MATTHEW ARNOLD AND MODERN EDUCATIONAL THEORY

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Alice Virginia Parker

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. PERSONAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. MATTHEW ARNOLD'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. A Definition of Education</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Kind of Education Needed for the</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different Classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Content of Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Methods</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Administration</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Teacher Training</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. SUMMARY</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. APPENDIX</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Bibliography</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MATTHEW ARNOLD AND MODERN EDUCATIONAL THEORY

Part I

Personal and Historical Backgrounds

With true modesty Matthew Arnold requested that he should not be subjected to the biographer's pen. And it is with true devotion that his friends have followed his directions. Consequently, those concerned about this man must satisfy themselves with a few impersonal facts and hope to eke out something more intimate from his writings.

Matthew Arnold, born on Christmas Eve in 1822, was the eldest son and the second child of the famous educator, Thomas Arnold, and his wife, Mary. The home in which young Matthew was reared served well to prepare him for his career of culture and refinement. Thomas Arnold was a clergyman, living at Laleham, occupied with tutoring and writing. When he had taken deacon's orders in 1818, he was unsettled and restless in his religious beliefs. However, before the birth of his son, a great change had come over him and his views had become settled and calm. It was into an atmosphere of great determination to use life diligently and earnestly for the best and holiest purposes that Matthew was born. Here he grew up midst culture, refinement, and learning, and here he received his first education.
at the hands of a clerical uncle. At fifteen he was sent to Rugby and at nineteen to Balliol College, Oxford. Here he took the Newdigate prize with a poem on Cromwell and enjoyed a remarkably fine sale of his work. He was graduated in 1842. Three years later he received a fellowship at Oriel, an honor which his father had held some thirty years earlier. Like his father, he also taught at Rugby, but his career as a teacher there was short.

Following his teaching experience he became the secretary to the Marquis of Lansdowne in 1847. His employer was in charge of the administration of public education in England and it was through this connection that Arnold began that part of his career which is of most interest to the field of education. In 1851 he was appointed an Inspector of Her Majesty's Schools, the functions of which office he carried out for over a period of thirty years.

Although Arnold had never been a rapid nor easy writer, he had been publishing poetry since his college days. His fame as a poet gained for him the chair of poetry at Oxford, which position as lecturer he held for two terms, from 1857 to 1867. The period devoted mainly to the writing of poetry was ended about 1861. After this date he gave over his writing talents to critical essays. Among works of the early period, we find "The Strayed Reveller," 1849, "Merope," 1859, and the volume entitled "New Poems," 1860. His poem "Thrysis," 1869, although falling
later than that span designated as his poetic period, definitively established Arnold as one of the great elegiac poets of the age.

After 1861 his writings were mainly prose. They were mostly critical essays, aimed to rescue the institutions of his country from the depravity into which they had sunk. In 1865 his "Essays on Criticism" was published and at once gave him indisputable rank as a writer of English prose. The volume had an almost immediate influence upon students of literature in England. Soon afterward he began a series of prose works in a sort of middle region between literature, politics, and ethics. The best known of these are "Culture and Anarchy" and "Last Essays on Church and Religion." Not able to rest content with earlier dogma and inspiration, yet shrinking from unsympathetic rationalism, he wanders, as he puts it, "between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born." Later Arnold returned to more purely literary criticism, though diverging from it somewhat in his "Mixed Essays," in 1879 and "Irish Essays," in 1882. After Mr. Gladstone retired him from his post of inspectorship in 1883, he visited America twice and published in 1885 his "Discourses in America." His one humorous work, "Friendship's Garland," was published in 1871.

Arnold's third group of works has to do with the position he held as inspector in the public schools. Frequently he was commissioned to visit the schools of continental
Europe for the purpose of educational survey. His findings and his comments on the comparisons and contrasts are recorded in "A French Eton," "Higher Schools and Universities in Germany," and "Popular Education of France, with Notices of that of Holland and Switzerland."

Arnold died of a sudden heart ailment on April 15, 1888, and was buried in the town of his birth.

Matthew Arnold's whole literary and educational career is embraced within the long reign of Queen Victoria, a period marked with a spirit of change and of transition. Within the fifty years preceding Arnold's birth had come the recognition of American independence and the formation of her new democracy; in 1789 the common classes in France had evidenced their desire to overthrow tyranny and oppression; in England, although Pitt and Burke were hostile to the French cry for "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," there was a growing feeling for democracy, as evidenced by the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832, which placed the political power of England in the hands of the middle class. Science and invention were giving a new mode of communication to the world. In 1819 the first steamship crossed the Atlantic, in 1830 the first railway connected Liverpool and Manchester, and in 1838 the electric telegraph was introduced into England, to be followed within the next twenty years by the laying of the first Atlantic cable. Increased publication and distribution of newspapers and periodicals made possible a greater enlightenment
for the general public. The mental sciences were making great strides; Darwin's "Origin of Species" was published in 1859. A great controversy was taking place between the champions of science and those of religion. The rapidity with which machine labor was replacing hand labor tended to keep the economic basis of society unsettled with frequent and varied labor troubles. Dissatisfaction over existing physical conditions was evident within the laboring classes at a time when the middle class was advancing in wealth and power.

To the literary, educational, and political powers, numerous conditions cried out for attention. Many were the solutions offered for the state of affairs, and frequently those who offered the panacea were the literary folk of the period. Macaulay, approving of the turn of affairs, said, "A half-acre in Middlesex is better than a peerage in Utopia." Carlyle took an opposing stand, protesting against the trend of the times and uttering fierce warnings against the levelling process of democracy. Tennyson, the laureate, played the part of the diplomat, seeking to bridge the widening gap between religion and science. Browning, ranging from the outer circumstances to the inner significance of man's life, voiced a great faith in human and divine love. Ruskin dogmatically spent his early energies in an effort to give his fellow man a strong appreciation of the beautiful. His later
work protested against the vulgarity which he believed to be an outgrowth of modern democracy. Dickens exposed the abuses of the common class and waged an untiring war of reform in the behalf of the downtrodden. George Eliot, too, reflected an interest in the cause of the lowly, and her writing dealt with the intimate personal life of men and women as it was affected by the conditions surrounding them. Of the essayists of this period, Walter Pater was perhaps the least indignant.

Matthew Arnold, we can see, came in a period fraught with issues. On the one side were the prosperous champions of industrialism opposed by the remnants of a rapidly dying aristocracy. Between these two Arnold took the stand of a mediator. He felt the lure of and was a true child of classicism, but his contacts in the world of politics and society impressed clearly upon him the fact that a new order had arisen and must be recognized as such. He constantly defended the refining influences of literature against the narrowing views induced by too great an interest in the commercial and practical.

Before we can measure Matthew Arnold as an educational force, we must attempt to obtain a characteristic picture of the man and the activities in which he indulged. His heritage as an educational worker was two-fold. His father, Thomas Arnold, the most famous head-master of Rugby, was a true reflection of his own age. To him
education meant thorough training in the classics and particularly in literature and languages. Routine education embraced tutoring in religion and mathematics, history, literature, and the mastery of foreign languages. Running through the whole routine was a strong flavor of discipline. Next came the experience in the formal school system, involving a continuation of the above and the added association of numerous young men in instruction and in companionship. Matthew Arnold's first experience with the formal school was at Rugby.

Here at Rugby he made his first acquaintance with the brilliant Arthus Hugh Clough. It is from Arnold's letters to his life-long friend that we glean a knowledge of Arnold the student, writer, school inspector, and personal friend. That he did not take kindly to the drudgery of constant study and preparation for the difficult examinations in his later college days; that he dressed, conversed, and acted the part of a continental dandy; and that he was apt to shrink from a too arduous task is brought out in this correspondence. Arnold's great gift for poetry alone seems not to have been neglected for lighter amusement. Even in college he was able to capture the Newdigate prize, thus fulfilling the first of his inheritances from the educational system of his youth.

Our interest lies in Arnold, the critic. In being called the "father of democratic education," he presents
much for solution. He was the founder of no specific school of educational theory or practice as were Aschem and Rousseau. In works dealing with educational movements he is given little or no attention. His influences have not been dignified by deep analysis or serious controversy. It will be our concern here to find out just what he has contributed to democratic education in England.

Stuart P. Sherman, in his "Matthew Arnold," sums up Arnold the educator thus: "Arnold's writing on education, like his poetry, derives a good deal of interest from its close relation to the 'main movement of mind' in his time. He was what we call nowadays an 'educational expert', but one is inclined to say that he was that only incidentally and in a somewhat old-fashioned sense; for there is no smack in him of statistical methods, child psychology, or the deeper mysteries of pedagogy. He writes, to be sure, with extensive knowledge of schools and universities, but he writes like a man of broad general scholarship, like an accomplished man of letters, like an intelligent man of the world, like an alert student of society. In his attention to the means of education he never for an instant forgets the ends. If power had been conferred upon him, he might have been an educational statesman; for he steadily sees his subject and handles it in full consciousness of its political and social bearings. He has the statesman's sense of the central
inevitable drift of things, and the statesman's passion for steering the drift.¹

Arnold's conception of the social pattern of the times is evidence in his own classification of English society. The hereditary, titled class he calls "Barbarians," the growing middle class of industrialists he calls the "Philistines," and the lower laboring class he names the "Populace." That the Philistines were rapidly becoming the governing class of England, together with the fact that they were insufficiently trained to carry this burden, was the driving force back of Arnold's efforts in the educational world. It has been said of him that he was so true an aristocrat that he wished to make everybody aristocratic. His patriotism and his great love for culture are a ready explanation of his attitude towards the one force, education, which he felt could solve the social dilemma of his nation.

Thus, we find Arnold a product of the Victorian era --cultured, refined, educated, socially conscious, critically aware of the inefficiency of the order of the times, and possessed with an ambition to match the growing democracy of his nation with a truly democratic system of education.

The key-note of Arnold's reputation as the "Apostle of Culture" is likewise the key-note of Arnold the educator: "What a man seeks through his education is to get to know himself and the world; next, that for his knowledge it is above all things necessary that he acquaint himself with the best which has been thought and said in the world."²

Again Arnold says of education:

"Its prime direct aim is to enable man to know himself and the world. Such knowledge is the only sure basis for action, and this basis it is the true aim and office of instruction to supply. To know himself, a man must know the capabilities and performances of the human spirit; and the values of humanities, of Alterthumswissenschaft, the science of antiquity, is that if affords for this purpose an unsurpassed source of light and stimulus...

"But it is also a vital and formative knowledge to know the world, the laws which govern nature, and man as a part of nature. This the realists have perceived, and the truth of this perception, too, is inexpugnable. Every man is born with aptitudes which give him access to vital and formative knowledge by one of these roads; either by the road of studying man and his works, or by the road of studying nature and her work. The business of instruction is to seize and develop these aptitudes. The great and complete spirits which have all the aptitudes of both roads of knowledge are rare. But much more might be done of both roads by the same mind, if the instruction clearly grasped the idea of the entire system of aptitudes of which it has to provide."³


As Arnold thus positively brought out his idea of appropriately educating the individual in line with his aptitudes, so he shows in his sarcastic attack on the English educational system in "Friendship's Garland" the chaos that has come about by lack of specific professional training. This work is composed of a series of pseudo-controversial letters between Arnold and his imaginary scholar-friend, Arminius Baron von Thunder-ten-Gronckh, a character borrowed from Voltaire's "Candide." In these letters Arnold paints himself a true Philistine and lends to Arminius his own ideas of and scorn for existing conditions. We find in the two letters given over to compulsory education that Arminius is in arms against the contemporary idea that education should be a routine, with little thought given to how much the pupil should learn. Arnold argues with Arminius that "it is rather in training and bracing the mind for future acquisition, a course of mental gymnastics we call it, than in teaching any set things, that the classical curriculum is so valuable." 4

In the same letter Arminius upbraids Arnold for the fact that certain restrictions are placed by civil law against the occupational activities of the lower class, but that no corresponding restrictions are set up to insure the

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proper administration of his duties by a member of the middle or higher strata.

It was through the medium of these and many other passages that Arnold attempted to draw the attention of the general public to the state of the educational institutions of his nation.

Matthew Arnold has long been identified as the "apostle of culture" in his age. A study of his poetry, critical essays, lectures on poetry, personal note books, and personal correspondence gives evidence that he has fulfilled all the obligations imposed upon him by his reputation as such. His early education decreed that he should speak the tongue of the classicists. His love of the arts prompted him to sow the seeds of such devotion in the hearts of his contemporaries. Therefore, we find his poetry couched in the terms of the classics, his subject matter frequently borrowed from the past, his characters taken from the epic lore of the past, and his criticisms written with the general aim of reviving an interest in culture.

It is from these points of view that Arnold has been mainly studied. His poetry has created a following for him among those of his own and those of our present age whose reverence for the classics and culture are in agreement with his own. However, Arnold had another aim in view in his writings. In a much-quoted letter to his mother in 1869, he claimed this in behalf of his own poems,
"They represent on the whole, the main movement of mind in the last quarter of a century."

Here we have unfolded for his other purpose which cannot be ignored, although disputed it may be. If, as Arnold claimed, his poetry does reflect the "main movement of mind" of his times, then it must reflect a movement toward and within democracy. It is to be assumed that the same attitude towards life that prompted his poetic utterances must have been the driving force behind his prose writings.

James Truslow Adams says:

"Arnold's doctrine, in spite of its emphasis on 'sweetness and light,' in spite of its being the mid-Victorian equivalent of 'highbrow,' was not intended for the scholar in an ivory tower, but for the man of action in the turmoil of a transition era."

Upon these foundations we will consider Arnold, then, as a man of action in the educational world. In order to consider him as such, it seems fitting to look at the conditions in which he began his work.

The experiments and practices of Dr. Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster had by this time crystallized in the National Society for the Poor and the British and Foreign School Society. It was through these two societies that free education was administered in England. It was through these agencies after 1832 that all financial aid from the

the government was dispersed for the purposes of education for the common class. Through the efforts of Dr. Kay, an annual grant was made by the government through the Committee of Council on Education of twenty thousand pounds. Dr. Kay, as the first secretary of this council, insisted first of all upon efficient training for teachers. An additional grant of ten thousand pounds was made. In 1840 Dr. Kay was successful in establishing a system of school inspection. The Council provided that every school receiving a grant should be open to the inspection and examination of persons appointed for that purpose.

The crying need was for qualified teachers. Training, except in the schools as monitors according to the methods established by Bell and Lancaster, was unknown. The fight for the establishment of "training colleges" was constantly carried to Parliament but without success. In a private venture, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth (as Dr. Kay was now known) established a college at Battersea. This was the beginning of a program of teacher training that is still carried on in England.

By 1846 the annual grants by the treasury had reached the amount of one hundred pounds, and the number of pupils coming under the inspection of the Council was seven-hundred thousand. In this year "certification of qualified teachers" was recognized; training colleges, of which there were now nine, were added; scholarships were
established for students desiring to enter them; and the Pupil Teacher system of regular apprenticeship was adopted. This mode of training teachers has been but little altered. Extended and modified to suit the changing circumstances, it has been, but in its main features it is the same today. At the same time, too, it was provided by the minutes of the Council that grants should be made to all certified teachers in augmentation of their salaries. This scheme, outlined in the House of Lords by Lord Lansdowne, was adopted, but education by all means did not become general.

"According to Mr. Joseph Kaye, every child in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland for the last twenty or thirty years had been receiving a good education. Of the men and women under the age of thirty-five, nine-tenths were well educated. In England, on the other hand, one person in every four who applied for marriage was unable to write his or her name, and signed the register with a mark."

In 1847, as a result of a more tolerant spirit, the Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Association were admitted on an equality with the established church to the benefit of the educational grants.

It is at this stage of the growth of public education that Matthew Arnold entered the capacity of Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools on April 14, 1851. He resigned on April 19, 1866, after a service of thirty-five years. In the course of this time he paid three visits to the

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continent, at the request of successive Royal Commissions of Enquiry into the educational systems. A fairly accurate reflection of the evolution of the English schools can be gleaned in his "Reports on Elementary Schools." These reports were made to the Council annually as being a record of the conditions he found in the schools under his inspectorship. Frequently he advised new practices in these schools; again, he sought to have old methods re-instated. Before we investigate these reports of Matthew Arnold it seems wise to consider the following: The first eleven years of his inspectorship were under the original system introduced by the minutes of the Council of 1846-47; the second group of years in service fell under the Revised Code of 1863; and the last years were served under the entirely transformed system of the Act of 1870. The system of grants and salary augmentation of the first period has been set out above. It is expedient that we consider the significance of these later periods.

In 1856 there was appointed a Vice-President of the Council of Education who should be a member of Parliament and thus become the representative and exponent of educational policy in the House. This has been regarded as the foundation of the modern Educational Department. In 1857 the grant for education exceeded, for the first time, half a million pounds. Clough says that it is interesting to look over the parliamentary debates of these years. One member
declared his fear that, "'according to the present rate of progression the Government would soon be in the possession of the education of the entire people.'"7

This large grant of over a half million pounds was not in any sense adequate for the educational needs. In 1858 a commission, generally known as the Duke of Newcastle's, was appointed to investigate the educational state of affairs.

Out of the enquiry of this commission, whose report was made in 1861, grew the Revised Code of 1862. The report, in brief, showed that only a fraction of the children had been reached through the schools, and those who had been under the influence of the schools were imperfectly instructed. It was the suggestion of the commission that direct grants to teachers be abolished, and that payments to schools managers be substituted; that searching examinations be given each child; and that the giving of subsidies from county rates, in addition to the treasury grants, be instituted.

Resulting from the findings and suggestion of the commission, direct relations between the Department and the teachers were abolished, leaving them to make their own contracts with the managers or trustees of the schools. However, the greatest result of this investigation was the change which made the grants to the schools dependent upon the results of individual examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This

7 G. Benson Clough, op. cit., p. 56.
"payment by results" proposal met with great opposition from the champions of the welfare of the two great educational societies. Educationalists, afraid of the educational dead level which they feared would be the results, and teachers, regretting the loss of direct payment and the privileges connected therewith, all banded against it. However, the suggestions had taken the form of a law and necessitated adherence. The immediate effect of the change was to decrease the grants, which fell in the following five years, to approximately three hundred thousand pounds. A far more disastrous condition was the outcome of this Code of 1862. It tended to localize the administrative heads of the educational system in each school district, and thus produced as many separate systems as there were schools. Each board of administration was a law unto itself, thereby abolishing any national feeling and tendency that had existed prior to 1862. It can not be estimated just how greatly the growing spirit of democratic education was hampered by this move.

During the eight years following the Revised Code little was done along the lines of school legislation. However, popular attention had been keenly directed to the complete failure of the schools to reach the great mass of the children, and it had been borne into the minds of men that, though schools might be provided, and though governments might support them, yet without the support
of the parents, the work was a failure. This latter idea of compulsion was long familiar on the continent but was repugnant to English ideals. In 1870, therefore, Mr. W. E. Forster, as Vice-President of the Council under Mr. Gladstone, introduced his great Education Act. This Act, for the first time, laid down the broad principle that it was the duty of the State to see that every child received a suitable education. The primary duty of securing this lay on the parent, but should he fail, through neglect or unwillingness, the State must step in and legally compel him to do his duty. Such a provision was in the nature of a revolution. Like the Revised Code in 1862 the Education Act of 1870 was vigorously opposed as an interference with the freedom of the parent.

A second great innovation was the compulsory provision of schools out of public funds where existing schools were found to be insufficient. The third principle which characterizes this Act was the introduction of a compulsory conscience clause into every school in receipt of Government grants, and the exclusion of all distinctive dogmatic teaching from all schools assisted from the rates.

The Act of 1870 preserved the payment of school fees by the pupils. No one was entitled to free education unless on good cause shown.

We have been concerned here mainly with the evolution of the elementary or grammar school. Inasmuch as Arnold
worked in elementary schools, further discussion of the institutions of higher education is necessary only in so far as they touch on his career. In his later reports we will note that Arnold was interested in the child after he was allowed to leave school at the age of twelve years. An enquiry into secondary education in 1865 had brought to light that this phase of education, entirely supplied by grammar and private-venture schools, had likewise fallen into bad usage. Three-fourths of the schools were pronounced inefficient, some of them hopelessly so. Remedies for the betterment were attempted, but the greatest result of the survey seems to be that public attention was drawn to these private schools. Consequently, many of the elementary schools added instruction for older children, and in some of the cities night schools were organized for the employed children who had passed through the elementary schools.
Part II

Matthew Arnold's Educational Theories and Practices

It is, doubtlessly, a far cry from the school system familiar to Arnold to that in force today. Arnold worked in the midst of a budding democracy, both politically and socially. It must be kept in mind, then, that those practices which were considered to be the embodiment of this great movement can at present be looked upon only as feeble gropings in the dark. As definitions change with the flight of time, so do they vary with locality. For instance, an action that may have been considered a breach of good taste and etiquette some generations ago may have evolved into generally accepted conduct at present, or a mode of dress representing the height of fashion in Paris may be considered freakish in New Zealand. Thus, time and distance, together with ideals and habits, tend to give a variety of inflections to a definition.

Accordingly, we can hardly feel free to set up modern American democratic standards as a criterion by which to measure nineteenth century English education.

We can take the attitude, however, that there are individual aspects to democracy, as the Englishman knows it, which are typically English and which should be just
criterion for the measuring of institutions within that especial democracy.

In brief, we can say that in America we are prone to standardize and that in England the tendency to individualize is extant. We, in the United States, are accustomed to thinking that "All men are created free and equal." This embodies, briefly, our conception of democracy. We are filled with wonderment that England can consider herself democratic when so little attempt is made to remove the social barriers between the classes. It is, to us, paradoxical that a country which has given political democracy so great an impetus should lag so far behind most countries in social democracy.

As it is true that the music of the savage and the modern dance orchestra have rhythm in common, so it is true that two nations governed by the vote of its populace have democracy in common. However, it cannot be expected that the two groups of people can create twin products from vastly alien blood streams. (It is generally agreed by authorities of political science that England is democratic.) Let us, then, assume that the institutions of England are as democratic in reflecting English politics, industry, religion, and society as are our American institutions.

Even in standardized America we have met with difficulty in arriving at an aim for education. In 1918 the
Department of the Interior gave us the "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education." According to the bulletin setting them forth, "The purpose of democracy is to so organize socially that each member may develop his personality primarily through activities designed for the well-being of his fellow members and of society as a whole... Consequently, education in a democracy, both within and without the school, should develop in each individual the knowledge, interests, ideals, habits, and powers whereby he will find his place and use that place to shape both himself and society toward ever nobler ends." 1

No fault can be found with that general aim of democratic education. The difficulties lay in the application of a universal set of rules and practices, curricula and textbooks, schedules and programs, and the testing of the democratic element in any one system by a set standard.

It is the opinion of many writers in the field of educational sociology that "the aim of education is nothing short of the aim of society for itself." 2

As a criterion for all aims of education Mr. Tuttle says, furthermore, that "No aim of education is sound that fails to enrich life, to improve the quality of happiness, to give more enduring satisfaction." 3


3 Ibid., p. 24.
Let us, then, in attempting to measure Arnold as a democratic educator, do so with especial consideration for his time and place. This is suggested with the conviction that democracy is no more universally constant than is "a pint a pound the world around."

We have noted briefly Matthew Arnold as a poet, critic, and essayist. Let us look at him as an educationalist. It has been the generally accepted opinion that Arnold shirked his duties as an Inspector of Schools. He has gained the reputation in many quarters of fulfilling the duties imposed upon him with neither zest nor enthusiasm. G. W. E. Russell, in his collected letters of Arnold, says: "Qualified by nature and training for the highest honors and successes which the world can give, he spent his life in a long round of unremunerative drudgery, working even beyond the limits of his strength for those whom he loved, and never by word or sign betraying even a consciousness of that dull indifference to his gifts and services which stirred the fruitless indignation of his friends."4

Conflicting with Mr. Russell are references made by Arnold concerning the drudgery of his job. It is almost surprising that any benefit could come from a work that

was so irksome. Perhaps if we remember that Mr. Arnold had undergone strict discipline throughout his school days, we can understand this more easily. In view of these comments of his we can understand that Arnold was more the executive than the clerk, more the statesman than the politician.

Let us now turn to a few appraisals of Arnold, the educator. Michael E. Sadler says:

"Matthew Arnold exerted a strong influence on English educational ideas for three reasons: (1) He was one of the English writers of high distinction who have pressed upon the nation the fundamental importance of public education as a factor in the well-being of the state. Thousands of men and women holding high positions in government and in society had their thoughts turned by Matthew Arnold's writings to the subject of education, from which they would have otherwise shrunk from lack of interest in its ordinary presentation. Much of the administrative interest in public education which became noticeable in England in the last twenty years of the reign of Queen Victoria may in part be traced to the literary influence of Matthew Arnold.

"(2) He took delight in making his fellow countrymen feel ashamed by contrasting the meager educational activities of the English State and those of France, Germany, and other continental peoples. Having grown up at a time when the English nation was strongly self-confident and little inclined to admit the superiority of any foreign system of social organization, Arnold indulged himself in the opposite habit, and idealized foreign systems of education and government, partly with the intention of impressing his fellow citizens with the need for reform, partly from a natural tendency to see the weak side of English habits of mind and to over-estimate the merits of Continental methods of education.

"(3) He was one of the literary leaders of the reaction against individualism in English national life and against the influence (wrongly indentified by him with Puritanism) which
minimized the functions of the State in promoting collective well-being by means of public education and state-aided culture. Matthew Arnold's influence was increased by the fact that he was the son of the man who had been the chief reformer of the English public schools. Brilliant in literary criticism, a master of political irony, politely pitiless in his satire of social and intellectual prejudice, he helped in making England self-conscious, dissatisfied with itself, vaguely collectivist in its educational ideal, and ready to accept immense development of public expenditure and of state inspection in educational work. His influence was solvent, unsettling, provocative, with a certain historical significance of many points of view traditionally accepted in England. Of foreign schools and political institutions he was an impressionable observer rather than a sagacious critic. He rarely struck a true balance between the satisfactory and the mischievous results of any form of governmental control of education; he was a brilliant impressionist rather than a scientific investigator. He idealized the action of the State without measuring the practical effects of organized bureaucracy. In his political ideal, his father's almost hebraic theocracy had faded into a somewhat dilettante admiration for governmental action, for many of the practical results of which he would himself have felt profound distaste. For the more scientific study of educational methods he showed comparatively little aptitude. A responsible officer of the Education Department during the years in which the system of 'payment by results' deeply injured the work of the best English elementary schools, he did comparatively little, even in his public writings, and still less by personal influence and protest, to check administrative tendencies which were hurtful to the best interests of English elementary education. But no English writer of his time, with the exception of Herbert Spencer and possible Huxley, did so much in popularizing the discussion of educational problems. He approached them, however, from the point of view of political philosophy and government, rather than from the standpoint of psychology or physiology. He thought rather loosely about forms of public control in education, and, while weakening respect for individual enterprise, throws but little light upon the defects of organized democracy in the sphere of educational
government. He was strongly impressed by the achievements of Germany in the Public provision of secondary and higher education, but did not press to any point of thoroughness his inquiry into the fundamental differences between different forms of national organization. As an educational writer, his chief service to England lay in his reiterated and urgent advice in regard to the provision of a liberal secondary educational thinker were on a much lower plane than his work in poetry and in literary criticism."

Hugh Walker in his "English Satire and Satirists" says that Matthew Arnold was the first worthy satirist to follow Thackeray.

"It is however the social and political conceptions (of which education is an expression prevalent) in England that Arnold most insists upon. He refuses to accept the current view that they are good absolutely and in themselves. His view of liberty might still do good, if people would take the trouble to understand it. Arminius, in "Friendship's Garland", has been explaining himself, and his friend comments:-- 'The truth is, he cannot rise to an Englishman's conception of liberty, and understand how liberty, like virtue, is its own reward.' 'We go for self-government,' I am always saying to him. 'All right,' he says, 'if it is government by your better self.' 'Fiddle sticks about our better self!' answer I. 'Who is to be the judge? Not the self every man chooses.' 'And where is the self every man will choose,' cries he, 'when they are not told there is a better and a worse self, and shown what the better is like?' 'They will choose the worst, very likely,' says I, 'but that is just liberty.' 'And what is to bring good out of such liberty as that?' he asks. 'The glorious and sanative qualities of our matchess constitution,' I reply; and that is always a stopper for him'...Arnold's book is really a veiled appeal, profoundly serious, to the better spirit of England."


Arnold had great critical powers which he readily used. George K. Chesterton gives us a more accurate picture of his ability and the success with which he employed it.

"Matthew Arnold, like every other great man, especially in that great transition age in which he lived, brought one or two really great and personal contributions. The most obvious, of the most superficial of these, and in a way, the most entertaining lay in the fact that he invented, if ever man did, an entirely new and original mode of controversy. He discovered the vast and militant power of a quite inexhaustible mildness. The Radical and Anglo-maniac disputants against whom he was pitted were men of the trenchant school of Macaulay, accustomed to give hard blows and to be on the lookout for them. They were entirely bewildered when they found they were fronted by a mysteriously meek person, and that the more of ten and more resoundingly they smote him over the head the meeker and meeker he became... Matthew Arnold never turned on his opponents; he was a philosophic worm who never turned, but bored on to its goal... His splendid ideal of a great central school of wisdom and beauty, disdaining provincialisms, however large and noisy, resisting second-rate innovations, however fascinating and fashionable, was a great conception, and one to which he was loyal in a bold and logical degree... It was Arnold's misfortune, but hardly his fault, if he sometimes, in insisting on the necessity of a reason and measure in literary enjoyment, lost sight of the vast and uproarious and noble enjoyment which can be obtained from everything that is not literary. He was a great critic and a great man waging an eternal and unplaceable war against frivolity. The frivolity which is to be found in the fashionable, the equally maddening frivolity which is to be found in the moral and religious. Under all his badinage he was even in the age of Carlyle and Ruskin, perhaps the most serious man alive."7

It is surprising that such a diversity of opinions could exist concerning one man. He has been lauded for his foresight, condemned for his lack of vision, accused of lack of patriotism, and praised for his great social consciousness. The following upholds his foresight.

"If there is quiet about his name today it is because his thought and teaching have been so absorbed into the very current of our age that we are no more consciously aware of them than we are of our pulse and our blood. We all talk Arnold, think Arnold, preach and propagate Arnold. In the dead and almost fabled sixties of the nineteenth century he discovered Main Street with its 'imperturbable self-satisfaction', its devastating 'provinciality,' its dangerous hostility to the 'free play of the wind,' to any 'flexibility of the intelligence.' He discovered the eternal Philistine of an industrialized and standardized civilization, who boasts of the output of his factories and the speed of his trains and never stops to consider that these 'trains only carry him from an illiberal, dismal life at Islington to an illiberal, dismal life at Camberwell.' It was Arnold who diagnosed the central Philistine heresy of substituting means for ends. 'Freedom like industry, is a very good horse to ride--but to ride somewhere.'

Yet another article throws more light on Arnold's attitude towards democracy in education.

"Arnold looked, so far as he looked to any outer agency for securing a qualitative democracy, to an education that was to be held up to high standards by the state and was in turn to supply the state with thoroughly trained leaders.... Arnold wished at least a society in which the failure of any one to measure up to the best

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standards should be due to inner, not outer, hindrances."

Thus we have seen some of the attitudes taken towards Matthew Arnold and the worth of the work he has done. Let us now look at the English attitude towards education. Arnold himself said,

"Our middle classes are nearly the worst educated in the world.... Say to the Government, regard the necessity of a not distant future and organize your secondary instruction."

A. N. Whitehead, Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University, says,

"English education in its present phase suffers from a lack of definite aim, and from an external machinery which kills its vitality."

Carelton Washburne of Winnetka, Illinois, writing in 1932, said of the English education system,

"No where is England's planlessness more obvious than in her education. She assumes that her leaders will continue to be educated in the 'public schools,' which we Americans must keep reminding ourselves is a private boarding school for boys of the upper classes, and is quite devoid of public support or control. These public schools are manned for the most part, by graduates from Cambridge and Oxford, where there are no real training courses in education. Consequently, the pedagogical methods in the public schools are antiquated and crude. The curriculum is largely classical and unrelated to contemporary life. The


school is not expected to do the real educating of the students.

"As Professor Fred Clark writes in the Yearbook of the International Institute: 'It would be tragic in the highest degree if England, of all countries, should succumb to a naive faith in school as the main educating medium, should ignore unduly the profound educating and unifying influences which are imminent in her historical and social life, and should attempt to substitute for them the clang and click of a purely pedagogic machine...' In no great country is there such ignorance of educational thought and practice elsewhere. In no great country is there such lack of fully organized and adequately equipped centers for the study of education. In no great country does there persist such a prejudice against systematic training of the teacher."

If this is a true criticism of the present conditions in England, apparently the plea of Matthew has not been fully heard. Therefore a validation for the ideas of some that Arnold is modern may have been found. In that portion devoted to his views on teacher training we will see more clearly the detail of his ideas on this subject.

A review of the important school legislation in England in the nineteenth century brings to light the fact that the greatest attention was given to the financial side of education. Greater emphasis was placed on the cost of establishing and maintaining the educational institutions than upon the quality of the product being turned out from them. "Payment by results" is a good example of this short-coming.

The fact that greater stress was laid upon the "payment" than upon the "results" was a source of great concern for Matthew Arnold. Mr. Washburne quotes the Honorable H. A. L. Fisher, Warden of New College, Oxford University,

"I don't regard education as an instrument to be definitely used to secure particular political results."\textsuperscript{12}

Thus we see two modern ideas of democracy in English education. Sir Percy Nunn, Head of the London Day Training College of the University of London, gives us a third idea. He says,

"It is too big a presumption for a person to try to dictate what society should be. Of course I accept wholeheartedly the ideals of democracy, by which I mean the steeping of all social institutions with the one purpose of conducing to the perfections of the individual.

"All social institutions have an educational character. Being an Englishman I generally share the conservatively outlook of the country and believe there is a great deal of virtue in our old institutions; but I do not want to hold them unchanged. There is life and growth in our institutions and I look to our boys and girls to give them a shape that is desirable. Yet I do not in the least wish to prescribe what that shape should be."\textsuperscript{13}

We have reviewed the educational situation in which Arnold worked for over thirty years, together with the thoughts of leading modern English educators. The following is the attitude taken by the State.

\textsuperscript{12}Carelton Washburne, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 271.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 265.
"The only uniformity of practice that the Board of Education desire to see in the teaching of the public elementary schools is that each teacher shall think for himself, and work out for himself, such methods as may use his powers to the best advantage and be best suited to the particular needs and conditions of the school. Uniformity of details in practice (except in the mere routine of school management) is not desirable, even if it were attainable."

In the ensuing discussion we shall attempt to set forth Arnold's reactions to the important school legislation of his century as a means of identifying him with the great movement of democracy. His attitudes, as shown in his educational writings, will be set up for comparison with generally accepted criteria for democratic education. These criteria will be taken from a variety of fields.

An analysis of Arnold's writings makes it possible to divide his interpretations of education into six arbitrary groups. These interpretations of education are concerned with: (1) a definition of education; (2) the kind of education needed for different classes; (3) the content of education; (4) methods; (5) administration; (6) training of teachers. These six interpretations will be discussed in enough detail to bring out Arnold's educational theories and practices.

A. A Definition of Education

In 1865 Matthew Arnold was charged by the Schools Enquiry

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Commissioners with the task of investigating the system of education in France, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. After seven months of investigation on the continent, he published a volume entitled "Higher Schools and Universities in Germany." From this work we have a fairly accurate idea of his conception of what education should be. He says,

"The ideal of a general, liberal training, is to carry us to a knowledge of ourselves and the world. We are called to this knowledge by special aptitudes which are born with us; the grand thing in teaching is to have faith that some aptitudes of this kind every one has. This one's special aptitudes are for knowing men, the study of humanities; that one's special aptitudes are for knowing the world—the study of nature. The circle of knowledge comprehends both, and we should all have some notion at any rate, of the whole circle of knowledge." 15

Again in the same work he sets forth a definition of education.

"The aim and office of instruction, say many people, is to make a good citizen, or a good Christian, or a gentleman; or it is to fit him to get on in the world, or it is to enable him to do his duty to that state of life to which he is called. It is none of these, and the modern spirit more and more discerns it to be none of these. These are at best secondary and indirect aims of instruction; its prime direct aim is to enable a man to know himself and the world. Such knowledge is the only sure basis of action, and this basis it is the true aim and office of instruction to supply." 16

Yet another time, Arnold quotes the ideal of the educator Comenius, who said,


"The aim is to train generally all who are born men to all which is human."

A fourth criterion of education, according to Arnold, is,

"What a man seeks through his education is to get to know himself and the world; next, that for this knowledge it is before all things necessary that he acquaint himself with the best which has been thought and said in the world."

A fifth definition of education, according to Arnold, is,

"But the true aim of schools and instruction is to develop the powers of our mind and to give us access to vital knowledge."

In the above five conceptions of this educator, we see that his was the idea of self-knowledge. Arnold agreed with "The present is the past and the future is the present."

John Dewey says of education,

"A society is stably organized when each individual is doing that for which he has aptitude by nature in such a way as to be useful to others (or to contribute to the whole to which he belongs); and that is the business of education to discover these aptitudes and progressively to train them for social use."

Dewey has gone a step further than did Arnold; he adds to the duties of the school that of discovering the talents for usefulness the child possesses.

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To Arnold the danger of democracy lay in that there would not be sufficient preparation for it. He says,

"Nations are not truly great solely because the individuals composing them are numerous, free, and active; but they are great when these number, this freedom, and this activity are employed in the service of an ideal somewhat higher than that of an ordinary man, taken by himself. Not only the greatness of nations, but their very unity, depends on this."

Again he says,

"Now, all the liberty, and industry in the world will not insure two things: a high reason and a fine culture... A fine culture is the complement of a high reason, and it is in the conjunction of both with character, with energy, that the ideal for men and nations is placed... No error can be more fatal: culture without character is, no doubt, something frivolous, vain, and weak, but character without culture is, on the other hand, something raw, blind, and dangerous: the most interesting truly glorious peoples are those in which the alliance of the two has been effected most successfully, and its results spread most widely."

In this statement Arnold has voiced the cry of all great educators. This has ever been the Utopia whose shores have been aspired to by the leaders of all ages. Like all great leaders he felt the possibility of his own fellow men attaining something of the perfection of the ideal. It is to be noted that he thought the solution for some of the evils which caused his own nation to fall short of this ideal lay

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in the State intervention in public education.

"Undoubtedly we are drawing on towards great changes; and for all nations the one thing needful is to discern clearly their own condition, in order to know in what particular way they themselves may best meet them. Openness and flexibility of mind are at such times the first of virtues. Be ye perfect, said the Founder of Christianity; I count not myself to have apprehended, said its greatest Apostle. Perfection will never be reached; but to recognize a period of transition when it comes, and to adapt themselves honestly and rationally to its laws is the nearest approach to perfection of which men and nations are capable. No habits or attachments should prevent their trying to do this; nor indeed, in the long run, can they. Human thought, which made all institutions, inevitably saps them, resting only in that which is absolute and eternal." 22

In 1860 Herbert Spencer voiced an opinion as to the task of education with which Arnold was in accord. Spencer said,

"To prepare us for complete living is the function which education has to discharge... It behooves us to set before ourselves, and ever to keep clearly in view, complete living as the end to be achieved." 23

In one of his visits to America, Arnold quoted Plato's view of education:

"'An intelligent man,' says Plato, 'will prize those studies which result in his soul getting sobriety, righteousness, and wisdom, and will less value the others.' I cannot consider that a bad description of the aim of education, and of the motives which should govern us in the choice of studies, whether we are preparing ourselves for a hereditary seat in the English House of Lords or for the pork trade in Chicago." 24

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22 Matthew Arnold, op. cit., p. 1


Thus, we may say that Arnold's aim for the office of education was not one bound within the confines of his own day and locality. The building of fine character and great culture are as ageless as time itself, and the building of culture has been the ideal of all civilizations.

B. The Kind of Education Needed for the Different Classes

Arnold was aware that England, despite her rapid growth in political democracy, had little or no social democracy. If we are to believe present-day critics, this same condition still exists, although in a lesser degree. He was able to see the conditions in a clear light and attempted to remedy the existing evils. He saw that the upper class, being deprived of a great deal of its hereditary incomes and prestige, needed a practical education. The middle class, with its increasing power, needed more culture and discipline, and the lower class needed an introduction to and an accomplishment in the fundamentals of learning. For the upper class he placed a reliance in its heritage and prescribed enlightenment in the human side of life. His real interest lay in the middle and lower classes. Being aware of the growing power of these two levels of English society, he spent the greatest part of his energies in their behalf. He speaks, in "A French Eton," at length on this subject.

"If secondary instruction were organized on a great and regular scale, if it were a national
concern, it would not be by insuring to the offspring of the middle classes a more solid teaching at school, and a larger share of home comforts than they at present enjoy there (though certainly it would do this), that such a secondary instruction would confer upon them the greatest boon. Its greatest boon to the offspring of these classes would be its giving them great, honorable, public institutions conveying to the spirit, at the time of life when the spirit is most penetrable, the salutary influences of greatness, honour, the nationality-influences which expand the soul, liberalise the mind, dignify the character.

"Such institutions are the great public schools of England and the great Universities; with these influences, and some other to which I now pointed, they have formed the upper class of this country—a class with many faults, with many shortcomings, but imbued, on the whole, and mainly through these influences, with a high, magnanimous, governing spirit, which has long enabled them to rule, not ignobly this great country and which will still enable them to rule it until they are equalled or surpassed. These institutions had their origin in endowments; and the age of endowments is gone. Beautiful and venerable as are many of the aspects under which it presents itself, this form of public establishment of education with its limitations, its preferences, its ecclesiastical character, its inflexibility, its inevitable want of foresight, proved as time rolled on, to be subject to many abuses. On the continent of Europe a clean sweep has in general been made of this old form of establishment, and new institutions have arisen upon its ruins. In England we have kept our great school and college foundations, introducing into their system what correctives and palliatives were absolutely necessary. Long may we keep them!"

Arnold revered those institutions which he felt filled the needs of the people. His fight was in behalf of those newer struggling schools which he felt were so necessary for the development of the lower class. In his second report

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as school inspector, he begins to wage his battle for better training for the poor.

"I remain in the opinion which I last year expressed, that in the schools which I visit, the children of the actually lowest, poorest classes in this country, of what are called the masses, are not, to speak generally, educated; that the children who are educated in them belong to a different class from these; and that, consequently, of the education of the masses, I, in the course of my official duty, see, strictly speaking, little or nothing." 26

He saw that the poor were unable, by force of many circumstances, to deny themselves the earning power of their children and to pay the fees demanded of them for school attendance. This made him realize that

"education will never, any more than vaccination, become universal in this country, until it is made compulsory." 27

In 1879, W. E. Forster, the Vice-President of Committee of Council, and H. A. Bruce, the Home Secretary, found that,

"Notwithstanding the large sum of money we have voted, we find a vast number of children badly taught or utterly untaught, because there are too few schools and too many bad schools, and because there are large numbers of parents in this country who cannot or will not send their children to school." 28


27 Ibid., p. 27.

However, it was not till 1880 that compulsory education
was made a law by Mundella's Act.

It is interesting to note that although Arnold turned
envious eyes to the school systems of the continent, and
especially to that of France, it was not till 1882 that
France passed a similar compulsory attendance law.

Arnold saw that other than classical education was
necessary, and especially so for the lower and middle
classes.

"Still I admit that Plato's world was not
ours, that his scorn of trade and handicraft is
fantastic, that he had no conception of a great
industrial community such as that of the United
States and that such a community must and will
shape its education to suit its own needs. If
the usual education handed down to it from the
past does not suit it, it will certainly before
long drop this and try another."29

All through Arnold's Reports we find his criticism
that the poor are not receiving the education they most need.
In 1853 he notes that the training for girls in sewing is
inadequate.

"And Miss Martineau, in an admirable paper
in Household Words, has well shown what discom-
fort of all kinds is produced in the ignorance,
in the female part of the family, of needle work and
other matters of domestic economy, even in homes of
a comparatively comfortable class in towns."30

In another place Arnold tells of an experience he had
concerning this matter of sewing instruction. In a family

29 Matthew Arnold, Discourses in America, (New York:
The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 79.

30 Matthew Arnold, Reports on Elementary Schools, (London:
which was the charge of charity, none of the women were able to do practical sewing and hired their garments made, yet the girls were learning ornamental embroidery work as a part of their schooling. To his practical mind, this was an enormous adverse criticism of the school system.

Great has been the criticism of Arnold for his emphasis on "sweetness and light." It has been said that the need of the lower class was for practical training and education, and that they were not ready for a cultural education. His contemporaries, and many of the educators in that space of time from the Victorian era down to the present, thought he was wrong in dignifying such a low social strata with culture. Before we agree or take issue with these criticisms of Arnold, let us look at his conception of culture. The three chief elements in culture, as summed up by Matthew Arnold, are that it is (1) an inward condition of mind in opposition to dependence upon external and mechanical appliances; (2) a harmonious expansion of all our powers in contrast to onesidedness of ideas and over-absorption in some special pursuit; and (3) a social conception aiming at the improvement of society as a whole and requiring the subordination of individualistic traditions and aims. It seems almost absurd that anyone can take issue with the ideals back of such a conception.

Let us hold up a modern day writer's conception of culture. A. N. Whitehead says,
"Culture is activity of thought, and receptiveness to beauty and human feeling. Scraps of information have nothing to do with it. A merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth. What we should aim at producing is men who possess both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction. Their expert knowledge will give them the ground to start from, and their culture will lead them as deep as philosophy and as high as art."31

After viewing Arnold's conception of culture, we can understand why he was interested in spreading the whole of culture over the whole of society. It was Arnold who taught the Victorians that culture is a study of perfection, and that one strata of society cannot attain perfection unless the other social groups are carried along in the seeking of this goal.

Thus through developing culture within the people of his country, Arnold hoped to accomplish the following. For the upper class he hoped to develop a notion of republican fellowship; for the middle class, largeness of soul and personal dignity; for the lower class, feeling of gentleness and humanity. Arnold emphasized those things which teach us to live nobly and intelligently, rather than those which must all be used in our daily pursuit of a livelihood. To him foundation of character is more important than the acquisition of knowledge.

As Arnold advocated compulsory education, so he was in

accord with the movement for additional training for those boys and girls who had to leave school for employment. Not only was he anxious that this sort of night school should continue, but in his report of 1882 he speaks with pleasure of the wisdom of the sort of work that is being offered the employed child.

Let us look further at the views of other modern educators on this problem of appropriate education. John Dewey says,

"A society is stably organized when each individual is doing that for which he has aptitude by nature in such a way as to be useful to others (or to contribute to the whole to which he belongs): and that it is the business of education to discover these aptitudes and progress to train them for social use."

"In any case it is obvious that an important part of the work of education is to make the educand aware of the nature of his environment. Clearly it is not a matter of mere information... The knowledge that counts, the knowledge that is power, is not mere acquaintance with fact, but experience of facts in their relation with one another."

This is the theory of Sir John Adams.

In discussing Butler's sermon preached in 1745 on behalf of the charity schools of London, Arnold says it is part of the teacher to assure herself that all children receive a thorough training in the "knowledges," reading,

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writing, arithmetic, language, grammar, natural science, geography, and history.

"But governing the teacher's whole design of instruction in these knowledges should be the aim of calling forth by some means or other, in every pupil a sense of pleasurable activity and of creation; he should resist being made a mere ladder with 'information'... But there is, perhaps, no sentence in the sermon which more deserves to be pondered by us than this: 'Of education, says Butler, 'information itself is really the least part.'" 34

In summarizing Arnold's thought on this phase of the educational problem, let us say, then, that he believed education should lead to (1) knowledge of the self and of the world; (2) culture, rather than mere information; (3) useful place in society; and (4) sympathy between the classes.

C. Content of Education

The generally accepted course of study in the elementary schools at the time of Arnold's work among them was the three "R's." In addition there was drawing for the boys and needlework for the girls, continued more or less through the seven standards. Then there were certain subjects which were optional, as "class subjects," that is, the whole class might have them or omit them. These included English, geography, elementary science, and history, only

34 Matthew Arnold, op. cit.,
two of which could be taken by the whole class. As more money was granted for the upkeep of the schools, and as legislation strengthened the cause of popular education, the course of study widened in scope.

Arnold, as an educator, held that the Humanities had the greatest educating power. It was to these studies that Arnold looked for the formative force in the educational system. He said,

"The great fault of the instruction in our elementary schools (of the secular part of it, at any rate) is, that it at most gives to a child the mechanical possession of the instruments of knowledge, but does nothing to form him, to put him in a way of making the best possible use of them. As things are now, the time is not ripe for laying down a theory of how this is to be thoroughly done and following it; all that can be said is that what practically will be found to contribute most towards forming a pupil is familiarity with masterpieces; familiarity with them for the less advanced pupil, in a very limited number and with each object of his study standing singly; for the more advanced pupil, in a series arranged according to some well-planned order."  

To these he would add the teaching of Latin as the basis of the larger part of the English language, as a disciplinary force for the mind, and as a source for the teaching of grammar.

Matthew Arnold as a school man was naturally involved in the war between the classicists and the scientists. He leaned more distinctly towards the field of the classics, but he saw

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35 Matthew Arnold, _op. cit._, p. 164.
that the sciences were a necessary part of a man's education. He said,

"All knowledge is interesting to a wise man, and the knowledge of nature is interesting to all men.... The appeal, in the study of nature, is constantly to observation and experimentation; not only is it said that the thing is so, but we can be made to see that it is so.... But whether we go to these lengths or not, we must all admit that in natural science the habit gained of dealing with facts is most valuable discipline, and that every one should have some experience of it."36

"There can be no doubt that Wolf is perfectly right; that all learning is scientific which is systematically laid out and followed up its original sources, and that a genuine humanism is scientific."37

"There is, therefore, really no question between Professor Huxley and me as to whether knowing the great results of the modern scientific study of nature is not required as a part of our culture, as well as knowing the products of literature and art."38

With reference to the curricula of the schools, Arnold had many suggestions to make. He placed a high valuation upon the teaching of English, pointing out that the correct use of the mother tongue must be acquired by an effort. The explanation he gave as to why English was never mastered in

37 Ibid, pp. 87-88.
38 Ibid, pp. 94-95.
the schools was that its value was not appreciated. He recognized the importance of the analytic study of grammar, both because of its value as a simple study of logic and because of its usefulness in composition. The study of literature he advocated because of its cultural value. He stresses the memorizing of poetry, if the pupil understood what he memorized. Because he saw the futility of teaching a child to read without encouraging it to want to do so, he worked for the improvement of school readers; and he deprecated the use of such readers as vehicles for imparting geographical and other information. Literature was to him a formative subject. Letters, philosophy, and history, held the high place in his ideal of development. Since his interpretation of culture was to know the best that has been thought and said in the world, he held that literature rather than science was the chief agent in education.

"A single line of poetry working in the mind may produce more light, which is what man wants, than the fullest acquaintance with the process of digestion."

He wished to have the Bible included in the elementary school course, because of the contact it gave with poetry and philosophy, though he did not believe that it is within the province of the school to teach the Bible in a spiritual sense. Because of his strong belief in the cultural value of the Bible, he wrote a Biblical reader for use in the elementary schools; but, since people became suspicious of its purpose, it was never adopted as a part of the school course.
Although Arnold saw that certain subjects, such as sewing, arithmetic, and spelling, must be taught, he recognized them as merely utilitarian. He wanted the study of foreign language begun in the elementary school. Especially did he favor Latin. If a gifted teacher was in charge of the instruction, Arnold would have an elementary course in the facts and laws of nature included in the curriculum.

Arnold advocated the inclusion of physical training in the schools. He looked longingly at the German system of gymnastics. He had little use for the system in force in the English schools.

"Gymnastics are better than the lounging and shivering about, which in my times used often at our great schools to be the portion of those who had not yet come to full age for games."39

There can be no doubt that Arnold falls short of our modern conception of the full rounded out curriculum. He falls short only in the width of the program he would have planned. He failed to give enough importance to the study of the sciences, even though he grants they have their places in the school program. The emphasis he placed upon the study of grammar and literature is distinctly in accord with the best modern conceptions.

D. Methods

When Arnold quoted from Wolf that "all learning is scientific which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources," he identified himself with the scientific tendency in education. Monroe says,

"The scientific tendency possessed two general characteristics; as a contrast to the prevailing disciplinary view that the value of the subject lay in the process of acquiring it, the scientific conception placed all emphasis upon the importance of the content." 40

Proof for this statement lies in the attitude Arnold took in reference to the "payment by results" practice. A mechanical acquisition of a few facts in no measure spelled education to Arnold. It is true that he advocated the teaching of certain subjects for their disciplinary values, but this discipline was not an end in itself, but rather a stepping stone for the ability of acquiring of future learning.

To the teacher himself he gave many suggestions relative to the work in the classroom. He taught simplicity as the foundation of good teaching. Often he criticised work that was made intricate and complex or that was treated in a narrow way. He placed orderly thinking and the habit of stating things clearly above the storing up of crude information. Three outstanding principles in which he strongly believed were: (1) the logical arrangement of subject matter; (2) clearness in the presentation; (3) the

marshalling of facts in view of a definite end. In carrying out these principles, he criticised geography that consisted in a multiplication of details but provided for no arrangement of these details to illustrate some great geographical principle. He saw also much waste of time in grammar classes where minute points of little value, such as details of parsing, were called for, and where the application of facts and the rules bearing upon the construction of sentences was ignored. He further advocated and demonstrated in his attitude to those under him the value of a true sympathy between the teacher and the pupil, stating that his observation in German schools had shown him the freedom and naturalness which comes when such sympathy is manifested.

Probably the most modern of Arnold's ideals are those dealing with class-room procedure. Even fifty or more years ago Arnold advocated the problem method of teaching. In demonstrating the desirability of setting up some big geographic principle and having the pupil collect and organize his geographic facts and draw his conclusions in accordance with this principle, he was doing just what our modern educators are trying to accomplish,—to make widespread a method of teaching which has evolved from the psychological investigation of the thought process.

Arnold has in common with Sir Percy Nunn a desire for the child centered school. When Arnold said of the German
schools that the children in them were human, he was leveling a criticism at the English system of class-room conduct.

Arnold's idea of stimulating learning with interest is in accord with that of Sir John Adams, who says,

"Interest is active. It is not the mere pleasure of contemplation or enjoyment. It is an impulse to further effort.... In the ordinary work of school it is quite common and within limits, quite legitimate to use interest in one thing to rouse interest in another.... The value of an education is to be estimated by a consideration of the subjects to which the finished educand is sensitive. Your really educated man is one who has something within him that responds to all worthy things. It does not by any means imply that he must have an encyclopaedic knowledge. He may not know in great detail the content of the subjects of general interest, but he will know enough about all to be aroused to intelligent activity when brought into contact with any of them."41

Writing on the same subject, William James says,

"In all pedagogy the great thing is to strike while the iron is hot, and to seize the wave of pupil's interest in each successive subject before its ebb has come, so that knowledge may be got and a habit of skill acquired--a headway of interest, in short, secured, on which afterward the individual may float."42

Arnold's message to the teachers was to simplify wherever it was possible. Another guide he gave them was,

"Wolf's great rule in all these lessons was that rule which all masters in the art of teaching have followed--to take as little part as possible


in the lesson himself; merely to start it, guide it, and sum it up, and to let quite the main part in it be borne by the learners."  

This is indeed the very heart of the method of modern democratic educational theory.

This is in accord with the standards of modern education in England, according to Sir Percy Nunn. He says,

"Discussion in the school should be completely free. I can't think of any questions, except perhaps sexual, and I am not even sure about those, which children may not discuss. In such discussions the teacher's fundamental duty is to see that each side of the question is fairly stated. Where the teacher has strong convictions of his own, he may not be able to disguise them, not should he necessarily violently repress them. But his main function is education--drawing out the children. It is not his function to spread any kind of propaganda."  

E. Administration

All of the work Matthew Arnold did as a school inspector in England and as surveyor of education on the continent was done with the view of making reports to the national administrators of education. Therefore, the conditions he lamented and the changes he advocated are from the viewpoint of an administrator. What he disliked was the lack of organization in the entire system of schools. He desired a planned education system. During his entire career as an

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43 Matthew Arnold, op. cit., p. 73.

educator he strove to give the schools uniformity in purpose and results. The fact that some schools were progressive and that education was attaining high levels in some districts was little consolation to him when he viewed the opposite conditions in other sections of the nation. He aspired for a system of nationally controlled education. He would have a minister of education as the supreme head of the educational department. This he proposed, both because it would be an administrative convenience and because it would give a central authority on whom to place responsibility. This official was to be assisted by a council of education, to be chosen because of their fitness for the work. The council was to advise on the grading of schools and on the organization of examinations in schools and universities in order to adjust these institutions to each other. Next he would have a provincial school board for each district to represent the state, serving between the minister and the schools. Coming to the schools themselves, he proposed the university as the capstone, followed by the public schools of two grades and, the foundation of all, the elementary schools.

He pleaded for institutions in which the middle and professional classes could get, at a minimum rate, education of as good quality and with as good guarantees of social character and advantages for a future as French children of the same class were able to get. His favorite doctrine was
was that the salvation of people lies in the state-provided, middle-class schools. In fact, he believed strongly in the control of all education by the state. In this belief he was strengthened by his examination of the systems of education in the continental schools. Although they differed in many respects, they were alike in being under state authority. For this reason, Arnold thought, was their work superior to that of the English schools.

F. Teacher Training

On the kind of training a teacher should receive, Arnold made no concessions. To him the success of the school depended on the teacher. As an inspector he had an uplifting influence with those teachers with whom he came into contact. He carried with him everywhere an atmosphere of culture without being technical or pedantic. Thus he raised the tone and the aims of the teachers, and enabled them to feel a respect for their task, a respect for themselves in their work.

Upon the subject of training teachers, Arnold's ideas were sound. He feared that too much reading of books on pedagogy was dangerous in that the study of theory in itself was likely to bring about formalism. He found objection to the doctrines advocated by such books, but he recognized that everything depended on their application. Adequate preparation of a teacher for his work he felt to be one of
the most vital factors in success in teaching. He dis-approved of the English plan of requiring applicants to pass a single examination for all kinds of civil employ-ment. It seemed to him that a fixed standard of prepara-
tion in a first-rate school was far more satisfactory and productive of better results than merely having a candi-date pass an examination after preparing for it under some "crammer."

He wanted teachers to keep up the task of self-improve-
ment even after they had entered upon their professional work. A great need, as in other ranks of English profession-
al life, was present for culture. To fill this need he en-
couraged higher education, advocating that teachers study English composition under the best English authors and that they study French and Latin as well as English literature. He believed that every teacher should be allowed liberty in the performance of his task and the right to exercise initiative; and he claimed the same right for professional financial independence as was accorded other public servants.

Above all he beseeched teachers to keep open minds and active interests in their work. Feeling as he did the in-
fluence of the school on the nation, he realized that the hands that guided this phase of public welfare must be skill-
ed to a high degree. He said,

"Yes; but, they say, why demand so much from those who will have to impart so little? Why im-
pose on those who will have to teach the rudiments
only of knowledge to the children of the poor, an examination so wide in its range, so searching in its details?

"The answer to this involves the whole question as to the training of the teacher of elementary schools. It is sufficient to say that the plan which these objectors recommended, the plan of employing teachers whose attainments do not rise far above the level of the attainments of their scholars, has already been tried. It has been tried and it has failed. Its fruits were to be seen in the condition of elementary education throughout England, until a very recent period. It is now sufficiently clear, that the teacher to whom you give only a drudge's training, will do a drudge's work, and will do it in a drudge's spirit: That in order to ensure good instruction even with narrow limits in a school, you must provide it with a master whose own attainments reach beyond the limits within which those of his scholars may be bounded. To form a good teacher for the simplest elementary school, a period of regular training is requisite: This period must be filled with work: can the objectors themselves suggest a course of work for this period, which shall materially differ from that now pursued; or can they affirm that the attainments demanded by his training, by a man of twenty or twenty-one years of age, of fair intelligence, and of fair industry?"

His high regard for the dignity of the teaching profession and the place it filled in the security of the nation and its people is voiced very simply and pays high tribute to the work it must do. He said, of the teachers in Holland,

"They are never servile, and never offensive."  

These words sum up his attitude towards the teaching profession.

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profession and the heights he would have it attain.
Part III

Summary

"The thing is **not**, to let the schools and universities go on in a drowsy and impotent routine; the thing is, to raise the culture of the nation ever higher and higher by their means." Arnold dedicated his volume "Higher Schools and Universities in Germany" with this quotation from Wilhelm von Humbolt. It was the key-note of his whole career as an educationalist.

It has not been the aim of this discussion to attempt to establish Matthew Arnold as a criterion for modern democratic education. As has been pointed out, he worked in another age and locality. However, the wealth of controversy concerning his true value as an educator has challenged the writer to attempt a survey of his writings in an effort to find traces of his educational theories. Those deductions found earlier in this thesis are the result of this investigation.

When Matthew Arnold set up as the aim of education "The ideal of a general, liberal training, is to carry us to a knowledge of ourselves and the world," he made a great, decisive statement. That he may have failed, in the present day sense, in the fulfillment of this aim, there can be little doubt. However, it is hardly fair to mark him a complete failure, for his influence has been invaluable...
in the development and constructive growth of English popular education.

There can be no question that many of his ideals of educational procedure are antiquated. Likewise, there can be no doubt that he gave the field of educational practice much sound advice.

His idealism of a great free public school system (in the American sense) cannot be a controversial battle ground. His pleas for the elevation of the masses took on the ring of a great humanitarianism. His idea that the State should foster that institution so essentially a part of the State has grown to be accepted democratic policy. Technically, Arnold has relayed to modern education the bud of numerous flowering ideals and practices.

It would be gratifying if it were possible to say that Arnold is ten or twenty or fifty per cent democratic in his educational theories. However, after a study of his writings and works, one is confronted with the impossibility of such evaluation.

It is with interest that periodical discussions of Arnold were investigated. The writer has found that, in a perusal of discussions of Arnold, the evaluation of him as a practical educator has been growing since the beginning of the century. We may hope, then, that the work of this great man will be discussed with more insight as time passes with a resulting greater understanding.
IV. APPENDIX
A. Bibliography


Arnold, Matthew, Popular Education in France with Notices


