

does not identify the two. Let the sea chant its varying song; it soothes, but cannot solve. Let it break at the foot of its crags, but I am I, must live out my own sorrow, and realize my own selfhood, so shall my peace be as a river and my righteousness as the waves of the sea.

Yet Matthew Arnold's poetic instinct fittingly selected the scene, quiet, serious, almost sublime, such as to lift up all thoughtful souls unto the contemplation of their own ideals, awakening to glorious revelations and purposeful resolution, or barren heart-ache and benumbing despair.

With the possibility of the latter, contrast the patience Nature teaches the Christian poet (in Mrs. Browning):

"O dreary life!' we cry, 'O dreary, life!'
And still the generations of the birds
Sing through our sighing, and the flocks and herds
Serenely live while we are keeping strife
With Heaven's true purpose in us Ocean girds
.
Unslackened the dry land, savannah-swards
Unweary sweep, hills watch unworn, and rife
Meek leaves drop yearly from the forest-trees
To show above the unwasted stars that pass
In their old glory. O thou God of old,
Grant me some smaller grace than comes to these!
But so much patience as a blade of grass
Grows by, contented through the heat and cold."

And notice, even as an extreme, the sprightly joyousness in the monotonous undersong of the Thames that Spenser discovers in his *Prothalamion*.

In stanza two, indeed, Arnold acknowledges that his thought is not the necessary one:

"Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery: we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea."

That ebb and flow of turbulent waves, of joy, hope, callousness and despair, the sea must suggest to all sympathetic hearers, but only the fatalistic among them need tremble and fail. The third stanza embodies Arnold's interpretation of the mes-