This intoxication and these "eddying forms" represent an acceptance but not a resolution of the problem of human sympathy versus natural indifference, for the poet still suffers all the hardness he imagines in the world; he is not a god.

"The Strayed Reveller" is almost all image-surface, with little depth; but other poems in the volume illustrate
a more typical weakness in Arnold's verse, the failure to find concrete and effective imaginative forms. "The Strayed Reveller" is a poem which embodies genuine value and appeal by virtue of its brilliance of imagery while failing to achieve much profundity of concept; such verses as the "Fragment of an 'Antigone'," the sonnet "To A Republican Friend" and even "The Sick King in Bokhara" illustrate a mastery of concept, of ideas and narrative, but a failure to realize the experience of both in appropriate images. The "Fragment," one of Arnold's several attempts to catch the simple dignity of a Greek original, has no more striking imagery to offer than "all-containing Hours" and the more crucial but hardly more fresh or felicitous "ties of blood." "The Sick King in Bokhara," the basic conception of which has some potential power, is too often simply unimaginative; its images are likely to be trite and incidental or quite patently ornamental and nothing more. The poet cannot combine its evenly-conceived theme with the vivid imagination of "The Strayed Reveller." The imagery of the "Republican Friend" sonnets is not perfectly clear, the first suggesting lack of vision as its focus and the second introducing, but not developing, the interesting ideas of Earth as a vale where men are overshadowed, cut off from the sun -- perhaps nature again? -- as well as from each other by "uno'erleaped Mountains of Necessity." The breaking through of this network of mountains, the barriers of selfishness, will free
man and leave him standing face to face with God. Is God to be symbolized by the sun, then? The implications are interesting, and this use of mountains and of the isolation theme may be significant in relation to later poems, but, again, the imagery is less vivid than ideal. Various metaphors, of leaves from a book, comets, glades, and so on, all apparently unrelated literally, are jumbled in the sonnet to Cruikshank. And in the "Independent Preacher" sonnet, important for its specific contrast of man with nature, the poet finds no definite imaginative center. Nature is cool (as it is silent) while man is heated; but the image is not extended. Once more an important idea predominates, but there is not a complete fusion of conception and imagination.

Two short poems which use the image of the wheel are the sonnet "To the Duke of Wellington" and "The World and the Quietist." Wellington has believed that the "wheels of life," never idle, are turned "by genius, in the strife/ Of all its chafing torrents after thaw," and apparently these are water-wheels. The metaphor is switched, but the water motif retained, as the Duke, with this vision of "the general law" or the wheels, becomes a ship whose track

    across the fretful foam

    Of vehement actions without scope or term,

    Call'd History, keeps a splendour.

The imprecision of this imagery is reflected in the vague-
ness of such phrases as "scope or term," and partly as a consequence of this the literal images are not perfectly clear, and the poem is weak. Something of the same weakness is to be felt in "The World and the Quietist," where the world of men "turns Life's mighty wheel" and "still expects an end" (13, 16). But the literal image is somewhat clearer here and so is the idea: "as the wheel flies round," the active man, represented in the first poem by Wellington, may be given by the "adverse" voice of the quietist, the critic, an Emersonian sense "of his own omnipotence." The note of death, the realization that the wheel turns endlessly and that life outlives any man's own life, is provided by the inactive man, whose voice is that of nature in the form of objective criticism; and this note, strangely, gives the knowledge of "omnipotence," of identification with the general life. The idea introduced here, but not exposed completely or clearly in this compact form, is an important one to follow in Arnold's poetry. And the final picture of the Monarch who, like Mycerinus, hears the whisper of mortality (from his slave), feels it "swell his mighty bowl" of experience in the knowledge of his mortality -- which is knowledge, too, of his part in an endless nature -- sums up the Arnoldian theme of man discovering himself and his place in an all-embracing order.

The implication of the word "omnipotence," then, is directly opposed to the statement that man and nature are
unlike each other, and we sense in this opposition the conflict already latent in Arnold's imagination. A great man's resemblance to natural phenomena provides Arnold's imagery in the "Shakespeare" sonnet. The bard is "free," beyond our questioning and largely beyond the understanding of common men: like nature itself, he is silent; he is a lofty hill "that to the stars uncrows his majesty," and if his footsteps are in the sea, his house is the heavens of stars and sunbeams. The images, even to the last phrase, "that victorious brow," are those of singular height. The mountain stands alone, and Shakespeare is "self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure." Height, often associated with divinity, is here used almost to deify a man: Shakespeare, who shows us "but the cloudy border of his base," soars to somewhat cloudy regions beyond our vision, regions exalted but inevitably vague, too. Both the notion of the self-secure man and the soaring imagery which expresses it are Emersonian, and again the omnipotence of this representative man -- the immortal spirit's pain, grief, weakness, finds its "sole voice" in his silent strength -- is that of a being apparently at one with nature, one who is man and more than man.

The "Emerson" sonnet itself is less Emersonian. Looking directly at the doctrine in the doctor, Arnold is faced with the paradox which all these images imply: mortality as the sign of omnipotence and silence as the voice
for weakness and grief. And here the paradox is repeated in the imagery of frustration. Emerson's is the voice of nature's oracle, for the American is not, like Shakespeare, silent. But the voice falls on dead ears, the world is dumb, without "lip for welcome," and it is "as though one spake of noise unto the dead." The imaginative difficulty involved in Arnold's use of the voice to express a philosophy of nature which he conceives, in "Quiet Work," "Mycerinus" and "Shakespeare," as demanding a kind of passivity or silence (quite clearly opposed to the oracle's and the hero's activity) is reflected in this fact: that man does not discover his potentialities and so mocks at the transcendentalist's faith in him. In an earlier draft of this sonnet Arnold describes this response to the "voice oracular":

Man after man, they smiled and passed on
Each to his Labour. And when all were gone,
It chanced, I know not how, my Joy was fled:
So scornful seemed that smile, so strange, so full
Of bitter knowledge.

These lines are a sharp criticism of Emerson's optimism about man -- anthropomorphic optimism about nature is criticized elsewhere and often. There is a voice, but men smile and are dead to the noise; according to transcendentalist theory the soul is strong and wise and beautiful, but in fact these qualities remain only potential: the "seeds of
godlike power" do not come to fruition, just as the voice is not heard, and this is the world's "bitter knowledge" about itself. These are images of the potential but not the actual, of what ought to be but is not.

A poem which comes nearer to being orthodox Emersonianism by emphasizing possibility rather than actuality, the goal of self-realization rather than the facts of doubt and difficulty, is "Religious Isolation." This sonnet, like the two "Republican Friend" poems, is addressed to Clough. And in it light imagery is used again. In other poems, light, the sun's light in particular, has been associated both with God and with an apparently, but not necessarily, monist nature which might replace the deity. Here Arnold urges Clough to depend upon his inner light, a familiar religious figure which can be roughly equated with moral sense, and the light image takes on new significance. Man lives by the light which illuminates his "inmost soul," but the "holy secret" of moral values, or of light, "moulds not the solid Earth." Physical nature has its own quite different kind of illumination: "Live by thy light, and Earth will live by hers." This suggests the old conception of a natural law and an analogous moral law (which Mill attacked by showing the ambiguity in the term laws, pointing out that natural laws cannot be broken). And perhaps the most significant thing in this poem is the phrase "Nature's great laws" which identifies man's inner light. Obviously, nature
has taken on two meanings: first, the world of things outside man, and second, Nature in the largest sense, including human morality in its scope. In the poems previously examined this distinction has never been perfectly clear; we sense at various points in the career of Arnold's poetic imagination a profound uncertainty about the nature of nature, whether it includes or excludes the consciences and desires which are peculiarly human. In this case the light of nature is the light of human values.

The major images thus far examined are those of sound and silence, light and gloom, heights, and the wheel. The poems which remain, in the "Strayed Reveller" volume, can be divided into two groups on the basis of their imageries: poems which concern shadows, the grave and related images; and those which use water images, both of sea and stream. The grave and the sea are themselves related in the poet's imagination, and so there is an important connection between the two groups; and, of course, other images are integrated with these, helping to fix the associations and meanings which cohere in each poem.

The literal imagery of "A Modern Sappho" is various and intense: the lawn, the lilac shade, the river, the elms and the boat "shooting round by the trees" give an immediate setting which is background for the terms of the speaker's own imagination. The modern Sappho's images for love and ennui are, appropriately, heat and cold, light and gloom.
This is a dramatic monologue, into which it would perhaps be presumptuous to read the more general meanings which Arnold plainly intends in most of his verse; but the association of fire and light with the idea of natural life and of darkness with an isolating tendency toward withdrawal, a pattern which has been established in other poems, seems to fit here too. Love is a flame, and one which may cool and die. The speaker in this monologue is in the dark and alone; she waits for the passion of her beloved (for another woman) to die, so that he will come to gloom and coldness, to her world, which is death-like: crown him, Life, she cries, and then "leave him for me." So she rejects the natural world, the open-air world of pain and passion, the "fires of anguish" and the flame of physical desire, in her dim and morbid mood. Two incidental and almost jarring water images occur in the poems, indicating how habitual such imagery is to Arnold: "most loves but flow once, and return," says this Sappho, and she goes on to envisage the emotionally burnt-out lover who "drifts to fatigue, discontent, and dejection." But the predominant impression left is that of light and dark, fire and cold, with the ordinary implications of life and death. And so this poem is properly associated with those which have to do with death and the grave.

Another of these rather dark pieces is "The New Sirens," in which the idea that emotion is shifting and uncertain is
again treated. As a palinode, it is probably intended to retract the statement of an earlier poem: Tinker and Lowry suggest that it may represent a reaction against the "Sappho" mood. But its picture of passion is in much the same spirit as the modern Sappho's, even if it is taken to reject her emotional tone. The life of feeling is seen here as a senseless vacillation between dullness and hysteria, and the poem is an animadversion on Wertherian-Byronic Romanticism in its extreme form. As Arnold writes in a letter to Clough, these modern sirens appeal to the spirit. Their home is on land, and their attractions are not the physical ones of the sea. Still, the complex imagery of this poem is elemental rather than artificial. If the "howling levels/ Of the deep" is not their "lair" (17,18), these sirens attract men from the mysterious deep to their "shores and sea-wash'd places," to the "fragrant glooms." They beckon to ships; and

In a Tyrian galley steering
From the golden springs of dawn,
Troops, like Eastern Kings, appearing,
Stream all day through (their) enchanted lawn.

The imaginative elements in this sentence -- the troops streaming across a lawn, the ship coming in the dawn, which seems to overflow, spring-like or stream-like -- are unified in the basic and recurring water imagery: men and dawn are like the water, the water upon which the galley sails.

Votives come from the "upland valleys," too, leaving their
"awful laurels" and "heap'd with myrtles" -- discarding the emblem of achievement for that of romantic love. But the "lawn" to which all these admirers come is not simply beach; in the third line of the poem the sirens are placed in "darken'd palace rooms" -- again, the image suggests Arnold's expression for the inner rather than the out-going and natural life -- and the wanderers from the uplands seem, like those other "troops," to leave the world of nature, of the sea and stream and spring, of dawn (light, the sun, life), of the mountains and the heavens:

From the dragon-warder'd fountains
Where the springs of knowledge are:
From the watchers on the mountains,
And the bright and morning star:
We are exiles, we are falling,
We have lost them at your call.
O ye false ones, at your calling
Seeking ceiled chambers and a palace hall. (33-40)

Jesus is "the bright and morning star" (Revelation 22:16); and it is from the life of religious faith as well as that of natural labor, accomplishment, and knowledge, that men have fallen into dark (and introspective) spiritual chambers. These sirens of spirit rather than flesh speak in a disillusioned voice:

Judgement shifts, convictions go:
Life dries up, the heart dissembles:
Only, what we feel, we know. (82-84).

In the phrase "life dries up" we are brought back to the image of water as the life-substance; but all that the sirens can say, that labor and wisdom and knowledge are vain, "the large appearance/ Of man's labour ... vain," (57-58) leads rather to the death-likeness of these gloomy environs than to life: to "emotions," "burning tears," "love potions," all rather shocking but ambivalent, being highly attractive, too, for Arnold. The moral tone of this poem suggests that it is in antithesis to "The Strayed Reveller," where experience is celebrated for its own sake rather than any other purpose: it makes a perfectly appropriate palinode, then, to the title poem of the volume in which it appears rather than to the "Modern Sappho." And the imagery is largely responsible for this tone, contrasting the monotonous and death-like existence of the sirens with the sun and open air and warmth of active life.

Because "The New Sirens" is one of the most difficult of Arnold's earlier pieces, an understanding of its imagery is particularly important. The imaginative structure of the poem embodies its basic meaning. Two kinds of images -- light-life and darkness-grave-death images -- are critical, and it may be worthwhile simply to follow them through the poem. The sirens are first seen "at sunrise" (94), their eyes "heavenly," their brows "starr'd with dew" (98,100); "And through golden horns, to greet (them),/ Blew such music
as a God may frame" (103-104). Here is a promising intro­duction to the Romantic spirit.

Yes -- I muse: -- And, if the dawning
Into daylight never grew --
If the glistening wings of morning
On the dry noon shook their dew --
If the fits of joy were longer --
Or the day were sooner done --
Or, perhaps, if Hope were stronger --

No weak nursling of an earthly sun ...

Pluck, pluck cypress, 0 pale maidens,
Dusk the hall with yew. (105-114)

This is an aposiopesis; the three dots replace a clause: if all this were so, the sirens could retain their hold upon us. But after dawn, in the harsh sunlight, their dew -- both freshness and vitality -- is gone, for the Romantic life of the emotions is fitful and does not bear the light of day. Hope is the weak "nursling" of an earthly sun, of the daylight world of nature whose best products are more hearty. But hope for what? For a consummation, perhaps, of the sirens' enticements and of the poet's desire in a life which combines deep human feeling with the constancy of nature. The poet stands now between the inner world of human emotion, of desire which alternates with despair, and the outside world of sunlight and continuing, uncomplaining, unaspiring natural life. The sun of nature, again as in
"Mycerinus," contrasts with the interior gloom and artificial joy of man isolated from nature. Darkness and death are appropriate to the most completely human-centered kind of Romantic -- or "inner" -- existence. It is in the dark, not in the daylight, that the sirens are at home; they are pictured in halls or in caves or dusky shadows. A Freudian analysis could undoubtedly discover more levels, with the familiar symbols of the sun for the masculine principle, and the caves and halls for the feminine. Or the appropriate concept of withdrawal into a facsimile of the womb could be applied here; and the implications of these ideas reinforce the sense of contrast between an active and outgoing life of affairs in the world of facts -- where life is harsh -- and a passive life of feeling and nothing more. But within the hearts of even the sirens is a natural fire. "The fire joy hath wasted," the "stars ... inly burning," "Germs ... untrimm'd Passion overgrew" (133, 137, 138) represent the natural life-principle in man -- what Arnold elsewhere calls the "hidden stream" -- which has somehow become masked, hidden or overgrown by each individual's confused feelings. Once these sirens watched "for a purer fire," for some light more certain than the inner fire and less harsh than the "earthly sun," one perhaps which could unify the two in one nature; but this expectation and desire are dead, and they have turned again and again to "soma transient human sun" (152). Their "earthward-bound" devotion is self-centered, and is
appropriately shadowed in "black depths" and "cold aisles" (182,183). And yet there is a seemingly contradictory element in this imagery. As in "Mycerinus," the contrast switches, and suddenly, instead of natural light and human darkness, it is natural darkness and silence which is opposed to the artificial light of the sirens' revelry. At noon their rooms are dark, at night their lamps "flash the brightness/ Which the sorrow-stricken day denies!" (179-180). This is a simple illustration of the man-nature contrast, this human reversing of day and night. It is important that the light of the revels be artificial, because the basic terms of the contrast are the weak human light and natural sunlight. Other imagery obtrudes in the poem -- the life of the emotions is a "chain" of pleasures and regrets, a "flux of guesses" which will end "when the slow tide sets one way," and the mutability of the human is set up against an underlying natural constancy in this water imagery -- but this life is more consistently pictured as the "dreary light ... wading/ Through [a] waste of sunless greens" (213-214); in the dawn of the "morrow," the "flashing lights" of these cheeks will fade, there will be no "radiant lover" (216,223) for these sirens, whose

    jewell'd gauds [will] surrender
    Half their glories to the day:
    Freely did they flash their splendour,
    Freely gave it -- but it dies away. (257-260).
Now the dawn is coming and the lamps are paled; the votives of these formerly brilliant maidens, the "lodgers in the forest and the cave," (236) see them "cold in that unlovely dawning,/ Loveless, rayless, joyless" in the light of nature. For the appropriate symbol for these Romantic sirens is not at last even the artificial flame but the darkness:

"Shall I seek, that I may scorn her,
Her I lov'd at eventide?

Shall I ask, what faded mourner
Stands, at daybreak, weeping by my side?

Pluck, pluck cypress, 0 pale maidens!
Dusk the hall with yew!

The Romantic geist which allows with its insistence upon a free and instinctive life of feeling is, at least for Arnold and in this poem, dead, for it cuts man off from the light of day and the duties, the realities, which an unfeeling nature gives to him. Arnold's nature (never the Romantic Wordsworthian concept of a projection which is given meaning and reality only by man) again wins out; and sunlight, though it is harsh and cruel, is also inevitable and true.

In "Fausta" the vacillation of human emotions is again expressed in water imagery: "Joy comes and goes; hope ebbs and flows,/ Like the wave." And the picture of the grave is repeated, along with the idea of death, quite explicitly now rather than in the symbols for death and mourning:
"Our vaunted life is but one long funeral"; hope is laid in the grave, and men with it, perhaps to die forever. In "Desire," the hope which seemed pitifully weak in "The New Sirens" is given eloquent voice. The repeated line, "From the cradle to the grave," introduces the life-death motif, and man's wavering between passion and torpor is imaged forth in the eagle flight and the sleep "heavy as death, cold as the grave." One phrase provides an interesting link with the poems in which sea imagery is mainly used, a description of this world "where love is half mistrust,/ Hungry, and barren, and sharp as the sea." In the lines "To My Friends" a comparable image is used, and time becomes the surface of a sea-nature: "Time's current strong/ Leaves us true to nothing long" (65-66). Finally, there is an explicit contrast between water (as a symbol for life?) and the idea of death in "The Voice." A voice from the past is like moonbeams which, falling on the sleepless waters

Of a lonely mere,
On the wild whirling waves, mournfully, mournfully,
Shiver and die (73).

And it is

Like bright waves that fall
With a lifelike motion
On the lifeless margin of the sparkling Ocean. (74).

This voice, whosoever it may be, is a living one to which the
poet's spirit is still not dead, and like the real ocean, it retains its fascination for him.

The image of the ocean and related images of streams, waves and fountains, appear again and again in Arnold's verse. Some examples have been cited already; but we come now to a group of poems in which this water imagery is central. "The Hayswater Boat" is simply the picture of a lonely single boat lying in "black, chafing water," and the piece derives its interest from the poet's careful and, for him, unusually detailed description of the scene; and from the fact that Arnold himself is apparently so much interested, so much struck, by this simple picture. Bodies of water always have a peculiar attraction for Arnold, and he is likely to see nature in the image of water -- calm and constant or in the flux of wave and tide. In his sonnet "Written in Butler's Sermons," for instance, he pictures men's various powers as islands linked beneath the sea. The poem celebrates "God's harmonious whole," man, and is only incidentally concerned with nature outside man. It is not clear if "man's one Nature" is one personality conceived holistically rather than as a mechanical organization of Butler's instincts, affections, and so on, or if it is some sort of human over-soul (or, in this case, under-soul); if the latter, there is a pointed contrast between human and non-human orders. In either case, these lines imply the superiority of the human spirit which rays her powers, like sister islands, seen
Linking their coral arms under the sea:
Or cluster'd peaks with plunging gulfs between
Spann'd by aerial arches, all of gold. (59).

This view is consistent with orthodox religion. But the non-human sea of physical life, here mentioned in passing, is to become a very considerable image as the sea-island (or sea-land) contrast is developed by Arnold. In a scheme where the sea engulfs mankind and makes him doubt that his spirit does ascend "to eternity," the idea of the underground unity and linking is lost. And it is largely in these symbols that Arnold's sense of contrast and conflict between man and nature comes to be expressed.

The opposition of human life on the land and natural life in the sea is the basis for dramatic contrast in both "The Forsaken Merman" and "To a Gipsy Child by the Seashore." In the "Gipsy Child" the imagery is varied. The child is engaged in life's "battle" (23); "sails that gleam for a moment" on the ocean and the world's "blank sunshine" suggest a world of brightness and purpose, but the child is associated with gloom and has "a funereal aspect." Even earthly labor cannot "oblivion in lost angels ... infuse/ Of the soil'd glory, and the trailing wing" (55-56): here is a negative approach to Wordsworth's vision of the child's soul. But land and ocean are the essential imaginative elements here. This poem is one of Arnold's earliest attempts at the elegiac mood, and it has a beauty of imagery
and phrase which lends deep dignity, a "majesty of grief" to its subject, the little gipsy who, alone and forlorn, watches the seascape. "Not idly Earth and Ocean labour on," but this human life seems uncertain, perhaps pointless. Though there may be sun-lighted moments in his "storm-vext stream of life," this life of pale hope and sorrow must return at last to grief: and this is so largely because man, in making material progress, has driven away the cloud of superstition and freed himself, only to find "in thy success, thy chain" (79) -- only to find that without his humane God he is lost. If this child is "self-centred," as the eighth stanza suggests, it is because she cannot be in communion with the sea, with nature; or God; or men. The imagery here is highly various, as this mixed metaphor would indicate:

The Guide of our dark steps a triple veil
Betwixt our senses and our sorrow keeps:
Hath sown with cloudless passages the tale
Of grief, and eas'd us with a thousand sleeps. (49-52)

But its use of such various images to achieve a consistent elegiac tone, its picture of land and sea and its introduction of the important phrase "stream of life" give the poem a significant place in the development of Arnold's imagery.

More important both for its typical imagery and its innate worth is "The Forsaken Merman," the most beautiful
and the most successful piece in the *Strayed Reveller* volume. This poem's literal images of the sea -- the caverns of amber and pearl, the sea-beasts, the surf and the glistening beach -- are vivid and irresistible. And its dramatic intensity, transforming the ballad story into a moving and beautiful monologue, results largely from the deep appeal which the story and its literal images hold for Arnold, from the profound conflict which it suggests to him and the sadness of isolation. The merman and Margaret represent two orders of life, human and natural -- the familiar antithesis again, but striving in a unique situation to be united. They are isolated one from the other by their natures, and this is emphasized by the contrast of their environments, the wild sea and the white-wall'd town, each appealing in its own way. The merman longs to be with his human wife, but his is not the nature for priests and churches; and the wife longs to, but cannot, leave human things and return to a sea home. The scene of the merman peering through the church window suggests all this. So the deep sadness of the poem gives the symbolic scheme's counterpart for the feeling of a divided man, unable to accept exclusively either the sea of non-human life -- the life of nature -- or the land of orthodox faith and human companionship but wishing for both, wishing to unite the two conflicting images. Sea life is without love and communion when it lacks the human element: "Alone dwell forever/ The kings of the sea." (83). And yet
the cruel loved one, Margaret, cannot forget or cease to
desire the strange peace and beauty of the water world,
though it be cold, without music or passion or prayer.
Here, again, as in most of the poems already examined and in
almost all of Arnold's important verse, there is the con­
flict between man's need for inner and spiritual values and
his experience of an outer physical world to which he is
attracted and of whose reality and constancy he is sure.

His assurance of this outer world and doubts about the
inner -- the town in "The Forsaken Merman" is a wind-blown
little fortress, walled against the mightier elements and
particularly against the sea -- makes man's isolation from
the sea-nature painful, and leads to a sense of men's isolation
from each other; for separation from the sure physical world
means, for the monism toward which Arnold is deeply inclined,
a separation from one's own true self as a segment of the world,
from the true personal nature as part of the one all-embracing
nature. And since for this view there can be no unique per­
sons apart from natural reality, it means the illusion of
isolation from other subjects, other apparent spirits or
personalities. This matter of isolation, then, becomes one
of Arnold's major problems in his most personal poetry. Al­
though human values constantly assert themselves, Arnold's
imagination is always inclined to give precedence to the
idea of nature; beneath the conflict between man and nature,
it proves to be always a monist imagination rather than the
dualist one which, for example, the seventeenth-century metaphysicals and many modern poets have displayed. But there are two distinct ways of looking at the relationship between man and nature. For the old and orthodox view, man is basically and by virtue of his soul apart from the world of phenomena. And Arnold retains something of this dualist sense of his apart-ness when he is dealing with human values, the properties of the soul. But finally, for any monist, nature must include man as either its highest achievement, in which objective and naturally inherent values are made manifest, or as a sort of aberration, a freak whose "spirit" is an "epiphenomenon of matter," as Santayana puts it. Arnold's "In Utrumque Paratus" deals imaginatively with these two possible views. It does so in the imagery of fountain and stream and of dreaming and waking. For Emerson the isolation of individuals -- self-reliance and introspection -- is only apparent, not ultimately true. And the first part of this poem is typically Emersonian: "alone/ Spring the great streams" (20-21). The exalted (spiritual) concept of nature which underlies this view is naturally associated with images of streams, mountains, stars, the sun. The materialist's concept, according to which man's spiritual realities are illusions, is associated only with the image of the earth "rocking her obscure body to and fro" (25). According to the spiritual monism of the first three stanzas man would have to live in apparent isolation, seeking the over-soul.
through his own soul, in "lonely pureness to the all-pure Fount" (12). Water imagery, suggesting the source of life always flowing and in cyclic movement, predominates in these stanzas. According to the materialistic monism of the final three stanzas, man must give up his cloudy dreams and realize that he is brother to the earth, that he only seems to be a God-like spirit: the human being is not more real than his environment, and if the idealist, living in a dream, denies the reality of nature, of which he is a part, he denies his own reality. And here the return to truth means a descent from the stars and the sun and the clouds, to earth.

Water images are Arnold's most ambiguous symbols for the natural order, since they may imply either its exalted spiritual origin or the simply materialistic view, in either case representing the concept of life, flux, and carrying all the connotations of fertility and baptismal rite. In "Resignation," which strikes the final despairing note in this volume, the water imagery is especially significant. As in "The World and the Quietist," the poet sees that men seek an end in life, and end for life: "to die be given us, or attain!" But this poem counsels resignation to the fact that life has no end: no ending and no goal. Existence, the life of the world, continues as the fountain and stream continue, always flowing, always the same. Literal images are employed here for figurative ends: the gipsies described in the poem, always moving, wandering, and yet returning to the
same spots; the scene itself, changing and yet still the same as it was years ago; the stream, rushing to its joyous merging with the sea, but still moving and remaining still; each of these imaginative elements epitomizes the theme of life in flux and constancy and all together provide both the setting and the significant imagery for the poem. The poet and his Fausta have followed their mountain stream from the heights "to the town, the highway, and the plain" (79); and finally to "the wide glimmering sea" where "we bath'd our hands with speechless glee" (88,87). But, returning ten years later, the poet realizes that this consummation of the "stream of life" (a phrase not used here) is not final, that none is ever final. And, musing upon the constancy of this river cycle, he returns to a theme of "The Strayed Reveller": the poet must see and celebrate this constancy, the literally inanimate "general life, which does not cease,/ Whose secret is not joy, but peace" (91). Here is the contrast again: land and water, desire and labor, noise and silence, fitful joy and lasting peace: man and nature. The poet who is aware of his brotherhood with eternal nature cannot say "I am alone" (169); and, again as in "The Strayed Revellers," this awareness is embodied in various images, in his observation of the variety and knowledge of the essential oneness in pasture, tree, hill, cuckoo, rose, and so on. The device of kaleidoscopic imagery, one picture quickly following another until they are almost fused in the imagination,
gains an effect which is the imaginative equivalent for the poem's philosophy: if the gipsies are less than men, having no constancy in their almost entirely natural lives, the poet is more than man in that he sees the constancy in eternal change, views the world as an endless procession of phenomena. "Not deep the poet sees, but wide." (212), and the verse carries out this axiom; but Arnold's anguish and the human quality of his best verse come from an insistent desire to see deep -- into the human consciousness, into passion and pain and frustration -- as well. It is this depth, the depth of human feeling, which he here resigns in turning to the stream as an image of the eternally changing and endless nature of which man is part: a nature which "outlasts aversion, outlasts love" (214). In this world, which also outlasts death, men must resign hope for their ends and belief in their values: this stoicism is wisdom "in His eye" for whom man's every moment "is but a quiet watershed/ Whence, equally, the Seas of Life and Death are fed" (257-268). Life and death are one, united with all that exists in the pantheistic being personified here, and so there is no isolation, and no distinct humanity. All this is imaged in the "stream that falls incessantly" (264): it is a concrete form representing the "something which infects the world," the vitalizing nature-principle, life basically one and calm now manifesting itself in ebb and flow, in storm and conflict. This principle of movement,
life, though natural, is an infection of nature -- here even monism, paradoxically, comes around to original sin -- because it can bring only pain and unsatisfied longing, having no end, no goal, for itself. In this nature the hills and sky and the stream itself "seem to bear rather than rejoice" (268). And, like them, man must bear existence. Man's life is like the life of the stream: it flows from life to a death which is, being only the destruction of a form, the beginning again of that same infected life.

The predominant images in this volume are light and darkness, sound and silence, land and water. In the degree that they are poetically effective, these images achieve consistency within single poems and combine inherent vitality, concreteness and particular appropriateness to particular subjects. The sun is consistently associated with an order of nature outside man and quite clearly in contrast with man, life which continues after human death and which mortal beings depend upon and are sustained by. Darkness, on the other hand, is the realm into which men retire when they refuse to respect the open-air world and its nature, when they set up their feelings as criteria for life. Similarly, as the volume's first sonnet suggests, the order of natural things is imaged in silence, while man is noisy. And finally the life which outlasts man and his feelings is epitomized by the sea, sometimes raging, sometimes calm; and the world conquered by men and humanized is the land -- the
mainland or the perilous island.

The problem of accepting the natural life of sun and silence, the unfixed and unfeeling life of the sea, is for Arnold a problem of the imagination. He has inherited a picture of the world of objects, of nature, as anterior to (and therefore basic to) man; and he must now face the implications which the experience of sun and sea and the world of things force upon these images given by a certain kind of Romantic temperament: he must, that is, seeing the contrast between human desire and human ethics on the one hand and natural facts on the other, face the anti-human implications of the monist imagination -- the imagination which takes all life as having one nature and thus one proper body behind an infinite variety of images. Arnold sets out in the Strayed Reveller to glorify both unity and variety, to glorify the Spinozan order at the expense of personal feeling for any part of it as an end; but personal feeling creates the poetry, and the tension between it and its objects give the poetry both its glory and its glooms. Rejecting that kind of Romanticism which is plainly ego-centered and spiritually all subject, he has difficulty in holding to the complementary brand which is all object: the Romantic fusion of man and nature which ends by subjugating man to nature. And so the union of vision with sympathy which vitalizes the images of the "Strayed Reveller" itself suggests inner conflict in the imagery of "Mycerinus," "The Forsaken Merman," "Resig-
nation" and a number of minor poems: the sunlight is harsh, the sea is cold, and the eternal stream of life means eternal ennui to the human spirit. These and the images of the wheel always turning and the mountain in its isolation, although they repel the spirit, are embraced by the mind: and so the imagination is divided just as it unifies the two sides of its nature, vision and sympathy. Sympathy, desire, all feeling, is resigned to vision at the end. But the resignation cannot be final, and Arnold has not in these poems solved the problem of finding a satisfactory final image for life. He has, rather, given the terms — the imaginative materials — from which the picture must be made.
NOTES

Chapter III

1 This kind of image is the clearest objective form which the conflict between Arnold's "two desires" -- one compelling him toward action in the social world, the other toward contemplation and passivity -- takes. E. K. Brown, in Matthew Arnold: A Study in Conflict (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1942) finds this the basic dichotomy in Arnold's thought, but the conflict takes other forms as well, and, at least for the purposes of this study, the terms "man and nature," used here, seem more adequate than "action and contemplation," being more comprehensive in explaining Arnold's dual interests.

2 The numbers in parentheses, in this and in later chapters, are line numbers, and they should correspond with lines in both of the Oxford University Press editions. The earlier edition, edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, prints the poems in order of publication, and so it will prove easier to follow in connection with this study. Page references are not given for quotations.

Like "The Strayed Reveller," "Empedocles on Etna" is a long poem with a variety of brilliant images. Unlike the earlier work, it intensifies its literal imagery by the use of a definitely worked-out pattern, of contrasts, antitheses and repetitions, and by the explicit association of elemental images with philosophical ideas so that the figurative language of the poem unites imaginatively physical impression and ideal concept. The major imagery is based upon the four elements, earth, air, fire and water, and particularly upon the last two; it will be useful to trace these elements in the poem, both in order to gain a clearer understanding of each image's implications and because these elements with the connotations given them in "Empedocles" occur and recur in other places. In this sense, "Empedocles" is the key poem, as well as the title poem for the volume.

The literal picture given here provides certain imaginative elements which are relevant: height and depth, the one associated (as in the mountain imagery of previous pieces) with an isolation both grand and painful, the other with ordinary social existence; the music of Callicles' harping and singing, expressive of the human-devised order which myth, imagination, art can impose upon the elements, and the
rumbling of the volcano, "not Typho's groans" but the naked elemental and eternal chaos. Along with these, the figurative language of Empedocles' own speech gives a human interpretation to such painful experiences as "The Strayed Reveller" only observes. Callicles and Pausanias, following Empedocles, speak with each other in every-day language, or in a rhythmic and intensified version of it, and seldom use imagery which is not literally descriptive. Even Callicles in his lyrics sings in descriptive or mythic rather than metaphorical words. But his singing has importance for Empedocles, whose mind turns always on the universal questions and whose imagination, thus, must always be at work fusing the immediate experience with a large idea. It is when he does this rather than speak in flatly abstract terms that his speech makes the poetry come alive. His mind, with its ordering of the elements, is the poem's imagination.

The valley is in shade. But Empedocles ascends into "clear mountain air" where the sun shines "on those naked slopes like flame" (Act I, Scene 2, line 6). As he speaks to Pausanias, resting on these heights, he hears Callicles singing of pastures and streams below Etna, and of a glen where springs flow and where the centaur taught Achilles "all the wisdom of his race." To this pleasant picture of the mythical world Empedocles replies with a song which embodies his concept of the real elemental world and man's place in it. The soul of man is like a mirror, which has glimpses of its
surroundings but "never sees a whole" (I,2,85). This image of the incomplete reflector makes ironic the memory of Arnold's remarks on the poet, who sees "wide, not deep," and suggests the way in which this poem, passionately human and emotional rather than objective, stands in opposition to the "Reveller" and other earlier ones. Empedocles himself is a mirror, reflecting but never wholly comprehending the nature about him; and this failure to comprehend the world, to place self in relation to an ordered universe, leads to the final tragedy: in new terms, it is the problem of reconciling and uniting the two ideas of man and external nature in a single, steady and whole vision. The now-familiar idea that the gods -- whatever powers control life -- are indifferent to man or mock him is repeated: "Heaven is with earth at strife" (I,2,122). The only way to understand is to "know thyself!"

Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
Sink in thyself! There ask what avails thee, at that shrine! (I,2,144-146)

But is this inner light (as implied in "Religious Isolation") the counterpart of an outer one? It may well be, for inner knowledge here is not so much ethical as stoic: man realizes, by it, that he must not make his will or desire the basis of expectation. What he understands is the necessity of resignation. This is not easy: "the thirst for bliss/ Deep in
man's heart is born" (1,2,168-169). And he finds no water to quench it. Man is a stranger in the world, "born into life," life which existed long before him and which outlasts him as the soil does the plant. Natural life surrounds and, if he is wise, moulds him: "experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing in": this sea is the only water of life there is to quench thirst, inadequate though it be. And man must perceive that he is of this sea, akin to the elements and no more, like the lightning, stream and wind, all desiring free play but, under nature's tolerant eye, clashing with each other. If he rails against the gods he imagines, it is only the one nature railing against itself: "earth and air and sea," for this monist philosophy comprehends all. And yet, man seems to himself more than earth, air and sea, seems like a being set apart from the natural world:

Our youthful blood

Claims rapture as its right;
The world, a rolling flood
Of newness and delight

Draws in the enamour'd gazer to its shining breast.

(1,2,352-356)

He is drawn to what he is in fact a part of and at one with. Man's history and science, his "hot grasp" and "passionate warmth" do not make him more happy or less frustrated than the elements. But finally, and here Empedocles mutes his note of despair for the sake of Pausanias, it is possible to
live a life of moderate satisfaction if one can expect but little and can practice self-control. This is the philosophical conclusion of Marcus Aurelius; but the advice -- nurse no extravagant hope; do not dream; resign your passions -- is given here by a despairing philosopher, a dreamer, a man of deep and agonizing passions.

Callicles' song breaks the silence after Empedocles is done, and, again in a sweet mood which contrasts with the philosopher's disillusionment, he sings the story of Cadmus and Harmonia, now "placid and dumb" after suffering, existing in an ideal world where the sunshine is fair, the flowers sweet, the air fresh; in a paradise, "in breathless silence after all their ills" (I, 2, 438). We are taken for these lyric moments from the literal and philosophical heights to a more pleasant valley of myth. But we return from myth to reality, from calm to passion, as Empedocles speaks in Act II.

He is alone now, and aware of being eternally alone and isolated from his fellows.

Thou canst not live with men nor with thyself --
Oh sage! Oh sage! -- Take then the one way left;
And turn thee to the elements, thy friends. (23-25)

To the elements the philosopher says, "Receive me, quench me, hide me, take me home!" (36). The imagination of the poem centers in the problem of whether the elements are man's true home, whether the elements can quench the thirst for
bliss, the thirst for all of life. "Something," Empedocles says, has dried up his spirit's "self-sufficing fount of joy." (22), but he himself has suggested the question whether any man's life can be self-sufficing, even though he counsels moderation as the means for such self-sufficiency to a man less passionate -- less intensely human -- than himself. The "something" is the strength of Empedocles' desire for a consummation of his life; and his gesture of self-destruction, his return to the elements, is the desperate attempt at consummation. Callicles, still representing the human attempt to comprehend the world in myth, in art -- as Empedocles cannot in philosophy, and as Empedocles believes man's mirror-soul incapable of doing in any way -- describes Etna in imagery drawn from the story of the rebel Typho, who groans and roars beneath the mountain in the voice of the volcano. To Jove the sound is sweet harmony, and the image of the writhing Typho is complemented by that of the charmed circle in a placid heaven. Again the imagery is mythical rather than explicitly symbolic. Again the mood is one of peace, the picture that of calm after passion, beauty ordering and outlasting pain.

The poem returns from Callicles and fable to Empedocles and fact. But the philosopher, whose temperament is that of a humanist and rebel, takes the side of Typho against the gods and sees a painful symbolism in Callicles' song: the brave and impetuous heart yields to the subtle head,
man yields to the gods of nature, and "littleness united/
Is become invincible" (93-94). Callicles resumes his song
with the story of the fawn Marsyas who was slain by the
jealous Apollo after being vanquished by the god in a musi­
cal contest. Unlike his other lyrics, this one tells an
unrelievedly painful tale in which the god appears harsh and
mean. And again Empedocles, taking up the allusion to
Apollo but rejecting the comfort of religious myth -- which
Callicles, through the beauty of his lyric can transform
and exalt -- recognizes that the nature given the form of
gods by human imagination has in itself all the power but
none of the beauty of those mythical beings. His own imagi­nation can find little more comfort in the elements, for he
feels himself to be, in spite of all his philosophy, as un­like them as he is unlike gods. Thus isolated from the rest
of life, just as he is isolated from men, he discards the
laurel, symbol of achievement and isolation: "Take thy
bough; set me free from my solitude! I have been enough
alone!" (218-219). Vacillation between god-like loneliness
and the false appearance of communion in a society where man
forgets himself in forgetting loneliness -- this will not
satisfy. In an earlier simpler day some compromise, some
un-selfconscious existence in the world might have been
enough, but the sophisticated philosopher is now the slave
of thought and finds no peace where men and gods, society
and nature, are unjust and alien.
Thought is the evil, then: the mind which cannot mediate between human passion and desire on the one hand and the indifference and cruelty of gods or nature on the other. This is the human element which is not of the elements. In a jumble of imagery, shifting but consistent in its import, Empedocles contrasts himself with stars, clouds, waters and the mountain; and it is his mind which cannot be absorbed by them. After a tentative personification of the stars, he concludes that, silent as the heart of nature is, "uncaring and undelighted" (297), they are more truly alive than he: with them there is no sense of decay and death. This paradoxical attribution of life to inanimate objects only is typical of Arnold: what Empedocles longs for is the life of a lifeless nature, an existence unselfconscious and so at peace. The fiery volcano, too, is alive, and the sea:

That mild and luminous floor of waters lives,
With held-in joy swelling its heart! -- I only,
Whose spring of hope is dried, whose spirit has fail'd --
I, who have not, like these, in solitude
Maintain'd courage and force, and in myself
Nurs'd an immortal vigour -- I alone
Am dead to life and joy; therefore I read
In all things my own deadness. (315-322)

The repetition of this spring image and the other water images brings the poet back again and again to water as the symbol for life underlying all the elements. But the joy without
desire which typifies water and all of nature is not for man. Each of the elements shares in natural light and movement:

Oh that I could glow like this mountain!
Oh that my heart bounded with the swell of the sea!
Oh that my soul were full of light as the stars!
Oh that it brooded over the world like the air!

But no, this heart will glow no more! thou art
A living man no more, Empedocles;
Nothing but a devouring flame of thought --
But a naked, eternally restless mind! (323-330)

The fire which is thought, then, or mind, is not the same as the mountain's fire, is not elemental; and here the imagery of light within and light without, used in Empedocles' lesson to Pausanias, seems to split, the inner light of human consciousness being seen as distinct from nature's. The light and heat of man, his wisdom and passion, are not the light and heat of the natural sun.

To the elements it came from
Everything will return.
Our bodies to earth,
Our blood to water,
Heat to fire,
Breath to air,
They were well born, they will be well entomb'd!
But mind? ... (331-338)
The elements are given explicitly here. Empedocles wishes to share the life in the womb of the earth, in the "stormy main," in the "all-bathing" air, the "life of fire," and each one of the elements is combined with the concept of life in this imagery. But mind and thought, "where will they find their parent element?" (347) They have no home, and they keep men isolated, "strangers of the world" (350) and "prisoners of our consciousness" (352),

And never let us clasp and feel the All
But through their forms, and modes, and stifling veils.
And we shall be unsatisfied as now,
And we shall feel the agony of thirst,
The ineffable longing for the life of life.
Baffled for ever: and still thought and mind
Will hurry us with them on their homeless march,
Over the unallied unopening earth,
Over the unrecognizing sea; while air
Will blow us fiercely back to sea and earth,
And fire repel us from its living waves.

The thirst is for a water of life; and even the element of fire is pictured in the imagery of water, as "living waves"; it is the water-nature, the elemental and living nature, which runs through air, fire and womb-like earth and with which man's consciousness cannot be reconciled. But this is a painful concept because it is expressed in the terms of a monist imagination for which there can be only one nature,
isolation from which means simply eternal illusion. The sea which symbolizes life must run beneath human nature, too; and so the idea of the buried life, the reality running beneath appearance like a stream hidden far below the surface: men return to an existence of illusory self consciousness, always trying to forget the self and to comprehend the true reality which is nature, the nature of the elements,

To see if we will now at last be true
To our own only true, deep-buried selves,
Being one with which we are one with the whole world.

(370-373)

Again, it is Emerson's paradox, life which is dead, reality not recognizing itself. To the elements Empedocles commends himself, hoping at the last moment to share in their life -- "not to die wholly" -- and he leaps into the "sea of fire."

The conclusion is inevitable, for the fruit of Empedocles' monist imagination -- and it represents the more basic of the two warring sides in Arnold's own mind -- must be self-destruction. But at the end Callicles sings again of Apollo, the sun god whose cult of lucid sanity is, in contrast with the almost Dionysiac emotions with which Empedocles, (like the Strayed Reveller), throws himself into the sea of life. Calliolas' is the mythical as opposed to the philosophical mind (or what is called here the monist imagination), and he represents the order and the beauty which result from those forms of imagination now lost to Empedocles, as they seem
sometimes to be lost to Arnold. The world of passion, frustration and despair is comprehended in a nature which is itself (as art reveals), beyond all of man's struggle, at one and at peace:

The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm;
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm.

Arnold's imagery is not always so carefully worked out in this volume. It is more various and less clear in short poems where feeling (particularly love) predominates over idea rather than being controlled by it. And it is sometimes, on the other hand, more ideal than concrete. "Too Late," for example, and "Indifference," are poems which use the image of the twin souls, possibly derived from Plato's Symposium. In them Arnold says that the strong man would not need love or give "light and warmth, and joy" to his beloved. The superior human being must be, like Empedocles, isolated; and, unlike the platonic lovers, self-sufficient. He must be, that is, like unselfconscious nature, and this notion is embodied in "Excuse" with an echo of the Empedocles imagery:

His eyes be like the starry lights --
His voice like sounds of summer nights --
In all his lovely mien let pierce
The magic of the universe.
Arnold's frustration in love, whatever its source, leads to a poetry of frustration: in "Longing" the satisfaction of companionship comes only in a dream. Associated with this sense of frustration is a feeling of impotence, expressed in the idea that man is controlled by fate, by "guiding powers" (in "The Lake") and has not in himself the ability to attain his own ends. The dream imagery, again, is connected with this virtual paralysis of will in "Self-Deception": there is a law-giving "Power beyond our seeing," and "we but dream we have our wish'd for powers." Here is a repetition of the dream motif of "In Utrumque Paratus": man's life is like a dream, but nature is real, and its is the true life. This imagery manifests the "Empedocles" frame of mind, and awareness of how man's efforts have always failed -- according to "Revolutions," he has not yet found "the word, the orders which God meant to be" -- and a longing for the effortless and unfailing existence of the non-human physical world:

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of Thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar!

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! Nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.
Thus, in the "Lines Written in Kensington Gardens," the poet equates calm with life, recalling his association of silence and nature. He asks for a universal impersonal sympathy which would combine human feeling with natural calm; and so, in the phrase "calm soul," he gives the natural order those human attributes -- life and sympathy -- which he denies humanity! This image of a life outside man (compared with which man's life is death or a dream) is the extension of Empedocles' idea, and, for Empedocles or the poet-lover, it supplies a more satisfying reality than the dream or the frustrated life without life.

The mountain in "Empedocles," it was pointed out, is an image suggesting both the heights of achievement and the isolation which achievement may bring. It has the same function in the "Shakespeare" sonnet and elsewhere. The mountain is a place of loneliness, of retreat, from which the world can be surveyed. The image is employed with this sense again in "Parting" and in "Obermann." Another of the poems devoted to Arnold's sense of frustration in love, "Parting" implies some irresistible force which takes the lover away from his "sweet blue eyes" to the mountains where coldness, stillness and perfect peace soothe him. These very qualities, normally those of death -- "No life, but at moments,/ The mountain-bee's hum" (55-56) -- here typify the heart of natural life: a cold inhuman heart, a paradoxical life, but peaceful as the sea or the womb.
Blow ye winds! lift me with you!
I come to the wild.
Fold closely, O Nature!
Thine arms round thy child. (75-78)

If this is a flight from sexual responsibility to the mother image, it is associated too with the image of nature as alive which already has been given philosophical meaning.

To thee only God granted
A heart ever new:
To all always open;
To all always true.

Ah, calm me! restore me! (79-83)

An incidental water image in this poem is interesting: to his Marguerite the poet says, "A sea rolls between us --/
Our different past" (65-66), and this sea may or may not be imaginatively identified with the "vast seas of snow" (28) which give his mountain its natural grandeur and are part of its deadly cold. But the image of the mountain "in the stir of the forces/ Whence issued the world" (89-90) is the central one in the poem, and it clearly stands for a life towering above the human and social one, a life of isolation and one without love or any passion, but a life which offers calm and certitude to the man whose spirit knows neither another nor itself.

In "Obermann" again the mists are "rolling like a sea," the "torrents roar," "the virgin mountain air" "blows --
through the pages of Senanocur's book. Here the mountain image, carrying all the connotations of loneliness and isolation again, is augmented by a pattern of cold and heat, of the mountain world and the burning human spirit. The need of a man who is lost in the sea of life to find assurance in nature outside himself is Obermann's theme: "All shipwreck in [his] own weak heart," he looks for "comfort from without" (19-20). Both mountain air, pure and cold, and the human fever, the sobbing "ground tone/ Of human agony" (35-36) are in his pages. There are "two desires" in this "poet's feverish blood" (94): "One drives him to the world without,/ And one to solitude" (95-96). In this case the "world without" means "the strife/ Of men" (99-100); a few lines later, "the world's life" means the life of nature to which man wins only by solitude and renunciation. The poem is partly a criticism of Romantic thought -- of Wordsworth, whose "sweet calm" represents only a partial view of "human fate" (failing to see the incompatibility of amoral nature with man's values), of Goethe, who saw "Nature's plan" (59) clearly and with no illusions but somehow stood above the conflict as Arnold and his contemporaries cannot. Both Wordsworth and Goethe are treated in the imagery of vision. The experience of life, though -- wave after wave -- allows men no complete vision. The water imagery appears in various guises throughout the poem and it is always in the background suggesting the picture of a vast confusing all-embracing life.
But the contrast between man's fever of passion and nature's cold and isolating calm provides the central imagery, and it is reflected in the theme of choosing between a cold and isolated life of thought upon the mountain and a feverishly impassioned and self-involved existence in the society of men. While Obermann's world is that of "languor, cold and death" (15), its is essentially the same lifeless life which Arnold has before celebrated, the calm and unaspiring life of nature. Obermann's choice of this literally cold nature (in fact, "the world is colder yet") with its intellectual "balm" and "healing sights" (112) at the expense of faith in human-centered goals and the validity of passion -- and this was the price which Wordsworth did not see the necessity of paying -- is the quietist's choice in the "World and the Quietist," and Empedocles' choice. Finally, Arnold's image for the human life which is closest to nature is the mountain -- isolated, cold, unlike Wordsworth's lake-country but, like Goethe, clear and, like Senancour's Obermann, "still/As death" (85-86).

A large group of poems in this 1852 volume are associated with each other by virtue of their emphasis upon images of fire and water. One of these, "On the Rhine" almost duplicates such phrases from "Obermann" as "the glow of life" and the mountain "balms":

Ah Quiet, all things feel thy balm!

Those blue hills, too, this river's flow,
Were restless once, but long ago.
Tam'd is their turbulent youthful glow:
Their joy is in their calm.

Nature, in the image of the river, is as calm and constant as the river in "Resignation," and the fire of passion is explicitly opposed here to the calm of the water. But the two images are not always so clearly distinguished. In "Destiny," the plight of the man who feels that he should feel but cannot, the theme of so many "Marguerite" poems, is expressed in the conflict within man between "a heart of ice, a soul of fire." Passion and coldness at war represent the two warring desires for a mountain calm and a more satisfying personal "end" in life. According to "Youth's Agitations," even after the heat of passion -- of desire for emotional and physical consummation, for bliss -- dies with youth, man still longs for it. In this poem "heat," "hurrying fever" and (as age calls it) "generous fire" are identified with passion's "ebb and flow," and so the water and fire images merge. If water can be taken here as a symbol for vitality, Arnold's paradoxical idea of an inanimate calm as "life" and the human, self-conscious and self-frustrated life as "death" seems to break down. The tenor of all these poems is to see the passions and the morality of man as increasingly vital and increasingly attractive. The old antithesis is not given up: in "Lines Written by a Death-Bed" "longing" has consumed a woman's beauty "like a flame," dimmed it
"like a desert blast"; but the calm of death brings back her natural beauty: nothing can now "dismarble" her brow or disturb her "marble sleep." The marble image suggests the cold hard death-like quality and the peace of nature in the mountains. But this poem is not only a celebration of death, the return to nature, as the true return to life. Although there is "harbour in the tomb" and "youth's hot brow" is cooled by a wind from the "far grave," the poet realizes that within man is still the flame, still the voice saying that "calm" is not the end which passion seeks, not what youth desires. An end "for daylight, for the cheerful sun," a life which is full of light and feeling, an attaining to nature's life which does not mean man's death: this is the goal of youth. Here is an imaginative realization of the fact that human desire is not easily resigned -- and perhaps not meant to be resigned. In these "Lines" the motifs of water, cold, the grave and light and fire are combined to make a complex but effective imaginative scheme, contrasting "harbour in the tomb" and youth's hot passion for life in "the cheerful sun." Water, the "harbour," is life -- but death, too. And the "flame of thought" which was eternal death for Empedocles is also life. The wavering between these images represents Arnold's uncertainty about choosing human passion or natural calm as the basis for an image of life.

Just as they did briefly in "Youth's Agitations," the
water and fire images seem to merge in "The Second Best," which pictures a deep inner impulse (Empedocles' "hidden life") that "strongly stirs and truly burns." And in "Courage" Arnold is forced to admire the very quality of "fiery courage" which is opposed to natural calm and upon which the sun shines "with ... cold derision." To Byron, who did not tame his "rebel Will" to "Nature's law," he says, "[the sun] had his glow, and thou hadst thine": the sun's light of clearness and Byron's flame of force, if they could be united, would produce true greatness. But this is asking for the union of a "cold" image with a "burning" one, and the difficulty is that of genuinely merging images which represent incompatible natures. In "Memorial Verses" Arnold carries out the idea of the Byronic fire's conflict with the cold light of nature, the conflict "of Passion with Eternal Law!" (11). And still it is with "reverential awe" that he watches the Promethean "fount of fiery life" (12-13). But there is no merging of the two elements, and he must turn to other poets in search of a satisfactory whole view. Goethe, more than any other, offers such a view: again, as in "Obermann" (written earlier but published later than "Memorial Verses"), and like the poet in "The Strayed Reveller" and "Resignation," Goethe is described in the imagery of vision. Now, however, a change in Arnold's view of poetry is implied. He is in transit from the belief that "the poet sees not deep but wide" to the belief that "poetry is a
criticism of life." Goethe sees no end outside the constant flux of existence: "the end is everywhere" (27). And so he offers only the warmth or consolation of art, and his happiness is that of seeing the "lurid flow/ Of terror, and insane distress,/ And headlong fate" from above it -- from, we might suppose, the mountain height. But if the water imagery is appropriate to the experience of life and death, of ebb and flow and constancy, Arnold finds himself in the midst of that "flow," that sea of life. Wordsworth, to whom he turns next and to whose memory these verses are written, is, again as in "Obermann," not so much the seer as the speaker. His is the voice which creates beauty and re-vitalizes the natural scene. A series of appropriate images -- of mother earth, of hills and breeze -- reflect Wordsworth's love for these scenes, but the most significant imagery here is that of living water. When Wordsworth spoke,

Our foreheads felt the wind and rain
Our youth return'd: for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,
The freshness of the early world. (53-57).

This is Wordsworth's (and nature's) "healing power," (63) an invocation of the natural order, outdoor life, as an image for vitality which lacks the confusion and frustrations of self-conscious human life. Once more we see the implied contrast of (Byronic) fire and (Wordsworthian) water, one a
way of life, the other a way of thought, both only partial, both attractive, and apparently incompatible. In the stream of Rotha the voice of the living water, though, has its last word; and Arnold joins the familiar image of the grave and that of nature's vegetation with the ideas of the voice and of nature's life:

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha! with thy living wave.
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone (71-74).

The inner fire is identified with what is, at least from Arnold's point of view, the most desirable human characteristic, in "Morality." And in this poem the images of human flame and natural sun, though not merged, are given a common divine origin. The fire in man's heart, his ethical "self-control," is viewed by "Nature's eye," the sun, with surprise and emotion: nature is "free, light, cheerful, glowing with joy, without moral constraint, and yet she seems to remember when, before time and space, she too knew this "severe [and] earnest air" which man "in hours of insight" retains. The image of the inner fire is central in another short thoughtful poem, "Progress." And here it represents passion in both its good and its bad sense, as thoughtless enthusiasm and as morality. Jesus sees "a fire in his disciples' eyes": exultation over the destruction of the old law. But the old law remains, and Arnold counsels keeping
such forms as can be helpful to the inner life; above all, he says, be concerned not to destroy but to "guard the fire within," the religious emotion in this case (which Arnold thinks of as basically moral). All forms and religions which have "fall'n on the dry heart like rain," satisfying and revivifying it, can -- to switch the metaphor -- help to keep that flame. As usual, with its "Unseen Power," Arnold's religious expression in this poem is theologically ambiguous. But the switch in metaphor, the virtual identification of the rain's life-giving water and the inner flame, now fused more definitely than ever before, suggests that his imagination is beginning to reconcile the idea of human values with that of life, the life of the world at large.

"The Youth of Nature" is a vision of that world at large in all its variety and overwhelming grandeur. Out of this vision grows a question which is vital to Arnold as a poet and as a person: "Can the image of life have the glow,/ The motion of life itself?" (115-116) Unconscious physical objects in their cyclical existence carry on the life of nature with a self-less, goal-less, vast and unending energy which must make poor man in all his pretentious bustle look like a petty creature. But "The Youth of Man" tries to relate man's nature to the whole world's, and even defends his peculiar emotions and moralities as part of the whole natural order. Here is a complete and beautiful fusing at last of the two images, of man and nature. But it is significant that
the imagery of the poem is primarily pictorial or literal rather than metaphorical: that the images which express Arnold's consciousness of incompatible qualities in the natural and human spheres are largely ignored. Although the poem implies that youth is wrong to speak of nature as having "neither beauty, nor warmth/ Nor life, nor emotion, nor power," it does not offer an image to contradict what sounds very much like one of the poet's own convictions. (Compare the famous lines in "Dover Beach": "the world ... hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light/ Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.") The water imagery is predominant, and along with the attribution of life to natural objects --

Murmur of living!
Stir of existence!
Soul of the world! (51-53) --

it is the chief means of glorifying nature, as a stream of living water in contrast with human lives which are "like the desert": "on, to the plains, to the sea,/Floats the Imperial Stream" (86-87). This is the stream which seemed less attractive in "resignation" but which is now, also, the water underlying man's own best (if not his warmest) nature:

Sink, O Youth in thy soul!
Yearn to the greatness of Nature!
Rally the good in the depths of thyself! (116-118)
But "youth's agitations" and man's desire for warmth remain. The human feeling of isolation remains, and in man's experience of duality there is still suffering; this is the deep sadness of the "Switzerland" verses, with their constant undertone of loneliness. Throughout these poems water symbolism is used negatively. Suffering man is again contrasted with the calm sea underlying his storm and stress. Men cannot attain to external nature's passionless strength and thus are isolated from their own natures. This human isolation in the sea of objective circumstance is directly related to man's isolation from nature in these familiar lines, "To Marguerite":

Yes; in the sea of life ensl'd,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live alone.

Men feel that in the past there was some sense of human brotherhood provided by religion:

... surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent.
Now round us spreads the watery plain.

This is a memory of the rejected Christian and moral scheme of basically united islands. But deified nature exalts the objective at the expense of moral and emotional values.

A God, a God their severance rul'd;
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea (182).

The image of islands in the sea is related to another one, more often used by Arnold, that of the ship which makes its way across the ocean. In "Human Life," this is the basic image: we journey on "life's incognizable sea" as we must, isolated in the sea-nature which cuts us off from the ends we may desire and from human companionship:

Charter'd by some unknown Powers,
We stem across the sea of life by night,
The joys which were not for our use design'd,
The friends to whom we had no natural right,
The homes that were not destined to be ours.

The phrase "natural right" is significant, for here the poet expresses his sense of fatalism in the familiar sea image which has been consistently associated before now with all that opposes and frustrates human -- and perhaps un-natural -- feelings. It is significant, too, that the voyage takes place "by night": in "Despondency" Arnold declares that

The thoughts that rain their steady glow
Like stars on life's cold sea,

They never shone for me.

Even the cold light of nature suggests too much of warmth to make it, for this mood, compatible with the "cold sea." Again, warmth and water are opposed.

In the silence of the sea, though, and of the stars, too, there is an appeal. "A Farewell," renewing the poet's com-
plaint about a virtual paralysis of his will which somehow does not allow him to control himself or to offer emotional stability and support to a loved one, ends again with the sense of human isolation and the "thirst for peace a raving world/ Would never let us satiate here" (87-88):

How sweet, unreach'd by earthly jars,
My sister! to behold with thee
The hush among the shining stars,
The calm upon the moonlit sea.

The sea offers something which earth -- or the human land -- cannot: peace, and an end to the strife and frustration which are associated with the fires of human passion. If one thirsts for the water of peace, the sea stands as the grandest water image, as life without inner conflicts; and the conjunction of star and sea is a joining of the light of exalted and transcendent nature with the reality of physical nature. In "Self-Dependence" these two images are central:

'Ah, once more,' I cried, 'ye Stars, ye Waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew:
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you.'

Once more, the basic image is that of a ship upon the ocean. And, as in "Human Life," the poet seems inclined to give up self and to plunge, like Empedocles, into the sea of things:
Weary of myself and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At the vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.²

The poem relates its images quite specifically to the idea of the impersonal and isolated life. The voice of the night declares that to be "vast" and calm like star and sea, one must live as they do, unafraid of silence, undistracted by "the sights they see" -- the vision of life which the poet in "The Strayed Reveller" must combine with feeling and which Empedocles must translate into emotionally-charged and corrosive thought -- demanding no "love, amusement, sympathy"; one must, that is, live an impersonal and isolated existence: "alone they live, nor pine with noting/ All the fever of some differing soul." This is the life without fever, and its loneliness is the price which must be paid for grandeur and for peace. And yet, in a final stanza, Arnold suggests that the voice of nature is also the inner voice, that Emersonian self-reliance and isolation accord with the imagery of the sea, the sea which must, then, not only surround but somehow subtend and create the human vessel, representing man's own deepest nature; again, the monist imagination has to face a basic paradox without the terms to deal with it.

O air-borne Voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in my own heart I hear.

'Resolve to be thyself: and know that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery.

This is telling the ship to be the sea.

Again, man is like a voyager in the sea, on a ship which finally has nowhere to go but must be sunk, in "A Summer Night." Beginning with the literal image of the "deserted moon-blenched street," the poem goes through a series of imaginal settings -- "a past night" and the picture of white houses on a bay -- the voice of the moonlight, with its metaphor of the heart's "fiery glow/ That whirls the spirit from itself away" and is "never by passion quite possess'd/ And never quite benumb'd by the world's sway," again contrasting fire (passion) with the world's peace -- the image of the prison in which most men live, the prison of feeling which, assailed by "waves of mournful thought" still keeps out the vision of life -- and, finally, the major image of the ship. Trite as it is, this idea of the "Ocean of Life," here opposed to the prison of self-centered and withdrawn humanity -- just as the sunlight is opposed to Mycerinus' grove and the sirens' cave, and the merman's sea to sheltered land -- becomes surprisingly vivid. The man who tries to steer his own course "on life's sea," free from social convention and from his own feelings, too, "standing for some false impossible shore," can come only to destruction: the search for perfection in nature, the attempt to master nature (without reliance on humane values) leads to madness, for this course -- abandoning human society and
yet not throwing off the human nature which, like the ship, is alien to the sea -- must be inconsistent and self-destroying. To some extent this is the course suggested by many of Arnold's earlier poems: certainly the vacillation between man and nature as a base for values -- the "spirit" fluctuating "to and fro" -- is typical of the early Arnold. And here, in the voice of the moonlight, he criticizes that vacillation. Finally, the poet looks to the heavens "untroubled and unpassionate" as a more fitting image for the life which man should lead, the life avoiding the extremes of land's prison and the wild sea, of the slave's and madman's ways, the life which combines calm and light. Arnold cannot resist personifying the sky, to wonder if it too has longed for that perfection which he can see only in the fusion of human personality and warmth with natural wholeness and peace. But, even while he offers this picture as a compromise, Arnold is working the image of the sky into one which is curiously like that of his dangerous ocean. In breadth and clarity the heavens are an emblem of man's soul, a macrocosm for its microcosm; but when he says, "It were good to sink there, and breathe free," the poet is reversing his image -- normally one rises to the heavens rather than sinking to them, unless man's earth is viewed from without, and our vision is thus made not geocentric but quite relative -- and in spirit reverting to the concept of the sea as the true, and natural, self into which one may sink. At best this
compromise in the poet's imagination is an uneasy and an uncertain one.

Still Arnold feels the appeal of the sea as an image for life in the large. Finally, in a group of poems which picture man's existence as a river rather than a ship or an island, he makes a serious attempt, using the same basic water imagery, to go beyond conflict and achieve the synthesis of human and natural values. His imagination abandons the images of heat and of enclosure to dwell on the idea of human development -- the flow of the river -- and to integrate this with the world outside. "The New Sappho" and "The River" reveal the poet's interest in literal river imagery. But in another group, as in "Resignation," the river takes on metaphorical significance. Resigning himself again to a world whose image is that of the water cycle -- life eternally flowing into the sea of all life -- he now makes that resignation into an acceptance by emphasizing the positive sense of consumption in and identity with the general life, and by finding in the water nature itself -- and this is the most significant change -- those qualities of love, of warmth, of ethical consistency, which are distinctively human.

In "The Buried Life" human love seems hardly strong enough to break through human isolation and find the true being, although, according to Arnold's naturalism, "the same heart beats in every breast." (As a matter of fact, because this is true no communion can take place on the illusory
level of unique humanity.) Yet, though man's true self is
a "buried stream," and fate bade "the unregarded River of
our Life" be "indiscernible," and though man vainly thirsts
and spends his passion to find his underground stream,
nature hidden in himself (but plain in the sea of life),
yet he may on rare occasions find in communion with a loved
one the calm of that true nature.

And then he thinks he knows

The Hills where his life rose,
And the Sea where it goes (247).

Here for the first time Arnold positively and explicitly re­
lates the idea of human love to the whole of life in his
imagery; here man's stream is given an ideal culmination
and goal in the sea of (peaceful) existence. Rather than
being pictured as an island, man is explicitly given a way
of return. Arnold is making an attempt to reconstruct human
values and satisfy human desire on the basis of the faith he
has declared. The ultimate reality of nature is clearly
made the criterion even of moral action. This is the theme

Sink, 0 Youth, in thy soul!
Yearen to the greatness of Nature!
Rally the good in the depths of thyself! (235)

Apparently human qualities have now entered into the sea
nature -- beauty, emotion, and warmth -- giving it some right
to identification with the divine. The relationship between
humanity and the external world (both one in a larger unity) has been suggested in "Progress." The unseen Power, whether Nature personified or a God above the soul of things, insists upon moral concerns:

'Bright, else, and fast the stream of life may roll,
And no man may the other's hurt behold;
Yet each will have one anguish -- his own soul
Which perishes of cold.' (238)

Even isolation ought to be overcome in a brotherhood demanded by such a humanized scheme. In keeping with the spirit of these images is the expression of the river theme in "The Future": man is a wanderer, "born in a ship/ On the breast of the River of Time," and history is his river; although he is now in the Plain, he may find peace as his stream "draws to the Ocean" and the wind "brings up the stream/ Murmurs and scents of the infinite Sea" (251, 254).

Now to turn to another and quite different kind of verse. The one completely dramatic poem in the Empedocles volume, having almost no apparent philosophical or personal message, is "Tristram and Iseult." In view of Arnold's frequent descent from poetry into the genre of the metrical essay when he is directly concerned with problems of conduct, it is interesting to observe how successfully his imagination can work when set free to create such a purely "poetic" poem as this one. It is appropriate that the consideration of Arnold's second volume close with an analysis of "Tristram,"
for this piece is at the same time an almost perfect example of Arnold's most effective poetic expression in imagery and one of the supremely beautiful achievements of sustained dramatic poetry in the English language. Finally, in connection with the development of the poet's imagination as it embodies his feeling about man's life and a general life, this poem presents a picture which inevitably includes and organizes the leading images of earlier verse in a form that makes them less explicit criticisms -- or interpretations -- of life, less distinctively metaphorical, but more immediate and particular modes of comprehending experience, and thus ultimately more meaningful: dramatic and "thoughtful" verse are intimately related, and the reading of one provides referents for and suggests depths in the other.

The images in "Tristram" fall into certain more or less distinct groupings. As in most of his poems, Arnold is inclined to use polar imagery, in which two terms are in contrast and even in conflict one with the other: thus the motifs of light and dark, heat and cold, land and sea, all of them familiar from the analysis of verse in which these elements are used specifically to body forth general ideas. And besides these leading images, there is in "Tristram" a strongly defined pattern of color: the red of blood, the green of the forest, the white of a flower, the gold of ornaments and precious objects. Following these imaginative details through the poem reveals the artistry with which
Arnold achieves his fine sensuous and emotional effects. Furthermore, since most of this is literal rather than metaphorical imagery, an examination of the way in which these details are used may suggest whether or not it is valid to read them as representative, as retaining the significance of similar image patterns elsewhere in Arnold's work.

At the beginning of the poem there is a vivid picture: the wind; the dark; lights from the fishing-boats at sea; the pale and dying Tristram by a dying fire, a dark green mantle across his feet, a gold harp against his bed; and beside him Iseult of Brittany, dressed in rich silk and burnished gold, with golden hair but pale cheeks, like a "sweet Flower" (36), a white "snowdrop by the sea" (49) nipped by the sea-gale from the Atlantic. Each of the three main persons in the poem is described as being pale; Tristram is like a dying light or fire; Iseult of Brittany, a flower by the sea; Iseult of Ireland, a ghost, fitfully pale and bright; and the word pale, repeated along with blanch'd and white, helps to effect the dim and dying quality which is basic in the verse. In contrast with it is green, the color of the forest dress, thrown over Tristram, and of the forest, of living and growing things, all associated with the world of vegetative nature. Gold, too, the symbol of beauty as well as human values in their most concrete form, contrasts strangely with pale cheeks and white hands: the gold of Tristram's harp and of Iseult's clasp (and, later, of the
other Iseult's ornaments). The life of green and gold and red, of "hunter, harper, knight" (21) is reflected in these glints of color. Tristram dreams of "the green fields of Wales," of the "golden cup," "the gilded barge," and the gold and particularly the green are predominant in imaging the past as a bright memory in the pale present. He recalls the "spring-time" of his love, but also the river "red with blood"; and blood-red as well as forest green and forest black is part of the dream. From the window of the room where Iseult's children (the flower's children) sleep, the night world is bright and fair: "red leaves/ ... jewell'd with bright drops of rain" (359-360), "smooth glittering sea" (368), "water sand/ All shining in the white moonbeams" (369-370): but, like Tristram, the children "see fairer in (their) dreams" (371). Black, white and grey are the setting for this picture of pale and dying people: the vivid colors of life outdoors can come into it only through dream, memory, fantasy, or desire.

In the second part, "Iseult of Ireland," white -- the light of moon and candle against Iseult's ghostly paleness -- and black -- the darkness of the room and of the woods at night, the darkness of Iseult's "raven hair" (107) -- again form the major pictorial elements. Even memory is dark, except only Tristram's memory of the forest: "I will think, we've lived so/ In the greenwood, all our lives, alone" (35-36). But life in the forest has been a deceptive
image of joy, perhaps; it was "in the forest" that Tristram's mother died in giving birth to him:

'Son,' she said, 'Thy name shall be of sorrow!

Tristram art thou call'd for my death's sake!'

So she said, and died in the drear forest (86-88).

Now the greenwood has turned dark for Tristram again, for he dreams no longer of that green -- and red and gold -- life, but of death. And as he dies, the memory is fixed only in a "ghostlike tapestry," an arras with its hunting scene, which is like the song of Callicles in its beautiful and essentially mythic assertion of constancy and life in the natural world: the world of the green huntsman, of the "fresh forest scene" (138), the "free greenwood" (163) where the "golden-tassell'd bugle" blows.

Finally, the colors of the last section, "Iseult of Brittany," where we return to landscape in sunshine, as it is seen by the children, are bright in fact, not memory. Green heather and grass, "burnish'd green" and "scarlet berries" (20-21), glittering hollies, and a riot of hue and brilliance bring back into the present the world of youth and of nature. And the story of Merlin and Vivian which Iseult tells has its setting in another forest, a "green sea of leaf and bough," its color suggesting the greenwood of Tristram's memory and that of the arras, while its "dark underwood" and Merlin's imprisonment there make it reminiscent, too, of
the "drear forest" of Tristram's birth. Throughout the poem, up to the last scene, the vivid color scheme carries out a contrast between death in the black and white and life in natural green, violent red or proud gold; and enforces the emotional sense of the drama itself to become a vehicle for the poet's expression of mood.

The motifs of light and dark, heat and cold, are more clearly related to metaphors used earlier by Arnold, and they may bear the functions not only of pictorial elements setting mood but also of images in the somewhat narrower sense of implied metaphors or symbols. The white and black pattern of the first scene is also, of course, a light pattern. Tristram lies dying, his passionate life like the dying fire (in the familiar Arnoldian metaphor, fire is human passion), "gazing seawards for the light," the light which will announce Iseult's return. He is feverish, and again and again the idea of "a fever in my blood" (280) seems like an echo of other poems in which passion, and particularly the passion of love, is imagined as fire and fever. It is a fever, like Empedocles', for which the world outside has no cure: "only death can balm thy woe" (289). The literal picture is interesting, with its emphasis upon firelight and moonlight, heat inside and cold outside the room: nature's light is cold, man's must be warm. Tristram's fever, his passionate nature, can die only with his death. Like Empedocles, again, he is man living intensely, all human in his essence. When Iseult
arrives, he says that he has "fought (his) fever," for it is consuming him, as passion consumes life. Iseult stands fair in the moonlight, the moonlight which blinds Tristram as he beholds her. She, too, is feverish, has been by moods "hot-flush'd," with "brilliant eyes" (117) and pale. And in the light they die, the fire dies, and to the hunter on the arras they become "cold, cold as those who liv'd and lov'd/ A thousand years ago" (176-177). Man's life of passion and warmth gives way to the cold of the arras "life" end of pure peaceful moonlight.

In the third part, the sea and the "clear still air" (39) are cold and the scene is cold, beautiful and without passion. Significantly, this is the first scene which occurs in the daytime, in the sunlight. This section of the poem, reflecting the children's delight in the winter landscape and their mother's deep fatigue after other scenes of fever, is cool with the coolness of the weary seeking peace. The coolness which Arnold so often associates with the general unimpassioned and inanimate life. In the one passage in the poem which explicitly pursues an idea, the poet as commentator says that it is not pain but passion which destroys the inner life upon which it feeds, the passion of the human world:

'Tis the gradual furnace of the world,
In whose hot air our spirits are upcurl'd
Until they crumble, or else grow like steel --
Which kills in us the bloom, the youth, the spring —
Which leaves the fierce necessity to feel,
But takes away the power — this can avail,
By drying up our joy in everything,
To make our former pleasures all seem stale.
This, or some tyrannous single thought, some fit
Of passion, which subdues our souls to it ... (119-128)
So "passion gulls men potently" (134), this "unnatural over-
heat" (136 -- my italics) by which they "are burnt up with
fume and care" (139). And this is, in the imagery of heat
and cold, the story of the poem: the lovers' passion consumes
them, and they die of their fever, as the cool greenwood
and the sea remain, nature lacking, perhaps, essential warmth,
but nature indestructible. The tale of Merlin and Vivian,
which ends the poem, might be expected to illustrate this
statement's cogency and to comment somehow upon the Tristram
story; and, like a variation on a theme, it does -- beauti-
ably, as no less strange ending could. Merlin is betrayed
and enchanted by his own passion, and cold Vivian of the
greenwood, free of the emotion, wanders where she will. She
is like a witch; "the spirit of the woods is in her face"
(180) and in her heart; and the spirit of the greenwood out-
lasts passion as it grows "passing weary of his love." The
mood is the story teller's mood, a weariness of emotion.
And, again, a life like Iseult's or Vivian's, without "bliss"
or "joy" (66,68), seems better than a "noisier" one (100)
and is closer to the peace and constancy of its natural sources.

The recurrent images of sea and forest are, finally, the most suggestive of these literal pictures. Forests are represented only in memory, while the sea is always present and the sense of its presence always powerful. Arnold's other uses of the forest, as in "Mycerinus," have suggested its association with a kind of withdrawal and inner revelry, an isolation from both the light of the sun and the world of society, escaping from the fever and noise of this world but also from the light of natural active life. Here the forest is a greenwood, but there is something dark in its memories, too: it suggests the vitality of the hunter, the death of the hunted; the brightness of green, the dreariness of black; the birth of Tristram, the death of his mother; and so it is an ambivalent picture in the dying man's imagination. Equally ambivalent is the sea, the cold Atlantic plain upon which, in the ship, the lovers drank their love potion, and beside which they now die. Tristram is "gazing seawards" (12,42: the phrase is repeated for emphasis) as the poem opens, but he dreams of a warmer sea:

his closed eye doth sweep
O'er some fair unwintry sea,
Not this fierce Atlantic deep (90-93).

"The calm sea shines" in his mind, and again the magic potion is drunk on board the "gilded barge" (112). But the
sea of the past, like the forest, can be dark and cold: the roar of that dark sea's waves (216, 217) is a ground music underlying the poem's every scene. Beside this cold dark Atlantic the "snowdrop," Iseult of Brittany (here is a triple-level image: Iseult is like a flower which is like snow) is chilled by its wind. Tristram, though, has spent peaceful hours by the "grey Atlantic sea," and if it is cold, it is still deeply attractive. These two ambivalent images, forest and sea, seem now to represent the depths of human solitude and of natural grandeur: Tristram has wandered "in the forest depths alone" (224), with "musing fits in the green wood" (247). When he returns to his halls from the wars, he finds in these solitudes an only hope for comfort: "to our lonely sea complain,/ To our forests tell thy pain" (274-275). The hope is for some calm, some cooling of the fever, the passion, which destroys him, and he goes first to seek it in the depths of the forest, "black in shade," away from the light of sun or moon. But soon he turns to the sea:

I think, I have a fever in my blood:

Come, let me leave the shadow of this wood,

Ride down and bathe my hot brow in the flood (280-283). Yet even in the water he sees the face of Iseult, of the woman to whom he is drawn as he is isolated from her:

Ah, poor soul, if this be so,

Only death can balm thy woe.

The solitudes of the greenwood
Had no medicine for thy mood (289-291).

Death and the greenwood come into more explicit contrast in the second section, when Tristram tells of his birth in the forest and then, immediately, turns from birth to death: his last words are these: "Now to sail the seas of Death I leave thee;/ One last kiss upon the living shore!" (97-98)

And with these words, the imagery of ocean and wood comes into focus. Withdrawal into the loneliness of the green and vegetative, and yet dark and sheltering, forest is appropriately given only in Tristram's memory because it is an imagination not only of peaceful solitude but, more profoundly, of the "green" darkness in the womb: of a kind of living death to all that pain and turmoil and passion which dominates the outer world of men. The forest, with its life and death, is a womb-grave image. The sea is always present as the natural medium in which man's life is conducted, the underlying inanimate nature which Arnold's monist imagination returns to continually; and for man the individual, for the fire or fever which is his feeling, his passion, it means ultimate peace, ultimate death. Greenwood and sea, then, are basic elements in the imagery of birth and death. Tristram dies, but the cycle continues, nature continues green and animating: on the arras the huntsman in his "fresh forest scene" seems now to be more alive than the cold, cold lovers in the room.

If the forest represents birth and the womb and the sea
represents death and the life of nature which absorbs man's passion in its passionless depths, a union of the two is suggested by a phrase in the final Merlin and Vivian passage, "the green sea of leaf and bough" (202). In this green sea, the forest which is like an Atlantic, death and life become one -- as in "Resignation." Merlin in the "dark underwood" (209) is an enchanted prisoner in just the way that Empedocles is, a prisoner to the life-in-death of men in his womb, his isolated and passionate nature, without the release from feeling which the literal Atlantic might bring, which the death of all passion in that cold sea nature would mean. Merlin sleeps in the land "edged by the lonely sea" (155), enchanted but undestroyed, in the greenwood from which passion grows -- within which fires still may burn -- and not in the sea of natural life which is human death. The furnace of the world is inside, and the flame remains within that grave-like womb, as it does, unresolved into the sea, into the elements, for Empedocles.

This rather lengthy analysis of Tristram has been undertaken to illustrate and substantiate as fully as possible the relationship between these imaginative details and the more or less explicit metaphors of other poems. The same imagination underlies all these images and makes Tristram as much a vision of the nature of human existence as "The New Sirens." The general meanings here are implicit in the imaginative scheme, though. As a result of Arnold's giving himself an
objective and dramatic subject matter within which to express his intensely personal feelings and ideas about the world in purely imaginative form. "Tristram and Iseult" is the poet's most moving, most beautiful, and most profound sustained piece of writing.

The Empedocles volume represents the mid-point of Arnold's poetic creativity. In the two long poems "Empedocles" and "Tristram," the poet's basic problem of unifying all the major elements in his imagination is dealt with both explicitly and indirectly in dramatic form. Both poems end on a note of personal uncertainty, but with the suggestion that man's life continues to be separate from the life of nature: the recurrent images of fire and sea seem incompatible. Throughout the volume this contrast is important: the distinctively human character of impulse, thought (self-consciousness) and passion is the character of the inner flame, or warmth, or fever ("feverish blood" in "Obermann" and "Tristram"), while inanimate nature as the ultimate reality for monism is still represented by the sea, which subsumes all elements. Warm land, or ship, and cold sea; inner heat and outer light; forest grove and ocean depths: these polar images, in various combinations, dominate the poet's imagination. Another major image, the mountain, suggests the theme of isolation from society as these suggest that of isolation from nature. The effect of all these sets of images is a feeling of unresolved conflict. But it is
significant that underlying all is the sense of a constancy and unity in the real world which Arnold expresses by his use of the term Life, still capitalized. His attempts to come to some synthesis of the two life forces, inner and outer, are illustrated by the poems which conceive of man's life as a river rather than fire, land, ship, or forest. And, even more important, in regard to the essential need for imaginative wholeness and adequacy to experience, Arnold tries to retain the typically human warmth of self-consciousness and desire, the desire to overcome isolation from other souls, in this imagery: the nature of the inner fire must somehow be a real part of the life which flows toward "the infinite sea."
1 Slightly different phrasing in the 1852 version leaves the basic imagery unaltered.

2 As Chapter Two suggests, this and some of the other poems using the ship image may be addressed to Clough. This poem in particular can be read as a reply to Clough's "Blank Misgivings."
CHAPTER V

POEMS 1853 - 1858

The poetry which Arnold published from 1853 to 1858 is not marked by any definite development, such as has appeared up to this point, in individual images: the problem of uniting sea and land is now apparently a less urgent one. Rather, the implications of certain imaginative elements are worked out in the literal form of dramatic verse. Arnold turns now to the narrative poem as quite distinct from the poem of ideas. Whereas "Empedocles" and "Mycerinus" and even "The Strayed Reveller" have been illustrations of conflict or poems plainly designed to expose personal, spiritual and intellectual problems, pieces like "Sohrab and Rustum" and "Balder Dead" show no explicit concern with such matters and are entirely dramatic embodiments of the imagination.

Because of the number of relatively long poems published in this period, it is rather difficult to arrive at any grouping according to basic images. It may be worthwhile, though, to begin by looking briefly at a few of the shorter, more personal, and more lyric pieces. "A Dream" suggests again the very familiar imagery of the river flowing into the sea. Addressed to Marguerite, this rather attractive poem enumerates a series of literal images -- the forest
trees, chalets, mountains in view of the river -- and then makes the dream of sailing on a river (and sailing by Marguerite) explicitly metaphorical: the "darting River of Life ... bore us by," and finally "us the Sea receiv'd."

This life-stream drawing the poet away from a loved one and on toward the ocean is reminiscent of that power which guides men over the sea, away from "the friends to whom we had no natural right," in "Human Life." The "River of Life," the "river of Time," is persistent in the poet's imagination, suggesting still that beyond the frustration of the present, at life's end, is some consummation in the mysterious, the infinite sea of being.

Another poem written "To Marguerite" is much less vivid but provides the line, "Self-sway'd our feelings ebb and swell," which seems to equate emotion, love, with the sea nature. But the tone of the poem is sad resignation, and the sea is now only an image of inconstancy. Several other short pieces of the period share this tone of melancholy. Two of them, the stanzas in memory of Edward Quillinen and the better-known "Requiescat," deal with death and find the thought of it comforting. It is not surprising to find a poet whose imagery has so often glorified the inanimate over the animate making his attraction to death quite explicit in "Requiescat," and saying of the departed, "In quiet she reposes:/ Ah! would that I did too." Human life is pictured as "mazes of heat and sound," recalling the
frequent contrasts between human heat and natural cold, man's turmoil and nature's silence; the image of the "vasty Hall of Death" grows from the same imagination which makes the vast "Sea of Life" to represent man's death (in "Tristram," notably). Finally, a less personal poem, one filled with classical imagery and allusion, is "Philomela," with its note of "Eternal Passion!/ Eternal Pain!" Life, literal self-conscious existence, whatever its spiritual values and goals, seems eternally unhappy to the poet in this mood, as it did to Empedocles.

Three longer poems, each with a strongly personal note, are "Haworth Churchyard," "The Scholar Gipsy" and the "Stanzas From the Grande Chartreuse." In "Haworth Churchyard" the stream of Rotha once more appears. But it does not succeed, as its earlier uses might promise, in introducing any very profound or attractive imagery. It is impossible to be sure how deeply concerned Arnold was, in fact, about his subject, the illness of Harriet Martineau and the death of Charlotte Bronte (his opinion of Miss Martineau had not always been a high one), but his use of conventional, even trite, images and phrases gives this poem a perfunctory tone. It is filled with commonplace personifications: Death sends a summons, gives a stroke, beckons guests from the banquet of life; Age deadens pain; the veiled muse appears to salute genius. None of these is an organic image, or one with any literal relation to
the others; none is concretely imagined. Not only the usual personifications but also such emblems as the laurel, the oak, the myrtle and the rose, are taken over from a thousand other poems, and they are not revivified or made unique here by being given new relationships: these are images prefabricated and ready for use. Still, the last three stanzas of the poem are not quite so flat as the rest, and the allusion to Byron as a "Son of Fire" echoes the more lively imagery of earlier topical pieces. Finally, the epilogue, though published in 1877, may be considered here, with its very interesting image of "the never idle workshop of nature," the "eternal movement" in which these "unquiet souls" shall find themselves again. Published ten years after "Rugby Chapel," these lines suggest the turning toward a mystic sense of personal identification with immortal nature (Tinker and Lowry call it "Hegelian") which is embodied in that poem, as here, in imagery very much like that of platonism.

"The Scholar Gipsy" has something of the same self-consciously traditional poetic diction and setting as "Haworth Churchyard," opening with a pleasant pastoral scene and the address to an entirely artificial and pseudo-classical shepherd. The story itself, of the gipsy wandering about the countryside in all seasons, provides opportunity for a number of literal images of meadows, trees and flowers, and the effect of these in association with the
attractive pictures of the idle scholar is altogether charming, if nothing more profound. But, while the story itself does not, as in "Tristram," allow for incremental imagery, for a series of settings which have a literal relationship and which suggest consistent meanings or associations, the images of forest, fire, and at last of the sea, are introduced metaphorically by the poet to give an interpretation to his own story.

The scholar gipsy, says the narrator, has not "felt the lapse of hours" (141) because it is change, the human and inconstant life of shocks and vacillation and disunity, which implies death. And now we realize that this poem is another celebration of the quiet and withdrawn existence as opposed to social life, of isolation from humanity. To live, again, is to be as nearly natural -- as nearly inanimate -- as possible. The gipsy had one aim; otherwise "hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire" (154). The inner fire, then, is to be cherished but not squandered: perhaps here is a new beginning toward justifying imaginatively the idea of warmth, of fever. While most men "fluctuate idly without term or scope" (167: in "Wellington" history is a "fretful foam/ Of vehement actions without scope or term"), this man has maintained the one soul-conserving aim: to wait for "the spark from Heaven" (171), to remain passive. The spark outside and the fire within: this seems like a restatement of the antithesis between inner and outer light, the fever flame
and the cold sun. But the outer spark is not a constant sun now: it is the means for lighting man's fire. And this counterpart of humane ideals in the objective world -- the hope of religion, probably -- appears to be flickering if not dead as the poet writes. He speaks of one (probably, as Tinker and Lowry suggest, Tennyson) who tells "how the dying spark of hope was fed" (188: in "In Memoriam"), and the tone of all this imagery is that of despair for dying faith. As he so often does, Arnold turns from these images of frustration and despair to the idea that life is after all a "long unhappy dream" (192).

How can one escape from the dream, from the frustration of desiring a humane universe of light and warmth which is man's home? One cannot return to the womb of being, cannot withdraw into the greenwood, as the gipsy does; but the idea, the memory, is powerfully attractive: "Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!" The poet can only advise his imagined gipsy to refuse the world of man, as he might wish himself to do, to stay with Mycerinus in the grove, to stay with the sirens, willful, irresponsible, in the shadows. But at last the poem turns from greenwood to sea, just as "Tristram" turns from the image of birth to the image of birth-in-death. The gipsy's escape from the deadly present of social confusion and religious uncertainty is like that of the Tyrian trader who, rather than compete, rather than face (social) conflict, goes out to sea until he comes to
some new shore.

... where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
And on the beach they undo and then des his corded bales.

This gentle world is far from the one of trade and intrigue:
it is across the sea. The endings to Arnold's land poems
(Tinker and Lowry compare them with the final chorus in
Greek Tragedy) almost invariably give this sense of calm
after conflict, of consummation which is beyond men's world,
of one-ness with the whole of nature; and they usually do
so in the image of the sea, as here. Once again the poet
turns from desire frustrated and from inconstancy, first to
the bower of the inmost personality and then, at last, to
the new image virtually equated with that one, the sea;
first (in the essentially metaphorical language of one psy-
chology), to the isolated before-life of the womb, then to
the after-life of death into a general, an inanimate but
calm and final Life. The desire for peace looks both toward
the forest and toward the ocean.

"The Grande Chartreuse" is one of Arnold's most moving
personal poems, partly because it gives a concrete setting
to the poet's reverie and a setting which is relevant: there
is no temptation to feel, as there might be in the case of
"The Scholar Gipsy," that the poet has set a stage and told a
story only to treat all this as the exemplum for a meditation
to which it has no necessary relation. But this poem is
successful, too, largely because it exploits the literal images provided and adds to them the terms which are most deeply rooted in the poet's imagination. Whatever is disjointed about the poem derives largely from a sense that these images are mixed and jumbled; somehow, though, the reader is likely to have a vague feeling of underlying unity when he reaches the end of the poem, and this is because even these various vivid images suggest one basic scheme of related meanings: the ocean, the altar, the greenwood, the mountains are not incompatible.

The alpine scene at the beginning may be reminiscent of Arnold's "Switzerland" poems. It is also reminiscent, this idea of ascent into the cold mountain air, of "Empedocles." Again, the mountain place is far from human society, it is an isolated outpost of men who have something superior in their makeup, something which means loneliness and suffering. On the few occasions when he deals with orthodox religion — notably here, in "Rugby Chapel," and in "The Church of Brou" -- Arnold is inclined to turn to the mountains: the result is imagery which is exalted, often cloudy, often cold. In the monastery the poet sees "ghostlike" forms, the white-cowled monks; he emphasizes details which suggest coldness and death, like the wooden bed which is to be a coffin, and he calls this life a "death in life" (54), this place a "living tomb" (72). In contrast with the tomb is the "white star of Truth" which Arnold's liberal preceptors -- Goethe,
Spinoza, Emerson, and other liberated minds -- have shown him. But the tomb, like the greenwood or the scholar gipsy's forest, is attractive. If this world of the orthodox is dead, his own is "powerless to be born": his own imagination cannot bring into being a faith in humanized nature, a faith which unites man with the whole scheme of things as the Carthusians' "Son of Man" does. And so he has no faith. This is, in more literal terms, the crux of the struggle which is basic to Arnold's imagination. The contrast suggested here between one form of death and another, the past and the present, is an inversion of the poet's usual life-imagery and of his frequent use of the term life: it reveals the poet's sense that he has failed to imagine life truly except in the terms of a paradox -- in the image of the river and the sea, of inanimate nature -- which excludes human life, conscious life, from the reality underlying it.

The problem is that of regaining any faith, of imagining any world, and it is a problem not of the rational mind alone but of the imagination which creates worlds. Arnold turns to the image of the sea as the natural medium in which men live, the life outside which is death to man, and he is unable now to find meaning in it for himself or his fellows:

Our fathers water'd with their tears
This sea of time whereon we sail;
Their voices were in all men's ears
Who pass'd within their puissant hail.
Still the same Ocean round us raves,
But we stand mute and watch the waves (121-126).
The past has failed to make sense of this temporal nature, to establish faith in it, that is, or in anything beyond it which now lives. Byron, Shelley, Obermann: all passion was in vain, and the end of all is in the grave. Now again we return to specific images of darkness and death, to the monastery as it stands in contrast to the life of human society, the life based on no faith or unifying principle such as either world of faith -- the orthodox one now dead or the humanistic one which cannot allow itself to be born -- would provide.

If constancy can be achieved only in death, the children of this mountain place choose that; the choice, like that of Mycerinus or of the scholar gipsy, seems almost a choice to remain in the womb of the past, in the womb of memory; and there can be no doubt of Arnold's sympathy with it. Is there another way to go? To the ocean, perhaps, to the elements, to the destruction of human desire and human pain. These are the alternatives unless somehow a new world can be born, and the sea and the fire, nature and man, be unified in a new work of imagination which is faith. And the alternatives, after all, are only two ways to death. The greenwood is very much like the sea, the isolating shadows behind like the impersonal waves beyond, the womb like the grave.

We are like children rear'd in shade
Beneath some old-world abbey wall
Forgotten in a forest-glade
And secret from the eyes of all;
Deep, deep the greenwood round them waves,
Their abbey, and its close of graves.

The world's troops pass by. The monks remain with their light burning in the darkness, their "inner" light: the "yellow tapers shine,/ Emblems of hope over the grave" (200-201). Here they are rooted, in a desert -- far, it would seem, from nature's sea as from society's life, cities, and war -- but in peace.

A short dramatic poem, "The Neokan," tells almost the same story as "The Forsaken Merman," but without either the striking subtly rhythmic and felicitous diction of the earlier poem. The imaginative detail of the Neokan's harp (like Tristram's, a "harp of gold") is new, and the form of this poem, like its narrative directness and objectivity, is typical of the ballad; otherwise, the working-out of an opposition between land and sea is virtually the same as that in the "Merman." But here the land, where religion exists and hallows the marriage of souls, is clearly the more attractive. It is for this land that the Neokan longs, but he is of the sea: he is isolated, shut off from communion with his beloved (as the poet is in his love poems to Marguerite) and with human society. The land-sea conflict, still, is the conflict between the orthodox and human on the one hand and the natural order (yearning to become human) on the other.
Now we have to turn from these fairly successful poems to what is certainly the weakest of Arnold's ambitious works, his one play in verse, "Merope." This poetic drama is an attempt to reproduce the effect of Greek tragedy in English. The result too often reads like a rather bad translation. In a long preface to the poem, setting forth a number of serious and pointed critical dicta concerning the genre of tragedy, Arnold attempts to justify his practice; but he attends least to the qualities in which he is most deficient. It is not its unlikely plot, its classical setting, its device of the chorus, its observing or failing to observe traditions and formulae for these matters, which make Merope tedious reading -- and, one imagines, impossible theatre. Attention to all such poetical machinery has led Arnold to try a reproduction not of the whole sense but of an austerity in the ancients which, in English, becomes pomposity at worst (with unnatural syntax) and something close to dullness at best. The language itself is at fault in this poem, and a sure indication of this is the almost total absence of images either typical of the poet or vivid in the poem.

Appropriate allusions to the gods, the furies, the bloody history of the Cresphontes and Polyphontes factions make up the imagery of most the speeches. But it is in the chorus that Arnold manages to create the most genuinely poetic moments of the play, and the images used by the chorus are less topical and artificial than those in the dialogue proper. In one of
the most effective passages, the chorus compares man's heart with the sea, the air, the earth, and starting from this elemental imagery, expatiates upon the mysterious depths of human nature which hardly knows itself (this is the "buried life" theme) and upon the impossibility of judging men, the necessity of judging deeds. When he writes such a passage as this, Arnold is less constrained to a slavish following of classical models; or, rather, he shares on this point the kind of feeling which a Greek might express, and so fully that he can state the case against "imperious self-asserting Violence" (695) in the manner of his model and still retain his genuine poetic voice. Aside from this, some few other passages of the chorus which abound with attractive landscapes both mythical and real, and Aepytus' vivid description of his own supposed death, there is virtually no compelling figurative language in the whole long poem; there are no images which combine startling freshness with the deep appeal derived from the most basic imaginative associations (only such images can stand alone in verse); there are none which combine freshness with the associations built up in the other parts of an imaginative structure within the poem. Like the diction of Merope, the imagery is largely derived and artificial. The play itself fails to exploit the full significance of its tragedy, the justice of Merope opposed to the justice of Polyphontes, because it tries to make the products of a Victorian Englishman's mind act like Greeks', and succeeds
only in making them act like rather foolish Victorian
Englishmen; and just so, the imagery tries too often to be
"classical" and so succeeds only in being flat: the artifi­
cial image does not grow from Arnold's imagination, and it
cannot relate profoundly to other equally artificial images
not rooted in that imagination.

The three rather long pieces in this volume which are
entirely narrative (and dramatic, if the term can be used
this loosely) are "The Church of Brou," "Sohrab and Rustum"
and "Balder Dead." "The Church of Brou" gives its narrative
in a very regular form and with the directness of a ballad.
Its imagery is entirely functional; that is, it is first of
all simply literal, although it becomes representative too.
The first section, "The Castle," simply tells the story, pro­
viding the elements for a more imaginative treatment in the
second and third parts: the duchess has a church in the
mountains completed as a setting for her husband's tomb, and
her own, and when the building is finished she dies. Part
Two, "The Church," describes the church "on high," "cloth'd
with pines sun-proof" (4), a deserted spot except on Sunday;
like the Chartreuse, it is in the mountains, in the dark,
lonely, a place of death, a tomb, but at the same time a
place of beauty and of peace.

The most interesting imagery in the poem occurs in the
final section, "The Tomb," with its combination of stone,
light and color. In "still mountain air" the princely couple
rests, "where horn, and hound, and vassals, never come" (2,3), and the antithesis between the life of the bloody hunt and this quiet is given explicitly in a passage which, even more than the "Chartreuse" and "Requiescat," makes death seem beautiful: death on the mountain, where peace is combined with the old images of heaven. Arnold's dream of the past, of orthodox faith, is nowhere more appealingly imaged forth: "the pavement of the courts of heaven" is the result of light cast upon literally cold and lifeless stone. The "cold white marble beds," "the marble forest" (27,39) are images of peace, of death, just as "marble sleep" was, in the "Lines Written by a Death-Bed." The poet can hope only for his pair of lovers, his "marble pair" to sleep forever or, if they wake, to wake in the magnificent delusion, saying

it is eternity.

This is the glimmering verge of Heaven, and these

The columns of the Heavenly Palaces!

and hearing, in the wind, angel's wings and, in the autumn showers, "the eternal rain of Love" (46). So the water which represents nature outside man, the cyclical and endless nature, is transformed into the human nature, the divine nature, in this dream. Such a passage makes one realize that Arnold, if he had been born to a happier time, might have given expression to one of the most profound religious imaginations in English poetry.

In "Sohrab and Rustum" Arnold attempts again to achieve
an effect comparable to that of the ancients, but his model now is epic rather than tragedy, and it proves to be a happier model. The many extended images in this narrative poem have a curiously un-modern and yet not an altogether infelicitous ring. These Homeric similes expand a comparison to several lines so that the emphasis is momentarily placed not upon the literal event or object but upon another one, and so they turn the reader, in these lines, away from the story itself. Apart from the decorative one, a major function of such images is to provide relief from and, at the same time, dramatic contrast to the tension which is gradually building up all the way through the first half of the poem. And so the imagery is likely to suggest scenes basically unlike those of the camp and of battle, recalling either outdoor nature or domestic life. In presenting a dramatic moment, Arnold turns to the cornfield and the mountain:

As, in the country, on a morn in June,
When the dew glistens on the pearled ears,
A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy —
So, when they heard what Peran-Wise said,
A thrill through all the Tartar Squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they loved.

But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
That vast sky-neighbouring mountain of milk snows;
Winding so high, that, as they mount, they pass
Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
Chok'd by the air, and scarce can they themselves
Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulberries --
In single file they move, and stop their breath,
For fear they should dislodge the oe'rhanging snows --
So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.

Obviously these images are chosen, too, because they relate to the experience of participants in the battle, and the poet is attempting, by using them, to give his own imagination the esoteric form which might be native to Persians and Tartars. Other such extended or Homeric similes in the poem compare files of soldiers with cranes; Rustum surveying Sohrab with a rich woman curiously eying a poor drudge; Rustum's figure with a lonely tower in the waste; Rustum's club with a tree trunk fished from a flooded river; Rustum's uneasy incredulity when Sohrab claims to be his son with the uneasy feeling of the eagle whose disappeared mate lies slain, far away.

And the space given to literal description of the second term in each simile, of the cranes, the woman peering through a curtain, the tree trunk in the river, the eagle circling his nest, makes each one a vivid excursion, quite aside from the main narrative, into another small poetic world. Only the image of the woman is distinctly unrelated to the area of experience and the physical area in which the battle takes place; but it, like the others, characterizes by indirection: just as Rustum is like the tower in a waste and like the
eagle, noble but limited in faculties of understanding, there is something in him of the proud and curious woman who inhabits another world from the one inhabited by those around him.

Perhaps the two most striking extended metaphors are those which compare the dying Sohrab with a flower, first with a hyacinth and then with a violet, in lines 632-638 and 843-848. The first is a celebrated image, and both are beautiful and strangely effective. It is interesting, too, that both are in rather extreme contrast with the literal scene at hand, taking the reader from the plain of death to the cultivated garden, where a flower is destroyed by carelessness: the gardener's carelessness or the children's carelessness. Both occur after the tension of the scene has been suddenly relaxed, while Sohrab is slowly dying, and they do not have to follow the imaginative-dramatic tendency which makes the earlier images of the poem reflect the minds of the actors within the poem, leaping to pictures of cranes and eagles, Caucasus mountains and Persian deserts: the feeling becomes now less subjective as it becomes less violent. As Kenneth Burke suggests in his remarks on Arnold's imagery, this contrast of the flower image with the idea of battle and bloody death is a way of turning death into a beautiful event: the image transforms the human agony into what is objectively seen as a glorious consummation. Again, in the almost elegiac note, Arnold expresses a deep and mysterious sense of death's
majesty and perhaps a longing for death.

This sense and this vague longing are even more beautifully embodied in the poem's water imagery. The whole scene, the challenge, the fierce battle and the death of Sohrab, has taken peace by the yellow Oxus, and the importance of this river in the imaginative structure cannot be overlooked: it is alluded to again and again, even in the midst of the fight. Near the end Sohrab speaks of "the yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die," and Rustum replies,

'Oh that its waves were flowing over me!
Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head!' (768-770)

But he must live; as Schrub predicts, with the vision of the dying, Rustum may not find the peace of death until he returns "home over the salt blue sea,/ From laying thy dear master in his grave" (833-834). "Soon be that day," the father says, "and deep that sea!" Again, the sea is death and peace. In an earlier passage Schrub says,

For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,
Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.
And whether it will heave us up to land,
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,
Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,
We know not (390-396).

Even in the detail of Schrub's drawing forth the spear there
is a suggestion of the stream of life and sea of death idea:

the blood

Came welling from the open gash, and life
Flow'd with the stream (840-842).

Finally, in the magnificent imagery of the last passage in the poem, the sense of moving through life toward death, toward fulfillment, is embodied in the picture of the Oxus and the sea: in the night, as Sohrab lies dead, the river flows on, away from this plain where the battles of human life are fought, where heat and strife and pain disturb its course, through sands and rushes, slowly but steadily, until at last

The long'd for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright.
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea (888-892).^4

This choric ending, in exalted calm after struggle, is the finest thing in the poem, and for it Arnold returns to his most profoundly fixed imagery, finding a deeper life in the death of the stream, the life of the sea: this is, again, the sea of life, of man's death which is nature's life.

"Balder Dead" is the other long poem based upon classical epic, and while its subject-matter is Germanic, its style and spirit are Greek.^5 Here again Arnold uses the Homeric simile, although sometimes the images are neither northern nor Mediterranean and offer, like the simile of the
rich woman in "Sohrab," a startling comparison of one point in the poem's world with something in another world far-removed: so Hoder's touch on Hermod's arm is like the touch of honeysuckle brushing across a tired traveller's face (surely English honeysuckle and an English traveller!), and the road to hell is blocked by a maiden just as a mountain pass (a Swiss mountain?) is blocked by cattle. Ordinarily the startling or metaphysical image draws from somewhat exotic and extraordinary objects a likeness to the commonplace which gives the commonplace new meaning and new interest. Poets like Donne, Marvell and Vaughan, for instance, deal with experiences which are real and immediate and make them spring to life by the use of such imagery. But here Arnold is reversing the practice, and his images of every-day (or at least familiar) experience are applied to exotic literal situations: a god in Valhalla is like an English traveller and the road to hell like a mountain pass! Not all the similes are like this, but the device is frequent enough to make the reader feel that Arnold is conscious of it as a way of humanizing his gods, of showing the relationship between a heroic story and human experience. Thok, the witch, jeers at the gods and compares them to cows leaving their hay. Here, by the way, the extended simile is spoken by a character; just so, Lok (who is also Thok, of course) belittles both Hemod and Balder in a curious, and grammatically dubious image which compares one with a farmer
and the other with the farmer's dog, pitiful and lost.

The sets of images which are most frequent in Arnold -- those of the sea, light (and dark), cold (and heat), the battle on the plain -- recur in "Balder Dead" and are given metaphorical values. There is throughout the poem a sense of the one-ness of time, a visionary knowledge of the future which makes every action seem inevitable, part of a great scheme, and this scheme itself is suggested in the imagery. The heaven of the gods, for instance, is a place of light, of sunshine, and the place of departed spirits is dark: Part Two, the "Journey to the Dead," is as full of images for night and darkness as the first part is full of sun. Odin would, on entering Hell, "set the fields of gloom ablaze with light" (243). And the myth of creation, as told here, is the story of light coming out of darkness (262-265). But finally Balder suggests a heaven beyond this in his climactic vision of a "return to light," and his imagery goes beyond that of light and dark, of fire and cold -- the bright, if harsh, sunlight of the valiant opposed to the pale, dark, cold places (Hell, Thok's iron wood) of evil -- to a new conception. The highest values in the old heaven are those of light and of warfare, and here again is the motif of life's battle, with all its din and confusion, associated with the sunlight of the natural world. Balder is weary of this kind of nature, this kind of existence, which makes life "one perpetual battle, a bath of blood": he rejects the heroic-
military ideal which creates the poem and its source, rejects his own world. And to see how his imagination is formed to make this rejection, one must return to a set of images which are apparently pictorial only, until these last passages telling of the creation and the future heaven: the familiar water images. The sea is always present here, as in "Sohrab and Rustum," in the background. Almost every scene in the poem takes place near the ocean or is specifically related in space to the ocean: Frea's house Fensalir is by the sea; the land of the dead is beyond it; and Balder is given a ship burial, so that going out to sea means death. The image is complex: suggesting "Dover Beach," the phrase "Ocean, whose water ring enfolds the world" (160) becomes more significant when Hela repeats it to personify her brother, the evil serpent of the sea "Who since in your despite hath wax'd amain;/ And now with gleaming ring enfolds the world" (210-211); and here the sea appears to be evil, opposed to sun and valor. But the sea's nature, if evil, is man's too: he is formed of spars from it (268-269), and the sense that his life is always close to the sea, appropriate in a poem based on the myths of northern sea-faring warriors, is carried out in, for instance, the extended simile which describes the gods foiled by Lok, the evil one; they cannot overcome the evil nature and bring back the divine and good Balder, and they are like sailors whom the sea allows to have a glimpse of land and then
carries out again into its depths (367-368). As in "Sohrab," the sea here is fate, the fate which means, ultimately, death, the one fact surely fated. But if all these images, even the ones of creation which make men sons of water as much as of light, agree in being negative, the ocean-image must at last be made over, and the nature of evil be changed into that of good. For Arnold is rejecting dualism in this poem more clearly than in any other, and asserting the ideal of the monist imagination: a new heaven and a new earth which are one, one nature somehow perfected at last, imaged in the single all-embracing "bright ocean." To the new Heaven when oe'r this present earth and Heavens

The tempest of the latter days hath swept,  
And they from sight have disappear'd and sunk,  
Shall a small remnant of the Gods repair;  
Hoder and I shall join them from the grave.  
There re-assembling we shall see emerge  
From the bright Ocean at our feet an earth  
More fresh, more verdant than the last, with fruits  
Self-springing, and a seed of man preserved,  
Who then shall live in peace as now in war.

This visionary transformation of values seems to be Christian as well as eschatological. But it is interesting that the conflict between good and evil, the conflict between light and darkness which is at last rejected, has been, in a sense, a false and not an objectively ethical one, since Odin the
creator (of light and sea) appears at last as defeated and not supreme (light does not triumph over sea and darkness); since he is as little like the humane Balder as the gods in "The Strayed Reveller" are (a passage strongly reminiscent of the earlier poem suggests this comparison: in lines 51-60 Odin surveys the world of men as these classic gods do); and since the ultimate world of unity and peace, after division and battle, rises out of the sea, the very natural element of the rebellious serpent (rather than from the image of light, implying hierarchal values and dualism). This suggests not the triumph of good over evil but the unity of the two appearances, not an overcoming principle but an underlying one. And perhaps most important, the places of death, cold and darkness which, according to all the basic beliefs of the culture that this poem's source embodies, seem somehow preferable to those of sun and battle: again, Arnold looks toward the negative images. Balder strongly suggests this view, and at the end of the poem Hermod would rather stay in peace with Balder than return to Heaven!

The Homeric devices in the poem -- set-phrases and descriptions as well as similes -- are interesting and often genuinely poetic, but the spirit which Arnold's imaginative scheme evokes, the overcoming of division and the ending with a prophetic image of unity, is neither Germanic nor Greek: it is that of the poet himself. It reveals the very imagination which creates "The Grande Chartreuse," "The Church
of Brou" and "Schrab," the imagination which is still seeking
to create an acceptable life and peace out of the images of
death and division.
NOTES

Chapter V


2 See Milo G. Derham, "Borrowings and Adaptations from the 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' in Matthew Arnold's 'Sohrab and Rustum'," in University of Colorado Studies, VII (December, 1909), 73-89; Frank L. Clark, "On Certain Imitations or Reminiscences of Homer in Matthew Arnold's Sohrab and Rustum," Classical Weekly, XVII (October 1, 1923), 3-7; Stephen J. Brown, "The Homeric Simile After Homer," Thought, IV (March, 1930), 597-598.


4 Maude Bodkin's treatment of this as an image of life and death and her association of it with the image of the womb are consistent with the interpretation given here, of this and other poems. See Archetypal Patterns in Poetry (London, Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 65-67.

5 This view is suggested by Herbert Paul in Matthew Arnold (London, 1920), pp. 48-49; and backed up by the research of Wilfred P. Mustard: "Homeric Echoes in Arnold's 'Balder Dead'," in Studies in Honor of Basil L. Gildersleeve (Baltimore, 1902), pp. 19-28.
Arnold's poems after 1858, including the "New Poems" of 1867, are curiously mixed in quality, and this may result in part from the fact that some of the best of them are almost certainly of earlier composition; still, it would be rash to assume a total loss of poetic powers in these years, for even in the less inspired pieces of this group Arnold can manage lines and passages which are up to very high standards. In his little "Caution to Poets" he warns that the artist must take pleasure in creating whatever he wishes to give pleasure; and while one is uncertain of Arnold's pleasure in writing the prosy "Picture at Newstead," for instance, it is apparent that something more than this principle is needed for the creation of true poetry. In many of these later pieces, particularly the short ones, the something else needed is the imaginative element. The pictures of an aging actress "With eyes no gazing can appease" (a striking line and good enough to stand alone!) are interesting, but "Rachel" has nothing of the intensity found in the "Emerson" and "Shakespeare" sonnets. Poems with morals, like "Worldly Place," "East London," "West London" are devoid of any but commonplace images, and the short religious-ethical poems,
"Anti-Desperation" (re-titled "The Better Part"), "The Divinity," "Monica's Prayer," "The Good Shepherd With the Kid" (although the last is based on a drawing, the "hasty image" with its lesson given us) are simply sermons in metrical form: good sermons, but not striking poetry. All these mentioned so far are sonnets; in his later periods Arnold can never do the justice to that form which he does in the two earliest volumes.

Only slightly more satisfactory are the poems which seem more personal, asserting again the weariness of life and interest in death: "Early Death and Fame," "Growing Old," and others. And in the same negative--even testy--vain but hardly more imaginatively satisfying is "Pis-Aller": here again can be sensed the sad turning away from all those questions which have vexed the poet in earlier verse. There is still a positive note: in "Palladium" the soul is like a statue which is lonely and steadfast; the poem can be creative, can create this image, because it is affirming some value. But a striking number of poems in these years either ignore the spiritual problem that has hitherto been central to Arnold's imagination--the conflict between fixed principles or values and a world in flux--or specifically renounce any way of coming to terms with it.

As important as they have become in his poetic processes, though, the major images cannot be forgotten, and Arnold makes use in "New Poems" and the later magazine verse
of the battle, the light and heat, the stream and sea motifs. In "Men of Genius," again as in "Sohrab and Rustum" and in "Balder Dead," man's life is a battle: "Warfare of man from his birth!" The Lord—of course this orthodox deity is always ambiguous in Arnold, is almost certainly conceived by him as a vague but useful metaphor—sends men into the fight, "to the plain" from which hardly one returns safely. The battle on the plain is also an image for human life in "The Last Word," and it is a battle of which the poet, like Balder, seems to be deeply weary; the same weariness is oppressive in "Bacchanalia," which conceives the new age as only a re-fighting of the same old fight: the peace of death "o'er the plain, where the dead age/ Did its now silent warfare wage" is pleasant, (19-20) and the "torrents" and "waves" (30) of a new warfare are only din and pointless confusion. If the "flush" of this confusion is heavenly, the poet says, "so the silence was!" (63) Arnold has come full circle, and the celebration of life's ecstatic rush and flow in "The Strayed Reveller" is almost paralleled by this rejection of vivid experience. A movement away from the ideal of full active life and toward that of peace, even of death, is clearly discernible in the poetry; and a part of that movement is the increasing tendency to conceive man's life not as a passive stream flowing toward the sea of consummation, of death, but as a battle on the plain, an
active and a wearisome business. Nevertheless, the plain
is related to the old sea-image: the battle-fields in
Arnold are likely to be near an ocean, as those in the
epic poems are, and as the one in "Calais Sands" is:
knights and tournaments pass away and the sea remains.

In "Immortality," again, the battle of life is the
basic image: only the man who does not flag in this fight
and who wins all his battles can press on to eternal life;
and this sounds more orthodox than the weariness expressed
elsewhere. A part of the trial of battle is "the heat of
this life's day" (7); and the phrase recalls Arnold's
light and heat imagery, with its implications of natural
truth and human passion. In "East and West" the central
imagery is that of light: taken from a Welsh legend, the
idea of light in the east and darkness in the west is
reversed to make the "bold west" the place of "conquering
sunshine bright" and the "mystic East . . . touch'd with
night." But boldness implies heat (and battle) as well as
light, and if man's peace is in the night or death and
nature's virtue in its creative light, still calm instead
of energy seems to attract Arnold in human affairs. It
is only the light of nature which he can admire unreservedly
and consistently. And so in "A Wish," one of the several
poems about age and death in this group, the poet celebrates
the world which outlasts man's birth and death—a familiar
theme—the world
Which never was the friend of one,
Nor promised love it could not give,
But lit for all its generous sun,
And lived itself, and made us live (37–40).

Another piece about death, "Heine's Grave," an uneven but seldom a very impressive elegy, ends with an invocation to the spirit which outlasts and underlies men's lives; and it too suggests a light pattern in its imagery: the grave is cool and life is warm and sunny. The spirit of bitterness is a film "o'er the sunshine" (39), yet the soul of genius scatters "lightnings," and a more pure and loving genius would be made "a ray" of the over-soul or Spirit in the world. The image of one mind and heart in all nature is complemented by this light pattern which emphasizes not the heat of personal human passion but the brightness of the sun's rays.

First published in a magazine in 1866, "Thyrsis" has come to be regarded as one of Arnold's finest poems. At least from the point of view of fresh and felicitous imagery, though, it appears to be somewhat overrated. Its descriptive imagery is an interesting and sometimes effective mixture of classical scenes and English countryside; the allusions to elegiac traditions in the school of Theocritus justify themselves as artifices when they seem naturally to grow from the Oxford background and pastoral scene as well as from the character of Arthur
Hugh: Clough: and so the reader can accept the names of Thyrsis and Corydon and the other details which might easily become absurd in an elegy for a Victorian poet, an elegy kept firmly on modern English ground. Still, the poem fails to do much with these details. Their most important function is to suggest a life of learning and a literary tradition, both of which affect the poet's memory of an Oxford fellow and poet; but beyond that, they are not related to the central images of the signal tree and the light which the piper, Clough, was seeking, and these images carry the weight of the poem's most personal and most genuine feelings. The elm recalls Arnold's "Scholar-Gipsy" who waited for the light to fall from heaven; and the "mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth, / Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and bare" (143-144) suggest again the association of images for lonely genius and for truth (light) like the gipsy. Clough was a seeker after light, and if his piping "a stormy note," his letting a conflict between religion and the anarchy of modern thought enter into poetry, destroyed the calm which Arnold desired in men, still Clough had "always visions of our light." The tree is a sign that there is still a light, a truth in nature (Which may or may not be religious):

Roam on! the light we sought is shining still.
Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet crown the hill,
Our scholar travels yet the loved hillside (238-240).
It is this light, beyond heat and battle and noise and confusion, which the poet must return to, have faith in: but what the light is, what the truth is, he cannot say.

Another elegy, even more personal, perhaps, and still hardly more clear in its imaginative affirmations, is "Rugby Chapel," Arnold's poem about his father. And here again darkness is associated with death, light with life:

That word, gloom, to my mind
Brings thee back in the light
Of thy radiant vigour again! (16-18)
The poet describes his father as a sheltering oak when alive and a spirit now; and then suddenly he switches to another image: most men "eddy about" in the sea of life, not asking what they are or have been,

what waves
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost ocean, have swell'd,
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

But this sea-of-life view is not appropriate here, apparently, for Thomas Arnold was not one of these men. As in the other more proper and orthodox poems, the imagery (switching again, dream-like) is basically that of the mountain, of ascent toward Heaven. The climbers seek life, for they are those "whom a thirst/Ardent, unquenchable, fires" (73-74). This suggests that it is water, the
life-image, which is sought, and that the sea motif is not so directly unrelated to the mountain as it may appear to be; but the goal is never made more specific, and even the phrase in the last line, "The City of God," is ambiguous in this place. The human life here, then, is not a battle: but a climb, through storm and avalanche and clouds, in spite of weariness and dejection and the falling-behind of many; but the mountain is always lonely, this kind of life is a rare one and Thomas Arnold "not like the men of the crowd" (155) but a soul "temper'd with fire." Such a leader is a beacon of hope (192), too, to those who would press on, up the mountain. If some of it is trite, at least this imagery is vivid; and yet, as just this brief listing of metaphors must show, the various images of sea, mountain, light, fire, darkness, cold (the soul is fire-tempered; but outside, on the mountain way, is snow) and so on are never brought together. There is a lack of sureness in this poem which, while much of it is strikingly and feelingly expressed, leaves the imaginative scheme curiously disjointed and curiously vague; and this vagueness probably indicates the poet's basic uncertainty in paying tribute to the Christian faith of a man whose terms for faith he can hardly share.

A group of poems about death which make no attempt to express such positive views or such orthodox faith reveals again Arnold's tendency to find life devoid of joy and to
take comfort in the thought of death: the fragment of a chorus for a Dejaneira and "Youth and Calm" (which is part of the "Lines Written by a Death Bed" in another version) make this particularly clear. The bitter "Growing Old" shows age as a process of weakening within: "the hot prison of the present." (24), and the image is reminiscent of one in "A Summer Night." Human life comes to be a trial rather than a joy in such images. And in "The Progress of Poetry," man's creative powers, too, dry up with age on "life's arid mount" where only youth finds water—life, the vitality of the spirit which is rare and precious. "The Austerity of Poetry," without any such basic imagery, is less negative, but its picture of the muse who is radiant outside and austere as sackcloth within makes the life of art, of "The Strayed Reveller" like a portent of death.

The river-motif appears in an interesting little poem published in St. Paul and Protestantism, where it serves to sum up Arnold's use of this image for the hidden life, "the central stream of what we feel indeed." And the only other place where the image is important in the later poems is the "Epilogue to Lessing's Laocoon." This critical essay in verse uses the stream of life as its imaginative center, to illustrate the relationships of the arts to life. The poet, like Arnold himself, cannot depict static objects or sounds but must tell life's movement: the task is the greatest one for an artist to undertake and the most
difficult; and in these lines one can read Arnold's sense of his own experience, his own attempt to catch the flux and inner nature of this stream.

The image of the sea is more frequent than that of the stream in these poems. The finest piece published in this period, "Dover Beach," makes beautiful use of it, and "Saint Brandan," "A Southern Night," "Calais Sands," the "Carnac" stanzas and "The Terrace at Berne" also exploit the familiar picture. "The Stanzas From Carnac," an elegy for the poet's brother, is full of striking descriptive imagery and is largely in the poet's best and most beautiful vein; "A Southern Night," on the death of the same brother, is more fanciful and less moving, but its final invocation of mountains and waters—"To that in you which is divine/They were allied" (139-140)—recalls the poet's identification of divine nature with human virtue. Even more significant, both intellectually and aesthetically, is the use of the sea in "The Terrace at Berne" and "Dover Beach." In "The Terrace at Berne" the imagery of isolated men in the sea of life—the world outside, the world of things—re-appears:

Like driftwood spars which meet and pass
Upon the boundless ocean-plain,
So on the sea of life; alas!
Man meets man, meets, and leaves again (45-48).

"Dover Beach." (published in the 1867 collection but
probably written earlier), is equally, if more movingly, negative. In it the images of the battle on the plain and the sea of life, now the sea of faith, are related and form the basis for an imaginative structure. Unlike "The Terrace at Berne" and the earlier poems about islands in the sea, it gives some hope for overcoming man's isolation from man (or woman) in the idea of love; unlike most of the other poems using the sea imagery, it rejects the world of natural things and takes an entirely human view. And in this sense it is Arnold's most intensely personal and human piece of writing.

Beginning with the literal images of sea and coast, the poet begins to play metaphorically with the idea of the water. First it suggests the "ebb and flow/ Of human misery" which Sophocles heard: this phrase and this concept are not new in Arnold's verse. But there is another metaphor more urgently suggested: the waters of the sea are like faith, retreating all over the world. Faith in what? The meaning of this word is a large one, including not only religious belief but any belief in an order of things which gives a goal and a human meaning to life, and this is shown by the intensely melancholy lines which find the world devoid of love, of light—the old image for natural law, for a true and reasonable order—and of peace. The only alternative, if this is so, if everything which Arnold has had to affirm as the very least of certainties
is false, is a turning to human love and an overcoming of
the isolation that results from man's alien and self-de-
lusive nature in a world of light. Resignation, which
underlies virtually all of Arnold's verse, is given up as
the passionate assertion of subject values, always in
tension with the other strain, bursts out in one beautiful
and perfect form. The sea outside is first of all the
nature of things outside man; but it is also, or its image
is, the unifying conception of a nature underlying life:
the literal sea remains, but as a compelling image the
waters no longer refresh because the Romantic terms for
faith— the terms of eternal flux, of the endless and goal-
less one— no longer can be held. The last image in the
poem reasserts a weariness with life's battle on the
"darkling plain" where all is noise and confusion, "Where
ignorant armies clash by night," and it is this mood of
weariness, finding no resolution for the battle in the
image of the sea in man's death to human pettiness, on
which the poem ends: the mood is one of almost complete
despair and disillusion.

Only human love is left. It is interesting that
"Dover Beach" can profitably be compared with virtually
any other of Arnold's best poems: with "The Forsaken
Merman," for example, where love looks from sea to land
and where the viewpoint is divided between the two places
(while here, for almost the first time, Arnold chooses the
land and rejects the sea). This is because "Dover Beach"
makes use of Arnold's basic images—the sea, light, the
battle on the plain, even noise and silence—and combines
them imaginatively. It is Arnold's most economical poem,
and, because of the successful fusion of all its images,
literal and metaphorical, it is both a significant document
in the development of Arnold's imagination and a great
work of art.

The theme of isolation is broached in terms of water
images again in "Obermann: Once More." Again Arnold looks
longingly at the past. The religious East has spoken:

"Poor World,"—she cried, "so deep accursed!"
That rumm'st from pole to pole
To seek a draught to slake thy thirst—
Go seek it in thy soul!" (117-120).

And from it came life:

... the wave

Of love which set so deep and strong

From Christ's then open grave (146-148).

But now Christianity is dead; man "must resign/ His all
too human creeds..." (186-187). And this is not enough.
As the tide of faith retired, men cried for a new and
revivifying flood. It came in the storm of human and free-
dom-exalting rebellion, typified by the French revolution.
But after this revolt the sea is still not clear and calm.
In it remain: "blocks of the past, like icebergs high,"
and on these men live "and know not they are sever'd"; the intellectual revolt which destroyed the idea of human integration in a divine scheme has left in life's sea men who are "poor fragments of a broken world"; these are the islands again, men isolated from nature and themselves. "The glow of central fire" which made all one, in the idea of a common divinely-created human nature, is gone. No unity has taken its place. "And who can be alone elate,
While the world lies forlorn?" (247-248). Men are lonely, suffering in their failure to integrate themselves in their new world. Arnold himself, after making giant efforts toward acceptable terms of faith, seems here, as in "Dover Beach," to accept failure. But he can still believe that the world will find itself: His vision is positive: the sun is risen.

He melts the icebergs of the past,
A green, new earth appears (284-286).

And he must still hold, with his conjured shade of Obermann, that man's duty is to find himself, to fulfill the desire for a world new-made and to seek a way of realizing life again, in "one mighty wave of thought and joy/ Lifting mankind again!" (323-324). In such a symbolic realization only can the haunting sense of isolation be overcome. Man's life, the stream, and the life of the world, the sea of life, must be at last one.

Arnold's latest poems, after the 1867 volume, are
mostly pleasant trivia: "Geist's Grave," "Poor Mathias" and "Kaiser Dead" are on the deaths of pets, the "S. S. Lusitania" about a personal incident, "New Rome" on a topical matter (the proposal to "modernise Rome!"); and "Rome-Sickness" is a moral piece. The last, concerning man's desire for change and nature's constancy, could almost be part of the poet's first volume, as it echoes the earlier imagery of fever and light: if man's "feverish blood" (a familiar phrase) makes him wander, he should "hold the light and reach the hand/ To all who sink, to all who stray!" It is almost as though Arnold has decided to put his spiritual questions into poetic form no longer, to make no more serious efforts at verse. Only the "Westminster Abbey" elegy for Dean Stanley, published in 1882, would break this resolve. Its imagery is that of light and flame; and every stanza is filled with the glowing heavenly light which Arnold still associates with the exalted spirit: this is appropriate for his last important poem. Although the sea image is suggested by "the flux of mortal things" (152) and "the rough waves of life" (165), it is with the flaming light that the piece begins and ends--Stanley is a "child of light" and so he has illuminated the Abbey which was originally glorified and consecrated with flame; like that of "the charm'd babe of the Eleusinian king," his light was divinely given, and it has served to overcome dark times and darkened minds. With
all this glory. The poem reflects still Arnold's attraction to "death... the boon supreme" (140); but the light which is flame and illumination at once, human and divine (or natural) at once, dominates; and it is significant that the more traditional (Christian) image, unifying human passion with universal nature, rather than the Romantic image of the sea, should dominate this last positive poetic effort.

The images of the last poems are often, when not artificial and commonplace, those of despair and of death. They indicate a turning away first from the battle and fever of human existence and then, at last, from the faith in an eternal sea in which human values are lost. So there is reflected the poet's increasing need for assurance of a human and humane good—of love, kindness, the humble Christian virtues—in the world which no longer has light or joy, for which the sea image of the Romantic faith in a divine universe, seems no longer compelling and the world of things outside man no longer supreme. The task of unifying the inner and outer life is now the problem of finding meaning for old images: the light imagery, which must make human passion and natural truth one, becomes important in Arnold's poetry, as in his prose. And finally, it is noteworthy that as the poetry, more personal, grows more and more concerned with attractive images of death, Arnold's interest turns more to the function of prose criticism subject-matter and its necessary emphasis upon the conduct of life.
And so the last poems give not a climax or solution to the tensions always implicit within Arnold's imagination but, in their inspired pictures of death, the ultimate result of a progressive glorifying of inanimate nature; and, in their turning from an intensely personal line, the means of transition to the social view of man's problems in a world which is sometimes and perhaps finally alien.
Lillian Hornstein points out that the imagery in the last half of the poem is based on the story of Moses leading the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land as given in the Book of Exodus. "'Rugby Chapel' and Exodus," Modern Language Review, XLVII (April, 1952), 208-209.
The function of poetic imagery can be broken down into two effects which images have upon the reader: the communication of an attitude embodied in imaginative terms and the evocation of a feeling appropriate to the subject. These are in fact two aspects of one function, for emotion implies attitude. In summing up Arnold's use of imagery as it is developed in the body of his verse, it will be convenient to consider the aesthetic problem, the problem of feeling, first and then to take up the larger consideration.

Those poems which are generally regarded as Arnold’s best invariably offer a contrast to the slight pieces, the metrical essays and moral lessons, in that they contain vivid and fresh imagery, either metaphorical or descriptive.¹ What is a vivid image? It is one which justifies itself by communicating something new, something which literal statement could not: the picture of a particular scene, such as the death-bed scene in "Tristram" or the moonlit one in "Dover Beach," does this descriptively; and a metaphor like that of men as islands in the sea does it by evoking senses of physical separation, of depths between men, which abstract language could not. But vivid and fresh imagery is demanded of the poet, and in a sense no image can be vivid which is not fresh: which does not fit the poem by being
formed as a part of it, consistent with its tone and with
its other images. It is possible to create vivid images,
very original and at the same time peculiarly appropriate
ones which have no specific (literal) relation to other
images in their contexts: Shakespeare can mix metaphors
within a sentence or a phrase. But the art is rare. Images
are justified either intensively or extensively, and most
poets must depend upon the latter device, upon the asso­
ciations and depth which an image gains by being part of a
whole image-structure. The literal scenes in a poem are in­
variably related one to another, according to the demand of
overall subject-unity, and the metaphors are usually so re­
lated, too, falling into groups rather than existing as
arbitrary and brilliant single images. If this is the case
with most poetry, it is particularly well-illustrated by
Arnold's poetry.

And so, in poem after poem, a scheme can be worked out
with a central set of terms: light and darkness, sound and
silence in "Mycerinus"; battle and confusion in life and
peace in death parallel with the confused course of the river
toward the ocean in "Sohrab and Rustum"; the land of human
society and the sea of things alien to men in the early
"Marguerite" poem, with variations in "The Forsaken Merman,"
and in "Dover Beach." But, as each of the illustrations
suggests, the terms carry over from one poem to others; and
because there is a single imagination adapting itself to
these various forms, the success of each poem may be seen
to depend largely upon the poet's use of images which are
native to him and to which he can give the full force of his
powers of literal description as well as the associations
established elsewhere. The best poems of Arnold are his
most imaginative ones, then, poems which are beautiful because
they evoke complex associations and responses, in the experi­
enced reader as in the poet, poems which manage to trans­
form traditional or personal images (which might easily be
trite) by suiting them to the literal conditions of a new
poetic plot. Furthermore, as this might imply, Arnold's most
effective imagery -- as in each of the poems mentioned here--
is likely to be metaphorical only by implication or by ex­
tension, fusing the descriptive level with those levels be­
yond it. In this way the danger of triteness is best avoided
and the imagination wholly adapted to particular poems:
so, for example, the sea appears as an object described,
with metaphorical value but not as simply a metaphor, in
"Balder Dead," "Sohrab and Rustum," "Dover Beach" and a dozen
other major pieces.

This leads us to the changes and development in the
poetic imagination behind these poems. These can be summed
up in reference to several key images which have been followed
through this essay.

Arnold represents in his water imagery -- and in the
scheme of such a dramatic poem as "The Forsaken Merman" --
the conflict between human values, represented by the land, and the life of the "natural" world, represented by the sea. Man is conceived of as an island, surrounded by the alien sea and so isolated from his fellows. The sea becomes an increasingly attractive image, and there can be traced in Arnold's verse, from 1832 to 1867, a tendency to emphasize it rather than the land. This tendency reflects a movement away from orthodox faith in the dualism of a divinely-created soul and a physical nature surrounding man. But, if the increasing significance given in his imagery to a single element suggests a monism in harmony with the naturalistic thought of his day, Arnold cannot abandon his belief in the objective nature of human values, in the ideals of the sympathetic and ethical life. And so he needs to introduce into his one Nature, the sea-nature, some human qualities which justify his identifying man with nature and retaining these ideals. He vacillates, though, between a hopeful faith in the spiritual essence of life, and a pessimistic conviction that the world "hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light." The vacillations between these two views make up the history of Arnold's later poetry. At his most hopeful, the poet is inspired by the vision of man's life as a river flowing into the great Sea of Life; at his least hopeful he returns to the picture of men as "driftwood spars" in the alien sea. Or, in a surprising switch, he is sad because the sea of faith is ebbing and he wishes for a revivifying
faith in life's values in the image of the flooding ocean. The water imagery, the sea, still represents life outside man for Arnold; but his conception of this physical inhuman world of objects seems at last inadequate (in "Obermann Once More"): orthodoxy, opposed to the water of life, is dead, and the idea of a physical monism as the one Life is no longer acceptable. In this mood, the poet no longer finds an acceptable objective idea for what life is, an idea upon which to base his values and his imagery. He feels the need, and his world's need, for a revivifying flood, for a new faith which will be, as the Christian faith once was, and as pantheistic monism does not yet succeed in becoming, a humanized sea of life: an image of some adequate source and ground of human existence.

The light imagery shows a parallel development. In "Mycerinus" the harsh light of nature is in contrast with the darkness into which man withdraws and the artificial light within. In "Religious Isolation" there are, again, two kinds of light: the inner, or moral, and the outer, or natural. Arnold's variations in attitude toward human nature are faithfully reflected in the modifications of this imagery as the inner light, the peculiarly human element, becomes fiery passion, moral illumination, or the self-destroying flame of consciousness, thought. Always in contrast with it, or existing alongside it, is the sunlight, which has several qualities -- vitality, wholesomeness,
harshness — any one of which may be emphasized as the quality of the natural world outside the person. In "The New Sirens" the Romantic dependence upon inner light and glorification of the personal fire is rejected, as the sirens' artificially lighted world pales in nature's sun. In "Morality," though, the inner light is identified with man's ethical nature and so becomes a positive image.

"Tristram and Iseult" makes use of the light imagery and contrasts the flame of passion, again, with natural illumination (moonlight). And in "The Scholar Gipsy" the goal sought is a light from heaven which is matched by a light within. The later poems are inclined to give this light image religious or ethical overtones (as in "Rugby Chapel") and to make man's light more appealing than earth's: "Dover Beach" even denies any light to the world outside. And so in this imagery, too, one can trace a tendency to find less comfort in the external world and to place more emphasis upon the human life of morality and passion.

The other major images — those of sound and silence, battle and death, heat and cold — are allied with these and, like these, indicate the shifts between conflict and synthesis which lead at last to such a crisis as that in "Obermann Once More." This crisis, toward which all of his poetry tends, gives a basis for understanding Arnold's shift from poetry to prose in later years. It is a shift from the very personal concern with nature and man to a concern with...
society and social relations; and it is fascinating to see
the poet who writes of human isolation come at last to be
the essayist who espouses the social functions of the church
and state, the need for unifying mankind in a human scheme
-- after a purely Romantic scheme, which specifically ex-
cludes society to emphasize the relationship between the
individual and nature, has failed. The crisis is one of
the imagination, and what Arnold discovers by the time of
"Obermann Once More" is that his imagination has not been
broad enough, with its limitations on both man on the one
side and nature on the other; that his rejection of society
has to be replaced by a criticism of society.

So an attempt is made to substitute the image of light
for the image of the sea, the idea of truth which can be at
one with virtue (Hellenism and Hebraism, the outer and the
inner light) for the idea of a single impersonal unity
threatening human values as it embraces all human nature:
and this is, imaginatively, the story of Arnold's turning
from poetry to the essay. It is not that he has failed as
a poet: he has succeeded in the most feeling and compre-
hensive criticism of the Romantic imagination which has ever
been made; and he has succeeded in creating out of the
tension and conflict of his times the synthetic object
that great poetry always is. Now, on the basis of what his
imagination has discovered through this body of poetry he
can go on to a less personal and more general criticism of life.
Chapter VII

1 Throughout this essay it has been taken for granted that most readers are aware of which poems are, in general, Arnold's most popular ones. Anthologies usually reflect popularity; but for a more exact set of conclusions on this matter, a doctoral dissertation by Fred Edgell (Ohio State University, 1951) on "The Poetical Reputation of Matthew Arnold in the Twentieth Century" should be consulted.
It is interesting to see the images which become familiar in Arnold's later work first appear in poetry written during his school and University days. A few examples from this poetry may be remarked here, and first of all the "Lines Written on the Seashore at Eaglehurst, July 12, 1836." Composed by a lad of thirteen, this mixture of allusion (to naiad, nymph and woodland fairy) with direct description is in some ways a presage of the imagery used by the mature poet: the ocean is an invading force here, and the picture of sea and shore, the billows and the cliff "opposed to Ocean's roar" suggest the land-sea contrast and opposition of later verse. Iris E. Sells points out the "Miltonic air" of these lines and their lack of the "thoughtful content" which typifies the poet's major work. But the relationship between the central images in this and later more serious poems is clear enough to show a strong natural bent of Arnold's imagination.

The prize poem "Alaric at Rome" is, perhaps necessarily, somewhat more artificial; but its dwelling upon the "solemn grave," the scenes of battle and the idea of life as a dream relates it to the later poems in which these very images are used. So do the metaphors like "fiery spirit" (187), "onset of the surging wave" of conquerers (110), and this
apostrophe to Rome:

A little while, alas! a little while,
And the same world has tongue, and ear, and eye,
The careless glance, the cold unmeaning smile,
The thoughtless word, the lack of sympathy!
Who would not turn him from the barren sea
And rest his weary eyes on the green land and thee!

(217-222)

If it can be assumed that "the world ... before us" in "Dover Beach" is the sea (as it appears to be), then this schoolboy poem not only provides the same imaginative ingredients and something of the same attitude toward nature and life as the famous masterpiece, but puts them together in almost the very way, lacking now the facility of phrase and the vital ability to conjure striking and concrete images which the later poem reveals.

The Oxford prize poem "Cromwell" is also full of sea imagery, and it calls the mountains and the sea, Arnold's two favorite settings, the cradles of freedom. The images of "inward light" (61), and "sea-like plain" (106) are typically Arnoldian, too, but perhaps the most interesting feature of this piece is its metaphorical use of stream and ocean images: "like a Kingly river -- swift and strong,/ The future roll'd its gathering tides along!" (133-134) -- and, in the poem's final passage,
... lo, the waters roll
Once more beneath him; and the fluttering sail,
Where the dark ships rode proudly, woo'd the gale;
And the wind murmur'd round him, and he stood
Once more alone beside the gleaming flood (235-240).

The ideas of time as a river and of the after-life as a sea are so basic to Arnold's imagination that this first occurrence only reinforces their importance: the imagery of "Cromwell" is centered in the notion of a river flowing toward the sea, and so it is clearly related to "Resignation," "The Future" and even "Sohrab and Rustum" in its conception.

Two short early poems, "Horatian Echo" and the "Sonnet to the Hungarian Nation" are less interesting, but the latter indicates the exuberant extremes to which the young poet, freed from academic forms, could go; and the former has a last stanza which, while lacking the later poem's complexity, is strikingly like a part of "The New Sirens": the face of a mistress will be no longer beautiful when the day of death comes, "when dawns that day, that day." The idea is ancient, but the phrasing is Arnold's own; and here again the continuity between the first and the last of his poetry is demonstrated.

Apparently the development of Arnold's poetic powers is a gradual one, making consistent use of certain imaginative elements which are altered but retained. Just as the
poetry leads naturally into the prose, the early verse introduces terms and problems which are to become increasingly complex and pressing for the poet's imagination throughout his career; the basic interests in seaside and mountain scenes, as in problems of man's and nature's life (and death), are there from the very early days.
NOTES

Appendix


2. Page 258.
BOOKS AND ARTICLES CONSULTED


C., T. C. "Matthew Arnold and Sophocles," Notes and

Clark, Frank L. "On Certain Reminiscences of Homer in Matthew Arnold's 'Sohrab and Rustum,'" *Classical Weekly,* XVII (October 1, 1923), 3-7.


Derham, Milo G. "Borrowings and Adaptations from The 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' in Matthew Arnold's 'Sohrab and Rustum'," *University of Colorado Studies,* VII (December, 1909), 73-89.


"Forsaken Merman, The," *Notes and Queries,* Fourth Series, III (January 30, 1869), 116.


I, Wendell Stacy Johnson, was born in Kansas City, Missouri, December 27, 1927 and attended the public schools of that city. In 1948 I received the degree Bachelor of Arts from the University of Kansas City and entered the graduate school of the Ohio State University as a Graduate Assistant in the Department of English. In four years of graduate work at this university I have done research and teaching in the various capacities of Assistant, Assistant Instructor and Instructor. I received the degree Master of Arts in 1949 and have been since then working toward the degree Doctor of Philosophy.