

# Matthew Arnold and His Critics: A Study of Arnold's Controversies

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## **PREFACE ix**

He doesn't look at controversies to which MA didn't reply, such as his American Emerson lecture. He revised a bit but didn't really reply to critics.

## **CHAPTER ONE – THE WRITER AND HIS MISSION – 3**

3 - People were slow to take MA seriously.

5 - "There was in all he said a kind of understood thought seldom expressed, as if to say, "It will soon be all over, don't let us get angry; we are all very good fellows."

6 - "Genius and humor are best reached by sometimes being audacious and giving oneself free play."

7 - Three questions:

Why leave poetry?

Why profess a disinterested pursuit and also engage personalities?

Why the division in strategy between charm and controversy?

8 - It is not at all certain that MA abandoned poetry. It also abandoned him. The worldly pursuits of family and public policy called him more than the life of a poet.

9 - This is the pamphletting passion he got from father.

10 - We read too much of ourselves into the motif of MA's gift imprisoned.

11 - His niece Ward said he had "no malice - not a touch, not a trace of cruelty - so that men allowed him to jest about their most sacred idols and superstitions and bore him no grudge."

He did attack Frank Newman and Bishop Colenso personally. But not others, except but incidentally.

12 - This with his friends, especially Clough, Harriet Martineau, and W. R. Greg attacking him harshly and repeatedly in public.

13 - He used to read criticism a week after publication to take it less personally, as it was out of people's minds.

15 - MA repeatedly said he'd stray from and sought to avoid controversy but was always in it. When he found out how much Colenso was hurt he never republished the work that gave offense.

15 - He took out the offending Dr. Arnold passage on rioting in later editions. He took out passages of My Countrymen for offense also.

16 - We must remember that he wrote on trains doing a day job. So, we cannot ask him to always be perfect.

16 - He modified the ending of his Oxford lecture when he published it as "culture and its enemies."

17 - We also must note criticism of his content and manner are often different. He is caught between saying what he thinks and not wanting to give offense.

He risked his education department position by too much frankness.

Still, why enter controversy so hard if you seek to avoid it?

IV

18 – TA's obit for MA, Father was a moral reformer and teacher. MA an observer and interpreter. Moral power versus intellectual power. Rather than reform, he wished to put people straight about books.

MA slowly changed from detached to engaged.

19 – He was glad to have influence. He wished, post 1869, to assist in "intellectual deliverance," to exalt the "serious cheerfulness" of Sophocles and the nobility of Homer as examples of lucidity and grandeur for an age of confusion, vulgarity, and triviality of mind in order to equip the middle class to take the reins from the aristocracy.

20 – He wished to move the idea-moved masses.

This mission emerged in 1859 with the Italian question.

21 – MA's seriousness about losing England, depression over it, led to an "almost painful anxiety about public matters." And this led him to over emphasize dichotomies: The Greek world was rational, the modern capricious, Homer noble, Newman, not. Etc.

22 – MA's intellect unfolds in response to critics.

## **CHAPTER TWO – THE POET AND HIS READERS - 23**

24 - Bailey's Festus (1839) started the vogue and introspection of the "Spasmodic" movement in poetry. MA's poetry was a relief in such an atmosphere.

Alexander Smith's "A Life-Drama" (1853), written under the influence of "Festus," is another.

26 – This poetry sings of the potential of the poet as a God.

27 – MA's prefaces aimed at the spasmodics as championed by Clough. He defended herein his own poetry, choice of classical subjects, and his refusal to be a spokesperson for his age (rather than a critic of it).

29 – MA recognized that Faust had been very subjective, but called it defective on this account and said Goethe would agree.

MA denounced Keats and Tennyson and d-----d Elizabethan poets generally for only wanting exuberance of expression, the richness of images.

30 – The overly ornamental should go for a plainness of style.

Tennyson's poems had no beginning middle, or end. He was deficient in intellectual power.

31 – But many saw Tennyson in MA's work.

32 – Clough was depressed when he publicly attacked Arnold. He loved Smith's modern subject matter and affirmative tone.

33 – He contrasted this with MA's enervating skepticism.

35 – Clough's rebuke didn't sting as MA saw it as the view of the time, as much as that of a friend attacking.

36 – Shelly and Wordsworth thought the poet should be a guide and comforter to their times.

37 – Equally prevalent in the criticism of Arnold's poetry was the complaint that he was unsympathetic towards his age.

38 – He expressed personal discontent rather than the desire to solve its problems.

39 – Friends complained of the melancholy.

40 – The entire preface of the 1853 volume answers the denouncing of his using classical subjects and poetry as a medium through which to address the age.

In the 1853 preface he says he withdrew Empedocles because it was post Athens and so too modern in its doubt and despair.

The Greek material helped one be disinterested, and not just make poetry as a channel for thinking aloud instead of making anything.

43 - The Greeks provide an excellent subject and teach a noble voice.

44 – The date of the action is not relevant; what is important is the greatness of the action and its representation.

The poet should not talk of their mission or interpreting their time, nor of the coming poet. Don't praise your age, but aim at the greatest pleasure possible. The attempt by poets to solve the problems of the age produces ephemeral poetry.

45 – He withdrew from this world as unpoetical, not unprofound or unmoving but unpoetical. And an American cultural wave of trash was on its way.

Thus the critic must try the culture ripe for great poetry.

## VI

The 1853 preface invited criticism and controversy. And critics fired: Should we really look for our lessons in ancient Greek books, rather than our own experience?

47 – Mimesis is weak. Originality is better, one said.

48 – One said to abandon art theories and go with the self.

49 – More offensive, Coleridge rebuked him for not spreading Christianity with his pagan motifs.

50 – 51, the 1854 preface to the second edition defended classing Macbeth with Sophocles.

52 – Sanity is the great virtue of ancient literature; the want of it is the great defect of modern literature. "I call the classic healthy," Goethe had said, "the romantic sickly."

Coleridge accused MA of plagiarism.

## VIII

53 - After Coleridge's accusation of plagiarism, MA remained silent for more than 3 years. In 1857 he delivered his inaugural lecture as the professor of poetry at Oxford, "On the Modern Element in Literature." It modifies earlier views.

55 – Dad Arnold's 1855 letter on children's education was found. And MA wrote, "what makes him great – that he was not only a good man saving his own soul by righteousness, but that he carried so many others with him in his hand, and saved them, if they would let him, along with himself."

He credits his father with the idea that Greek and Roman history is modern. And, his keynote speech speaks of disinterested objectivity, criticism, and Hellenism, which are the same thing.

56 – In 1853 modernity had been associated with sterility – with the dialogue of the mind with itself. In 1857 modernity is also characterized by intellectual vitality requiring intellectual deliverance. This is why Greece is important. It too was a vital

modern time. So we can learn from it. Aristophanes and Sophocles wrote at the peak of Greece. We should not follow Menander, because he wrote after the loss to Sparta and Athens' decline.

57 – In Rome, Lucretius is depressed and so not adequate to his time. Neither is Virgil!. The Aeneid is not as good as Sophocles, since he had comprehended life as cheerful.

58 – In 1854 poetry must animate and ennoble. In 1857 it must also be adequate to the present time: it must be in sympathy with the activity of one's age.

The withdraw of Empedocles is due to literary and aesthetic reasons, not social and ethical. Earlier he spoke as a guide to young writers about simplicity of style and structure.

59 – In 1857 the time is fine, but our poetry is not adequate to it, hence Merope.

60 – MA both wants detachment and a passionate commitment to make reason and the will of God prevail.

Oberman and Oberman Once more note the shift. Oberman is driven to solitude. Now he goes to the world without. Commitment will now start to take precedence over detachment, Hebraism over Hellenism, high seriousness over simplicity.

He will continue to insist that romanticism is weak, arbitrary and eccentric and intellectually deficient. But, the critic who wrote the preface, the detached one, is gone.

61 – That poet is gone too.

### **CHAPTER THREE – HOMER AND HIS TRANSLATORS – 62**

62 – This chapter starts in 1860, 3 years after the inaugural address when MA gave the first lecture that would become, "On Translating Homer."

The four needed characteristics were 1) rapidity, 2) plainness and directness of style and diction, 3) plainness of ideas, and 4) nobility.

63 – The first lecture discussed the hexameter and the final was cheered, unusually. But while some applauded, many attacked. MA liked this.

64 – At first criticism annoys him, but when he reflects on the opportunity for free activity of the spirit, his humor is restored.

Francis William Newman was the younger brother of John Henry. He asked Dr. Arnold to help him with his biblical doubts.

67 – In 1856, Frank published a translation of the Iliad. Logical and unimaginative, Frank put over his wife's grave an epitaph saying she had, "no superiority of intellect."

68 – MA was upset about how much he hurt Newman and did not republish the book on Translating Homer.

68 – As the English public would demand, Newman sought to accentuate all of Homer's oddities, and peculiarities. And to Newman, the Iliad seemed as foreign as scripture.

69 – To give it an ancient flavor, Newman used odd words. Newman also got rid of rhyme.

70 – In elder Newman's fidelity to absolute truth, and the younger Newman's philological rigidity, we have the same errors.

73 – The attack on Newman is because he represents the great defect of English intellect.

74 – 75, there are defensive moments in Newman's rebuttal. But, it is largely substantive. He says, for example, Sophocles would have found Homer archaic. The real issue, Newman asserts, is that Homer spoke to a barbaric, not an erudite audience. The ancient language moments makes Homer's silliness less offensive.

76 – Homer's quaint language shows an illogical and barbarian mind. Homer uses run-on details, ie., is garrulous. And Homer is Low.

78 – And, lastly, Newman says the hexameter is ridiculous.

80 – MA gave his 4<sup>th</sup> lecture in response to Newman.

Arnold plays the victim of attack and says he has always tried to avoid controversy in his lecture. It also contains a mock humility. But he does not back down in substantive matters.

81 – Newman's erudition is blamed. He applies philological rules, where the poetic rules are the ones to pay attention to.

82 – Homer's topics may rise and dip in nobility, but not Homer.

84 – Blackie defends Newman's use of ballad as dignified.

91- Arnold dives deep between Blackie and Spedding, but then says the hexameter is not the main idea of his essays on translating Homer.

92 – 98 The less than friendly banter with Wright, who Arnold said had no reason for existing (or his translation), is still mentioned in his "Function of criticism at the present time." But now it is a different concern. That of the ugliness of the Wragg description.

99 - He has gone from literary to social and political criticism.

#### **CHAPTER FOUR – BISHOP COLENZO AND THE PENTATEUCH - 100**

101 - During his mission to the continent in 1859, MA read Mill's On Liberty.

MA particularly paid attention to the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter wherein Mill took on an imaginary opponent who said the masses don't need to understand their opinions.

Catholics let the clergy read all, but not the masses. The Protestants have no such mechanism. Frederick Temple, headmaster of Rugby, also fought for free speech in "Essays and Reviews."

102 – In 1862 John William Colenso, bishop of Natal published, "The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua critically examined."

103 – In 1853 he was appointed minister to the Zulus. By 1861 they were converting him to doubt. When asked if Noah's ark were true, he could not lie. In his book he questioned eternal punishment. He was excommunicated.

105 - Of the many replies, only Arnolds is remembered. MA wrote the "bishop and the philosopher" which invoked Spinoza.

106 – Literary criticism is now the "appointed guardian" of "the general culture of single nations" and "of the world at large." He thus judges Colenso's book's impact on the general culture. Books must edify the few or instruct the many. A third possibility – enlightenment of the many by removing their prejudices – is disallowed.

Ideas filter down. Colenso's work cannot, therefore, be justified on the ground that it informs the little-instructed many unless it edifies them.

107 – Nor does it inform the few. Colenso uses math to destroy the Bible. What follows from all of this? What is to be of the established church then? Colenso doesn't say.

108- By contrast Spinoza gives wonderful proofs. Spinoza wrote in Latin for the instructed few and cautioned folks not to read it.

Spinoza gave a basis for a new church. But, he didn't do so as a rep of any established church.

109- Colenso signed up for the Church and should know its limits. His work has no justification for existing (like Wright's Homer).

## II

110- The harsh article aimed not at Colenso, but liberals who were exploiting him.

The book is negative and uniformed biblical criticism.

112 – MA takes the hard view that we must distinguish between books for the many and books for the few. The masses must be softened and humanized before they can digest new ideas.

Cardinal Newman also said heresy must come at the right time. The right time, according to MA is after moral ideas have had a leavening effect on the multitude. Were the masses needing leavening when Colenso published and not when Literature and Dogma was published?

113 – And can this new vision happen until some destructive work (ala Colenso) happens?

The Church and the Guardian considered Colenso dishonest by keeping the Bishop position when he had the ideas he did.

114 – Mill, of course, defended Colenso.

117 – The public outrage caused MA to alter his position.

117 – 121 Lists all the attacks on MA's position. Only Macmillan's supported him. And, MA waited until all negative press had been aired and he saw everyone's hands prior to replying. His reply came in a review of Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church, by AP Stanley. Whereas the first article was ironic, this reply has a somber tone.

He redefines the few as, not dangerous free thinkers, but a group who seek the ideal life through the intellect. And the many who seek ideals through religion.

122 – The few are a few individuals who live in austere isolation and address and imaginary audience of their mates.

123 – Colenso failed to take the work from the sphere of speculation and place it in religion harmoniously. MA is working towards a distinction between truth of religion and that of science. The literary critic speaks of truth in a humanist sense, not a scientific sense.

In the review "the powers of literary criticism are now less extensive than they were at the outset; but in theory they are still awesome and in practice ill defined and in their imperfect application, they suggest not so much the absolute authority of an anonymous force as the fallibility of an individual critic."

124 – Ideas will filter down via zeitgeist.

125 – Several papers were convinced by his revisions. Some not.  
127 – MA replied to lingering critics with “A Word More about Spinoza.”  
128 – That Spinoza keeps “god” in a time of atheism is admirable.

VI

“The Function of Criticism at the Present Time” grew directly out of MA’s Colenso controversy.

130 – Creative spirit depends on the critical. Zeitgeist is back, in that some eras create poetry and some not. But it is now determined by human effort, and not just the guiding thoughts of a few against the many.

131 – The realm of pure ideas needs to come into practice at the right time in the right way. The world of pure reason is Plato’s and the world of practice the pragmatic Englishman’s, the Puritan’s, the Philistine’s.

132 – Force till right provides a stable adjustment of ideas at the same time that it avoids imposing a kind of intellectual censorship. The State must allow time for the enlightenment of the masses. This keeps the Colenso argument, but with the objectionable bits removed.

The masses are satisfied. But the few wish to see things as they are. This they do via the free play of mind, disinterestedly, without thought for political implications. The critic is more useful than the philosopher with their realm of pure ideas.

133 – The critic has responsibility.

He is nicer to Colenso, but holds that he confused the idea of the truth of science and that of religion in the popular mind.

134 – Criticism in this essay is not an authoritative power, but a certain attitude of mind. The critic takes ideas from the speculative thinker and sifting them.

135 – Again the philosopher is disinterested. The critic has the missionary zeal to spread the best known and thought.

Criticism herein becomes more, a near religion. It leads men towards perfection by making men concentrate on excellence and the absolute beauty and fitness of things.

136 – The Saturday Review long nailed Colenso as a Philistine. So the critic had struck some successful blows.

## **CHAPTER FIVE – PHILISTINISM AND GEIST – 137**

This chapter starts in Nov 1863, a month after the last Colenso article, with MA saying he feels a great change coming that he wishes to help. And if he cannot tame with wild beast of Philistinism, it may tear him apart.

138 – The previous June, he’d lectured on Heine – “A brilliant soldier in the Liberation War of humanity.” – carrying on Goethe’s work. It was here that MA seized upon the word ‘Philistine.’

139 – Philistia is not a promised land, and especially not when idea is being to exercise real power in society.

He announced this in the lectures on Heine and those on Joubert.

140 – MA hates Macaulay’s smugness in praising English literature.

Then in June 1864 – “The Literary Influence of Academies.” Herein we learn that the British art has energy and honesty, not a flexible intelligence. An Academy would help with this.

But, the “Function of Criticism at the Present Time,” is the first definitive attack on philistines. It looks at the satisfaction over the Anglo-Saxon line and divorce courts and the British College of Health, etc. as bad.

141 – James Fitzjames Stephen attacked. He was not into joy. Funny descriptions of JFS herein. JFS’s attack on Tom Brown’s Schooldays may have led to “Rugby Chapel.”

144 – JFS says the English are pursuing and rejecting the philosophy MA accuses them of neglecting. The English are practical. That is logical.

145 – And whereas MA pretends a separation of theory and practice, he judges one by the other – as in the divorce court.

147 – JFS’ stringent logic is a weakness; flexibility a strength, MA replied. “Logicians imagine truth something to be proved, I something to be seen; they something to be manufactured; I as something to be found.” MA liked intuition, more than logic.

148 – He dismisses the idea that philosophy is now firmly anchored on Bentham so we needn’t think any longer.

149 – The Guardian attacked MA for 10 years saying a professor of poetry shouldn’t spend time attacking others in print.

151 – He asks a person if “to some of his remote ancestors, long before the birth of Puritanism, some conception of a joke must have been conveyed.”

152 – The Preface mostly asks people to attack him, not Oxford which stands nearly permanent.

153 – In the divorce court, MA meant to say take the practical, lift it into the world of ideas, and see how it fit.

158 – JFS says if MA wishes to disrespect the divorce court, he needs a theory of jurisprudence. But, he has none. Rather he enjoys hitting things. MA was a man of taste, and not a man of thought. As with the decimal case, JFS was right and MA withdrew the footnotes.

After Essays in criticism, MA went abroad and in 1861 published The Popular Education of France.

159 – It begins cautiously because the English don’t like the State. As the Aristocracy declined, the Middle Class might want public schools to prevent England from becoming Americanized.

160 – One review worried that Britain become Germanised or Gallicized. Reviewers noted that the view of the literary critic had now been taken over by bureaucratic views.

160 – MA starts attacking payment by results.

161 - The twice revised code would make the state’s role mechanical.

MA said, “That the State has an interest in the primary school as a civilizing agent, even prior to its interest in it as an instructing agent.” The State should speak to the “deeper life,” of the nation.

162 – With a partial victory over payment by results, MA returned to education with A French Eton.

163 – Reviewers said that missing practical details and State *deus ex machina* were a problem as well as a lack of problem because the Middle Class could educate itself.

164 – MA tried to meet these objections later in culture and anarchy. But for now, he – just back from 7 months abroad – wrote “My Countrymen.”

165 This essay has some patriotic fervor. It contrasts the foreign view of England with that of itself. It spills over into Friendship’s Garland wherein Arminius is the foreigner and MA. The ineffectual MA tries to defend against Arminius’ saying the intellectual thought now needs to lead the nation. The fear is repeated that England will become “a second Holland.”!

168 – JFS’ reply says if you wish to know if England is great look at our freedoms (doing as one likes) and rational settling of religious disputes.

Horace’s reply looked at the horrid political conditions in France and that France looked to English liberties as an ideal. Horace also said the French middle class is not great.

170 – MA says he doesn’t wish to make England French. But, a third thing. MA wishes to get us past the dichotomy of “liberty and philistinism, or else culture and slavery.”

171 – Smith said MA’s hate of England came from a love of France.

The modern turn is a victory of Geist over ungeist; the victory of reason and intelligence over blind custom and prejudice.

174 – MA diddled with the Arminius letters. But, more reaction came when he wrote that the Celtic people had to combat the coarseness and vulgarity of the English.

176 – People generally ask who the hell is MA to tell us who to be and treat his Geist like the Welch sarcastically.

178 – Culture would not come via bludgeon, but by studying something beautiful, outside of themselves, disinterestedly: Celtic literature fit. This positive example was well received in some papers.

180 - His final Oxford lecture happened a month after finishing the Celtic intro.

## **CHAPTER SIX – THE APOSTLE AND THE ENEMIES OF CULTURE – 181**

181 – Harrison denounced the argument that the working class should be denied the franchise because they are intellectually and morally unfit. The 658 members of the House of Commons were no tyrants. But, they had created tons of problems.

182 – The working class may not be educated, but they are honest and have a sense of justice.

183 - Harrison hated “The Function of Criticism” and its pretenses.

184 – MA called Harrison a Jacobinist furbishing up a guillotine.

In his final Oxford lecture MA contrasted Harrison’s Jacobinism with the culture of Oxford. Rather than dabbling in art, culture is the love and pursuit of intellectual and ethical perfection. It is interested in beauty for its own sake and seeks to leave the world a better place.

185 – This speech became “Culture and its Enemies.”

187 – We get pages of criticism that includes MA’s calls for central government and Church. One noted that MA attacks non-conformists as lacking sweetness, but his own Oxford doesn’t let them in.

188 – People also attacked his putting religion below culture.

191 – Harrison did a satire with Arminius and Arnold that MA loved.

193 – The criticisms to the “culture and its enemies” series were:

- 1) Because it couldn't be reached, this ideal of culture lead to paralysis of action.
- 2) MA worried more about his cultivation than the urgent needs of humanity.
- 3) MA was indifferent to the need for sternness that religion provided.
- 4) His whole system lacked logic.

194 – At the first reply, and throughout, MA aims at practicality. He says that action without theory is empty. So culture performs a guiding negative function. And that the state regulate behavior. With a need for central authority checked by class jealousy, culture can unite us under our best selves. Thus culture can provide the unity, the very one thing our nation needs.

195 - Critics denounced the tyranny of the cultured and lauded Mill.

196 – The 2<sup>nd</sup> installment, “Barbarians, Philistines, Populace” came out in February. This presented a system of sorts, but MA quipped, “How can you expect an ordered system of philosophy when I have none, as you say?”

197 – To doing as one likes, MA denounces the Times' atheism in regards to our “best selves.” The Mormon guns making right and people's faith in the literary tastes of trashy papers prove the need for cultural authority.

198 – That an anarchy of ideas will lead to the best seems too reliant on providence. His answer about the State being a bad guarantor of truth, he says the individual and state are in reciprocal check.

He gives examples of someone's anti-papist rants and park riots as that the state must stop.

#### IV

The next installment, on Hebraism and Hellenism, discussed the relation of culture to religion.

199 – H&H are historically dependent. Christianity replied to the laxity of pagan morality. The Renaissance responded to too much Hebraism.

200 – The Puritanism of England meant that it missed the Enlightenment in some ways. Hebraism cuts off Hellenism too often. Here he mentions Mr. Smith's suicide, St. Paul's free play with Hebraic morality and the Hellenic pursuit of perfection.

201 – The liberal's desire to disestablish the Church of Ireland comes from an overly literal reading of scripture. He also looks at the Real Estate Intestacy bill.

202 – Critics wanted a quick single step of action rather than stalling for right perception followed, presumably, by action some day. But, MA won't back down from this position. He also looks at Free Trade and marrying your sister. In all of these he attacks the liberal position as inflexible.

207 – MA shows his concern with the masses by replying to Buchanan's religious belief that multiplication should happen without limit.

We must ALL be perfected as a society. So, culture isn't remote and individualistic.

#### VI

208 – He started writing the preface of Culture and Anarchy, when his son died. So he put it off for a while. The tone lacks the vivacity of other works.

209 – The preface sought to placate the nonconformists.

## VII

213 – MA wished to win the dissenters to the mainstream of British cultural life.

215 – JC Shairp says religion cannot be a part of culture. It is not a plant.

### **CHAPTER SEVEN – THE BIBLE AND ITS INTERPRETERS – 217**

217 – In June 1869 The Irish Church Bill passed, much to MA's regret. It disestablished the church of England in Ireland.

218 – Renan published a book attacking St. Paul and praising his end.

219 – Paul had to use the religious vocabulary then available. He used Faith and Resurrection beautifully.

220 – Puritanism has translated into scholastic and scientific languages, what Paul used figuratively and imaginatively. And Paul begins with an appeal to experience and reality.

221 – MA worried about hostility from dissenters after they tore apart his poems in 1869. The poems, they said, showed the horrors of what we find when away from Christian moorings. Not Greek coolness, but languishing.

222 – Not harshly, Puritans said they pursued goodness, not happiness. And they said that Paul's main idea was Righteousness (all caps).

The Puritans use terms like calling, justification, and sanctification. But, Paul's teaching lies in his own experience of faith and resurrection (death of obedience to blind selfish impulse, to the life of obedience to the eternal moral order).

Puritans had made the deal with God legalistic. But science, MA predicted, would undermine the legalistic and Paul's meaning would rise again.

224 – Rather than proclaim their righteousness, the Puritans should unite with the Church in a moral endeavor made stronger by their union.

227 – Dale criticized - Puritanism was an intense relationship with God, prior to being ethical, and needed no sanction from any church. Dale also notes how much dissenters are discriminated against. This justifies their suspicion.

228 – 9 - And both Anglicans and dissenters disowned MA's work on theological grounds.

230 – Bismarck's pummeling of France was blamed by MA and others on France's lack of Hebraism. So MA's call for less Hebraism faced an uphill battle. MA sought to reinstate the Bible against onslaughts against Hebraism by making it literature.

## III

231 – The language of the Bible is the language of a people who had neither talent for abstruse reasoning nor interest in metaphysics. But no people ever felt so strongly that conduct is 3/4ths of life, "hitting the mark in this great concern, [is] the way of peace, the highest possible satisfaction."

232 – Righteousness tendeth to life! But the shocks of history inculcated skepticism in this regard. The Jews forgot the covenant was not mechanical, but dependent on behavior. In despair, they started looking for metaphysical redemption: a miracle.

The Jews had also gotten mechanical, with no heart in their conduct. They needed more feeling. And, Jesus provided it. He put emotion back in righteousness. He made happiness okay again.

233 – Inwardness (repentance) was introduced and “sweet reasonableness.” But people did not sustain righteousness, so the idea of his second coming was added.

234 – It was not Jesus’ fault, but his reporters that put in so many miracles. The reliance on the idea of God sending his son, Like a Lord Shaftsbury might send his, means we lose reliance on verification.

#### IV

Literature and Dogma was published in Feb of 1873 and was big.

237 – Religious reaction was negative, secular often quite positive. But MA didn’t see a review for 3 months. He split to Italy.

238 – In 1872 his second son had died. He looked troubled and worn. His grief stricken wife seemed broken by the calamity. So the replies didn’t come till 1875 in God and the Bible.

An attacks he had to pay attention to were that he was irreligious and that he relied too heavily on the 4<sup>th</sup> gospel.

239 – He positions himself between the Christian orthodox and the liberals who want to destroy the Bible.

241 – Arnold apologized in God and the Bible for his personal attacks and sacrilege.

242 – Someone asks if MA really doesn’t think it makes a difference if someone answers our prayers.

243 – People argued for a personal God, they said only with a personal god is religion meaningful, and said MA’s “stream of tendency” was no more verifiable than a personal deity.

244 – Religious experience got put forward as proving God exists. Others said God must be personal or nothing. Is MA’s replacement for a personal God, “not ourselves,” giving us righteousness and morals personal or some vague power?

245 – The “power” MA offers cannot create emotion, another said.

#### VII

248 – The first three chapters of God and the Bible concern the personal God question. MA is agnostic and says we have no personal experience of a personal god. The main support is miraculous.

249 – And discussing if miracles happened or not was not the point. He wanted to say what happens to religion now that fewer and fewer people believe in miracles.

252 – MA makes a lot of categorical defenses that are not so strong before settling to defend himself against a fellow who says the Old Testament God is not righteous, but patriotic, mercurial, and angry.

MA replies that the righteousness grew into shape over time.

253 – And the origin of this righteous strain doesn’t matter. It might have come from feeling. Religion gives us morality touched with emotion.

255 – MA says the Bible is literal when it talks of righteousness and metaphorical when God actually talks.

#### VIII

256 – MA defends his reliance on the 4<sup>th</sup> gospel.

262 – After backing the 4<sup>th</sup> gospel as reflecting Jesus’ ideas, he returns to the theme of literature.

263 – The Church is to promote righteousness, MA says in Last Essays on Church and Religion. But this is more than narrow morality. It is the love of perfection, (that had once been the aim of culture in MA’s scheme of things).

264 – Elsewhere he says the revolt against the Bible is not moral, but intellectual.

265 – He noted that on the continent his religious writing was considered reactionary, because they had thrown out the Bible. The secret of Jesus’ teaching was that good behavior leads to happiness and obedience to the values of the lower self leads to misery.

267 – When called, “not a Christian,” in 1885, MA wrote “A Comment on Christmas.”

### **CHAPTER EIGHT – THE HUMANIST AND HIS ADVERSARIES – 269**

270 – MA goes into less controversial waters in the last decade. He does theater and literary criticism. He reads novels, which he had earlier thought of as opium. His publications, Mixed Essays, Irish Essays, and Discourses in America, show heterogeneous concerns and a lack of a unifying thesis.

271 – The voice of humanism speaks out more clearly than before.

In 1881 MA writes, that man feels himself to be a more various and richly –endowed animal than the old religious theory of human life allowed. Man is fighting to give satisfaction to these varied instincts.

He speaks of the relaxing middle class loosening strictures on the old strictness as to theaters, dancing, and such things. And especially the “awakening demand for beauty.” If you stick to religious themes, you are not with the movement of men’s minds at present.

277 – in 1877 he publishes the essay on Falkland.

272 – He contrasts Falkland with the Puritans, whose rule in England had been a disaster.

274 – Smith tears at Falkland to defend the Puritans. Without Puritan morality, he says, the renaissance would have been “vice, filthy vice, decorated with art and elegant philosophy; an academy under the same roof with a brothel.”

275 – In his reply MA notes that the Puritan Parliament ordered paintings sold or burned.

276 – The harsh Puritan life, he says, offers, “a religion not true, the claims of intellect and knowledge not satisfied, the claim of beauty not satisfied, the claim of manners not satisfied.”

## **II**

MA enters into debates with Swineburne as well. They disagreed on the nature of poetry and Victor Hugo.

277 – Swineburne in reply says that MA is an unreliable French critic and leans too heavily on Sainte-Beuve.

279 – MA defends the poet Gray. This even shows up in his essay on Emerson.

The final debate with Swineburne happens in “Wordsworth and Byron” (1884). MA claimed that whatever is concerned with the question of “how to live,” is a moral idea.

280 – This against the Art for Art’s sake position.

Swineburne disagreed that moral idea could cover Keats who is “the most exclusively aesthetic and most absolutely non-moral of all serious writers.”

281 – MA predicted that Byron and Wordsworth would come to be seen as the 19<sup>th</sup> century’s pre-eminent poets.

### III

281 – MA also debated Huxley a lot. They were such good friends, that people said they never really realized how much they disagreed.

282 – Someone called their debates “amicable clarification.”

282 – MA drew the battle lines in the introduction to Literature and Dogma, wherein he denounced the revolt of scientists against the “tyranny of letters.”

283 – In terms of the best thought and said in the world, the classics of Greece and Rome are “the very chief portion and the portion most entirely satisfactory.”

283 – Huxley bashed at the “best thought and said” as including science. And, we cannot know this without science.

284 – MA replied that the best thought and said included science. (btw, that is the canonical phrase formulation – “thought and said.”

285 – Beautiful mock humility in debate example. After told that our ancestor was a hairy quadruped,” we need conduct and beauty. But does literature provide this? Yes.

And given the choice between a student who doesn’t know how to paraphrase a Macbeth line, but knows the moon’s circumference, he’d take the former.

286 – The literature and science (“Rede lecture”) was given in America, so we transition to discussing the essay on Emerson.

“Remnant” is among Arnold’s last catch phrases.

289 – Audiences in the East were large and appreciative, those the Midwest were small.

290- After MA got home and the Chicago hoax, the reputation of the journey went down.

291 – MA’s last published essay during his lifetime was, “Civilization in the United States.” It attacks the American newspapers. The immediate product of the trip was “A Word More About America” which largely looked at the Irish question.

MA said, “the chief good, that which above all makes life worth living, is to be of use.”

291 – “As you draw near to your latter end, redouble your efforts to do good.”

292 – MA said America had successfully solved political and social problems. While almost Sophoclean, England was still groping for the path it should take. MA wanted the Irish to have their own legislature based on America’s Federal model. Gladstone wanted home rule. Gladstone’s home rule bill of 1886 was defeated.

294 – MA debated the Irish editor of the Nation, E.L. Godkin about home rule.

295 – MA felt that disestablishment in Ireland had weakened the church and thought disestablishment in Wales a bad idea.

295 – In “Civilization in the US” he said America had solved the social and political problems, but not the human ones. Life in the US is, compared with that of Britain, so uninteresting, “so without savor, without depth.” Elevation and beauty are not everything, but (as he closed A French Eton, God and the Bible and the prefaces to

Culture and Anarchy and the Study of Celtic Literature) they are indispensable to attaining, "a renovated and perfected human society on earth, - the ideal society of the future."

### **CONCLUSION - 297**

In God and the Bible, MA quotes Goethe as saying culture was "but a higher conception of political and military relations."

297 - MA touched us as "poet, educator, and literary, political, social, and religious critic." He needed variety for his sad soul.

298 - MA wrote not as a scholar, but as a man of letters. He was public as much as academic.

MA develops his ideas and changes them in response to his critics. But, he has a theme: to see things as they truly are. This helps him correct distorted or provincial thought, in the 50s to counter the excess of romanticism, in the 60s to purge the Middle Class of their philistinism and prepare it to become the ruling class of the future; in the 70s to provide a solid basis for religion; and in the 80s to find a new humanism.

299 - MA holds that neither Puritanism, nor aestheticism, nor science can meet the demands of humanity for a full and harmonious development.

MA was criticized for being aloof, but he was deeply immersed in the life of his time and anxious about the issues it faced and his role in meeting them. This is why so many of his words refer to people of his times and current events.

300 - He was not aloof, but engaged controversies relentlessly. He engaged a hostile audience to convince them, and in discussion with them would modify his position until it was more acceptable, or even make a return upon himself, to bring them along.

301 - Culture and Anarchy is likely the most widely reprinted essay of the Victorian era.

301 - Through his engagement, he became the most adequate of Victorian writers.