

II.

Do give fayre welcome to yir gentleness,
And kyndest thanks for this and all largesse;
For, certes, none have ever been more kynd,
Nor to swete charity more well-inclyned.

III.

We wolde that we myght kepe ye many a day,
Nor have ye soone depart so far away;
For in all graciousnesse ye did excel,
And in all duties ye have wroughten well.

IV.

Wise have ye been in all high governance,
And to all virtue given countenance;
Withouten sournesse and withouten frown
On all our pastimes ye have looked down.

V.

Most noble Lord, we bid you welcome fayre,
Most gracious Lady, swete beyond compare,
We give ye gretynge, and our bosoms swell
With pain to think 'tis welcome and fayrwell.

VI.

Oft-times, when farre amid the Indian hilles,
Ye holde y^r reins of rule, and work yir willes
O'er all the subjects of Her Majestie,
We pray ye hold us in yir memorie.

VII.

When in yir gardens at the sonne upriste,
Ye gaze on flowres gorgeous, as ye liste,
Forget not how among us birdis sing,
And flowres red and white mak' swete the sprynge.

VIII.

Ye will not be outmemoried, for we holde
Yir memorie dearer than it were of golde;
And pray that many springes with white and rede
May richly dight their garlandes for yir hede.

A copy of Mr. Griffin's graceful verses was presented to Lord Lansdowne.
SARA J. DUNCAN.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THERE is something more than ordinarily pathetic in the sudden passing into the invisible of one whom we have long known as a keen searcher into the mysteries which envelop the region of sense, and who, more than most men, has felt the weight of an all but unintelligible world, whose dark problems, if they have not been solved by his mellifluous phrases, have been brightened by his earnest aspirations and large humanity. "What?" we cry, as we hear the bodeful news, "Matthew Arnold dead!" and yet, even in his case, shall we not in his own words say that, while the world will miss him for a day or two, the great mundane movement will still go on—

The world which was ere I was born,
The world which lasts when I am dead.

Ah, gentle, knightly soul, now wilt thou know all, and, as thou hast crossed "the unplumbed . . . estranging sea" of death, no more will the baffling problems of this world trouble or vex thee. All will be clear in the light of the Spirit Land! In his latest hour, as the poet desired, he has had his wish. Long ago he wrote:

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,
The friends who come, and gape, and go;
The ceremonious air of gloom:—
All that makes death a hideous show!

His life's work now over, is it too soon to glance at some stray aspects of it, and to ask ourselves has he left us anything beyond a few memorable phrases and the beautiful example of a gentle, cultivated, and graceful life? Matthew Arnold, in a peculiar sense, is the product of his age—the product of the critical habit as well as of the doubting spirit of the time. In him meet, paradoxically, the "sweetness and light" of the serene poet of nature and the intellectual arrogance of the impatient critic of modern manners and life. English born as he is, of what nationality he has sprung seems at times to be a puzzle to us, for he displays at once the intellectual characteristics of Greek, Celt, and Teuton. The union of the three perhaps accounts for the paradoxes in his nature, and for those mental strands in his work which reflect Goethe and Carlyle on the one side, and Wordsworth and Sainte Beuve on the other. This makes him, however, the more complex and interesting a study, and perhaps the most unique figure in the literary and scholastic annals of later Britain. But not only has his life been serene and beautiful; it has been full of work. Years ago was flung at him the derisive epithet of "a literary trifler," but the dart did not stick in his flank, for in the great missionary work of Culture in which he has long and unweariedly been engaged, the scornful assailant of British Philistinism has shown that he was more than a poetical dreamer and a fastidious dilettante critic. But what of real value, it may be asked, has the essayist and poet left us in his work? Not in his aphoristic phrases, we fear, shall we find a satisfactory answer to this query. Let us look at a few of them.

"Truth," he tells us, "is discovered by intuition, not by argument;" but is this more than what the essayist, Walter Bagehot, calls "a sort of truthful scepticism, which makes the author anxious never to overstate his own assurance of anything"? Does it stand to us in any sense as a creed for action, or is it not rather a mere flavour of the mind—a bit of Hellenism, with no Hebraic earnestness behind it? Is there more in the aphorism than we find in Pilate's fatigued way of asking "What is Truth?" and if Truth is only to be discovered by intuition, how many will find it unenlightened by argument and unimpressed by the experience which comes of the laborious and diligent search for it? Again Mr. Arnold says: "To be perfectly cultivated we must be perfectly religious;" but what is his definition of religion—"morality touched with emotion!" Here again, is

there more than a mere epigram, a languid paraphrase of the Gospel message, distilled of its vital force and shorn of everything but its literary trappings? The asserted facts of Christian doctrine, he has told us, it is impossible to verify; while the Personal Ruler of the universe is transcendently minimized by him to "a power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." In this phrase-mongering where is there solace for the sin-burdened soul, or any fit substitute for that faith which he loftily derides and would supplant by an oft-repeated metaphor? Is this all, we ask, he has to teach us of his emasculated Hebraism or the lessons in "high seriousness" he would have us learn from Israel of old, to whom we are to go that we may cultivate righteousness—"the sense of right conduct?" Nor hardly in literature do we find Mr. Arnold at all times more coherent or logical, though as a critic he possesses the rich qualities of freshness and thoughtfulness, his work being suffused with the glow of a keen intelligence and a rare culture. Take his definition of poetry—"a criticism of life"—and let any one endeavour to find out how "lucid" is the phrase, or wherein it may not apply as a definition of prose. "Lucid" Mr. Arnold may be, but logical,—well, he has himself acknowledged that he has "never been able to hit it off happily with the logicians!"

But though Mr. Arnold's phrase-making falls before the test of logic, and though little of it brings conviction of truth, many of the more memorable of his sayings have a value beyond the charm of verbal felicity. They have often that touch with genius which few sympathetic readers of his works can fail to recognize, however imperious or ethereal may be his spirit and coldly condescending his manner. In our study of the author we feel that we are in contact with a spiritual nature which longs to surmount the gross wrappings of earth, and seeks to wrest from the invisible world the secrets that would immeasurably extend the survey of his thought. More than this, we are conscious that we are in the presence also of a finely-trained intellect and of questioning powers which are as keen and penetrating as they are at times audacious. Hence we have in his writings "a gospel of ideas" which, though it is an indifferent substitute for that to which a simpler and robuster faith would fain cling, is at the same time full of suggestiveness, painfully charged though it may be with intellectual disbelief. The gospel is never one of "good tidings," and therefore nothing, we may be told, is to be gained from the consideration of the vague Pantheism that characterizes much of Mr. Arnold's religious disquisitions. But to this we can hardly give assent when we consider how much Christianity in the last quarter of a century has benefited by scientific inquiry, and by the large results of modern scholarship and Biblical interpretation. Nor can we allow that truth will greatly suffer from a free though reverent spirit of inquiry, even if the intellectual mood of the critic, with the final results of his criticism, be steeped in doubt.

It is to Mr. Arnold's poems, however, that the reader must turn for that note of mental disquiet and bewilderment which is so characteristic of the time, and which there finds freest and saddest expression. In his verse we shall meet with no popular pipings of grief or joy, no overflow of the affectional nature, no note of unrestrained feeling or ebullition of emotion. To Mr. Arnold these passionate outbursts are alien to his serene, contemplative spirit, and would be destructive of his carefully-maintained mental equipoise. In their place we find a deep, speculative melancholy, the languorings of a soul disquieted, the plaintive cry of a heart vexed with vain questionings and wearied with equally vain regrets.

Wearied of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be.

Occasionally, however, nature asserts herself, and, in the spring and elasticity of a yet undaunted mind, we hear the lyric notes of returning joyousness and the choral song of a spirit freely breathed upon by the winds of heaven. Then is the poet most truly a poet, and the reader most in sympathy with the author's mood.

As an artist in verse Mr. Arnold has a special charm, which is equalled only by the delight which his high and pure sentiment affords. Deficient he may be in the sympathies which excite ordinary mortals; yet there is no lack of that graver ecstasy of the intellect which to a cultivated nature, sensitive to the influences of art and scholarly workmanship, is hardly less thrilling. But the chief note in all his verse—his subjective verse, at any rate—is a sense of bafflement and defeat, the feeling that in the storm and stress of life one is sure to be wearied, if not worsted:—

Hardly, hardly, shall one
Come, with countenance bright,
At the close of day, from the plain;
His Master's errand well done,
Safe through the smoke of the fight
Back to his Master again.

But for him the Master's errand, whatever it was, is accomplished, and it is not for us to say that, in the larger and fairer view of Heaven, it does not merit the "well done" awarded to those who have wrought its purposes, though he may have been "broken" in working with or against them. From the strife and contention of the age he has, with Carlyle, counselled us to abstain, and "be still"; and still now is the spirit, which, having led its own vain onset, death has rudely withdrawn from the world. Here are the words the poet years ago addressed to his dead friend and brother pessimist, Arthur Hugh Clough; they may now well apply to himself:—

Creep into thy narrow bed,
Creep, and let no more be said!
Vain thy onset! all stands fast:
Thou thyself must break at last.
Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans and swans are geese,
Let them have it how they will!
Thou art tired; best be still.

G. MERCER ADAM.