

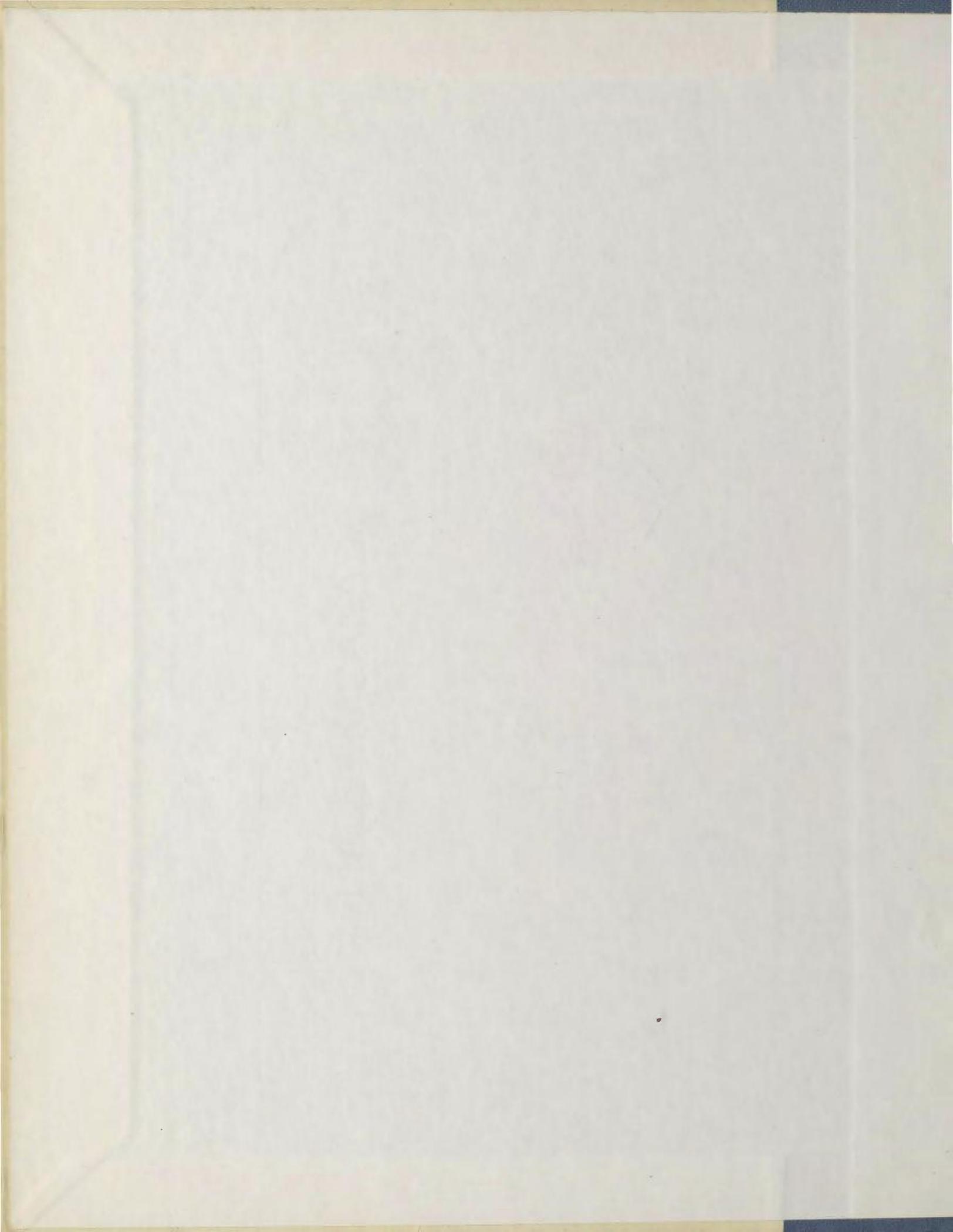
A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE POETRY OF ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

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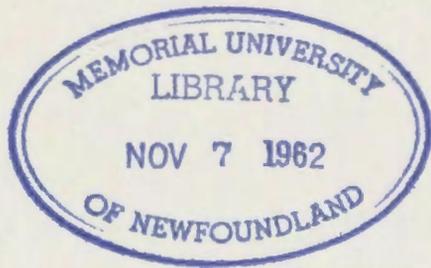
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A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE POETRY
OF ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts, Memorial University of
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This thesis has been approved by

ABSTRACT

An intense moral and intellectual earnestness marks Arthur Hugh Clough as a pupil of Dr. Arnold at Rugby. The didactic nature of his Rugby poems reflects a concern for the morals of others. At Oxford he questions his Rugby inheritance, and, influenced by Carlyle's gospel of work, formulates a philosophy of duty as service. His Oxford lyrics are a record of the development of this philosophy. Even the best of these poems are marred by clumsy phrasing. Only rarely in his later lyrics does Clough achieve a beauty and dignity of expression.

Clough's first long poem The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich (1848), about an Oxford reading party in the Highlands, praises Carlyle's gospel of work in application to women. The excellence of the poem lies in Clough's humorous and satiric treatment of situation and character. The poem holds a high place among Victorian verse-novels. It is written in hexameters and this metre admirably suits the semi-burlesque effect which Clough aims at.

Amours de Voyage (1849), Clough's best long poem, is a humorous and satiric analysis of introspection. Clough shows great skill in meticulously dissecting the mind of the hero Claude, in harmonizing the theme and the Roman setting, and in using the tourist motif and the hexameter measure to reinforce the theme. Dipsychus (1850), a

quasi-dramatic poem on the Faust model, is also a humorous and satiric study of introspection. The poem lacks the unity of Amours de Voyage, but it contains Clough's most original and polished satire.

Mari Magno (1861), a group of Tales in verse, owes much to Chaucer and Crabbe. Love and marriage is the theme of all but one of the Tales. The story-telling, character-drawing and parody of this poem is as fine as that in The Bothie.

Clough's satire is his individual mark in mid-Victorian poetry, but he also holds a high place amongst Victorian writers of narratives of contemporary life.

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PREFACE

The First Cause, Arthur Hugh Clough conjectures, may turn out to be a "smudgy person with a sub-intelligent look about the eyes." This Shavian maxim is the key to Clough's personality and poetry. His temperament inclined him to the satiric, and the words humour, irony, satire and parody must be used often to describe his intention in The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Amours de Voyage, Dipsychus and Mari Magno. In this study I am concerned mainly with these four volumes.

Students of Clough have been helped greatly by the interest which English and American editors have shown recently in Clough's poetry and letters. In 1932 Dr. H.F. Lowry edited The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, and in the past decade an impressive edition of the Poems (1951) and a two volume edition of the Correspondence (1957) have appeared. This makes Clough that rare Victorian poet who can be studied without misgivings about either the accuracy of the text of his poems, or the availability of his letters. Professor Buckner Trawick of the University of Alabama is now preparing a complete edition of Clough's Prose.

I discuss in Chapter I Clough's Rugby and Oxford years, (1829-48). The purpose of the Chapter is threefold: to define the main influences on Clough during these years;

to point out the positive nature of his "religious" and "moral" views; to discuss his Rugby and Oxford poems, paying some attention to their autobiographical element, and noting similarities to his later poems. With this as a foundation I discuss The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich (1848), Amours de Voyage (1849), Dipsychus (1850) and Mari Magno (1861) in Chapters II to V. In Chapter VI I draw some conclusions about Clough as a mid-Victorian poet. A number of shorter poems and the long fragment "The Mystery of the Fall" also belong to the years 1848-61. The limits of this study preclude a detailed consideration of these poems, but where any one of them seems significant, it is mentioned.

I wish to thank Dr. A. O'Reilly who suggested the subject of this thesis, supervised its writing, and made innumerable suggestions for improvement. I also wish to thank Dr. E.R. Seary for his many helpful hints on procedure. I am grateful to Miss A. Green, the University Librarian, and her staff, who gave me their willing help at all times.

22 August 1961

R.P.

Chapter I
RUGBY AND OXFORD

1. The Foundation of Character

Arthur Hugh Clough was born at Liverpool on New Year's Day, 1819, the second of four children. Late in 1823 Arthur's father, James Butler Clough, a cotton merchant, migrated with his wife and family to Charleston, South Carolina. Arthur remained there until the summer of 1828 when he returned to England to attend school at Chester, and in the following year to enter Rugby School where Dr. Thomas Arnold was headmaster.

The circumstances of Arthur's family life at Charleston are significant. The Cloughs, who remained conscious of their British origin, deliberately isolated themselves from their Charleston neighbours, and the children had few experiences outside the family. This helps to explain Arthur's shyness and reserve amongst the school boys at Chester and Rugby, qualities which were to remain with him throughout his life. His upbringing at the hands of his evangelical mother rendered him particularly susceptible to the teachings of Dr. Arnold. Arthur's sister, Anne, tells how their mother taught them about God and duty, and how she loved to linger over the sufferings of the martyrs in the cause of duty and faith.¹ Dr. Arnold's chapel sermons about the love of God and the importance of duty must have reminded Clough of his mother's exhortations.

Although this study is concerned with the poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough, it will be necessary to discuss the influence of Dr. Arnold on Clough's early thought. This will help to elucidate many otherwise baffling points in his Oxford poems.

Dr. Thomas Arnold became headmaster of Rugby in 1828. The aim of his life was the establishment of a Christian society, and he regarded his new position at Rugby as an opportunity to create a Christian society on a small scale.² His greatest asset for this task was an amazing power of communicating to others the leading traits of his character. He passed on to his pupils his earnestness, his zest, and his concern for the morals of others. A.P. Stanley quotes one of Arnold's pupils:

Every pupil was made to feel that there was a work for him to do -- that his happiness as well as his duty lay in doing that work well. Hence an indescribable zest was communicated to a young man's feelings about life.³

When Clough entered Rugby he became a boarder in the School House which was under the direct supervision of the headmaster, and so was in closer personal contact with Dr. Arnold than was usual with Junior boys. Not until the sixth form, however, did Clough experience the full force of the headmaster's personality.

Even the earliest of his Rugby letters show how anxious he was to attain intellectual distinction, and

comments like these are frequent: "Now all Feby and March I was writing for Prizes,"⁴ and "on returning to Rugby the prize-composition subjects were set immediately and I believe I did nothing else what ever but write for them."⁵ Dr. Arnold, however, placed intellectual ability third in his list of the aims of a Rugby education, with religious and moral principles first, and gentlemanly conduct second. The degree to which the moral and religious atmosphere of Rugby permeated Clough's thought is seen in the letters to his younger brother George, who was at school at Chester. Here he advises George of his duty towards his fellow pupils:

the most trifling things are ordered by God, and I doubt not that he has sent you to this school for his own good purposes to give light to these poor boys who are walking in sin and darkness. . . . All I want is that you should show them by example what a good and beautiful thing the love of God and his service is. . . . You and I are both placed in our different schools to do good.⁶

He writes to Anne of his duty in the school: "I know the work is appointed for me and I for it, and woe to me if I do not do it."⁷ To his friend J.N. Simpkinson⁸ he confesses: "I verily believe my whole being is regularly soaked through with the wishing and hoping and striving to do the School good."⁹

The letters also reveal the introspective nature of Clough's temperament.

I was in a very queer humour I wish I could get rid of this humour-rule, but there are times when I feel so utterly weak in both intellectual and moral power that I half fancy myself crazed. . . . the excess of thinking about one's self is very ruinous indeed.¹⁰

He greatly fears that the motive in his moral crusade at Rugby is a selfish one: "I am so apt to get full of high thoughts of my own importance to the School."¹¹ This habit of looking inward and questioning his motives lies at the core of many of his Oxford poems.

A couple of month's before Clough entered Balliol College, Oxford he wrote J.N. Simpkinson:

I am tolerably happy though having once relaxed the reins of discipline, partly through weakness and unconsciousness of what I was doing, and partly through being busy with other matters in preference, I find it hard to tighten them again, and it is a work which perhaps I am not very well qualified for.¹²

Here we see Clough reacting against the high moral and intellectual pressure of his Rugby life. This reaction reached its climax at Oxford, and his Balliol poems must be understood in terms of it.

Before considering Clough's Oxford career and poems, the poems which he published in the Rugby Magazine¹³ will be discussed briefly. They reveal him preoccupied with his duties as an ideal pupil of Dr. Arnold. Bound by Arnold to the great task of establishing God's kingdom on earth, he wrote poem after poem of an edifying and homiletic nature. His diary entry: "Instead of turning to God last night I

wrote a sonnet, and poetized till 10 o'clock,"¹⁴ shows that he was at first uneasy about using his valuable time for writing poetry. He was reassured, however, by his discovery that Dr. Arnold believed that certain types of Romantic poetry were of the highest moral value. Arnold also wholly approved of Wordsworth, so it is not surprising¹⁵ to find Clough imitating Wordsworth's poems. "An Incident" tells of his visit to the city:

And when I started on my way,
My heart was full of fancies sweet.

(p. 441, ll. 1-2)

He is soon depressed by what he sees and hears:

Nought heard or seen around, but told
Of something bought or something sold,
And none that seemed to think or care
That any save himself was there.

(p. 442, ll. 7-10)

Then there appears on the scene,

Locked hand in hand with one another
A little maiden and her brother.

(ll. 17-8)

The courage that this gives him --

And often, should my spirit fail, . . .
I'll call to mind that little pair --

(ll. 35, 40)

reminds one of Wordsworth's conclusion in "Resolution and Independence",

I'll think of the Leech-gather on the
lonely moor!

The edifying intention of this poem is representative of Clough's Rugby poetry.

The narrative poem "Count Egmont", written in imitation of Macaulay's "Battle of Ivry", is interesting for what it foreshadows. It reveals Clough's rather considerable narrative gifts which are to appear again in his major poems. Like Macaulay's poem it is written in lines of fourteen syllables, and the long line gives Clough an opportunity to explore the problems of writing such verse. His experience in sustaining a long line and in varying its caesura proved valuable in his hexameter poems.

2. The Questioning Spirit

Clough entered Balliol College, Oxford in October, 1837 with every prospect of a brilliant career. He obtained neither a first class degree nor a Balliol Fellowship, but at Easter, 1841 was elected to a Fellowship at Oriel. He remained there for seven years, but by January, 1848 he had given the Provost notice of his intention to resign. The much discussed questions of why Clough failed to obtain a first class degree, and why he resigned his Fellowship will be considered only as they bear upon the poetry.

During Clough's first two years at Balliol he wrote one poem, but he wrote more than twenty-five during his last two years. To account for this two year break in his poetic activity, one must consider the intense moral and

intellectual life he lived at Rugby. The high pressure of this life exhausted him and affected his health. He wrote his sister shortly after he entered Oxford:

I may go in to try for the Ireland Scholarship next spring, and I wish also to work at Mathematics. I am not quite sure, however, of being able, as I do not believe myself to be over strong.¹⁶

His letters reveal that in the freer atmosphere of Oxford he relaxed considerably.

That I have been a good deal unsettled in mind at times at Oxford . . . is true enough, and I dare say the change from Rugby life to its luxury and apparent irresponsibility has had a good deal of ill effect upon me.¹⁷

I have but little appetite for Work Mathematical or Classical, and there is as little compulsion to it and as much enticement from it as is possible in our ways of life at Oxford. I would give much for the pleasant treadmill routine of school.¹⁸

As was to be expected in one so imbued with Dr. Arnold's teachings, his idleness and moral irresponsibility began to bother him. In most of the poems of his last two years at Balliol, he priggishly confesses his failings and his sense of despair.

The critical tradition that accounts for Clough's failure to obtain a First at Balliol by reference to the Oxford Movement and the Higher Criticism¹⁹ finds Clough a poet of religious doubt. Yet doctrinal problems do not appear in the Balliol poems. The letters contain references to the Oxford Movement and the German critics, but there is nothing to suggest a serious doctrinal conflict. Clough's

comment, "I only hope to escape the vortex of Philosophism
 and Discussion, (whereof Ward ²⁰ is the Centre), as it is
 the most exhausting exercise in the world," ²¹ has been
 over-emphasized. Only one poem "Away, haunt not thou me",
 which Clough dated February, 1840 and in C.E. Norton's copy
 of Ambarvalia ²² added "in lecture at Balliol College"
 (Poems, p. 468), expresses this view.

The confident assertions about the existence of God
 and Truth, for which Clough's Rugby poems are remarkable,
 are continued in the Balliol poems. In "Look you, my simple
 friend, 'tis one of those" he contrasts "the stifling gas
 of men's opinion" with "the vital atmosphere of Truth"
 (p. 26, ll. 32-3). But as early in his Balliol career as
 October, 1838 he wrote "Truth is a golden thread, seen
 here and there" with its suggestion that he is beginning to
 question his Rugby inheritance. He compares Truth to the
 thread of a tapestry that appears "In small bright specks
 upon the visible side," but continues unseen on the other
 side (p. 45, ll. 1-4), to

a vein of ore
 Emerging now and then on Earth's rude breast,
 But flowing full below,

(ll. 4-6)

and to

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

(ll. 6-10)

The confident assertion of these lines is weakened by the "if" of the closing question,

Oh, if it be so, wherefore do we men
Pass by so many marks, so little heeding?

(ll. 11-2)

Yet the assumption that God and Truth exist -- he uses these two terms interchangeably -- and that one perceives them through the heart, or conscience as he sometimes calls it, is basic to an understanding of his Balliol poems. Clough derived this belief from Dr. Arnold, who taught that conscience or "moral reason" is the chief instrument of Divine Providence; in fact it is a higher authority than the empirical intellect. For through conscience God gives moral guidance to the individual and maintains order in the world. According to Dr. Arnold anyone who disobeys his conscience will suffer remorse.

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Most of the Balliol poems are consciously confessional, but vary considerably in quality. Many of them are marred by their pretentious and inflated language. In "Come back again, my olden heart" Clough, seeming to have lost all sense of virtue, desires a return to the moral values he lived by at Rugby:

Come back again, my olden heart! --
Ah, fickle spirit and untrue,
I bade the only guide depart
Whose faithfulness I surely knew;
I said, my heart is all too soft;
He who would climb and soar aloft
Must needs keep ever at his side
The tonic of a wholesome pride.

(p. 9, ll. 1-8)

The language of some of the "Blank Misgivings" poems is the same:

Though to the vilest things beneath the moon
For poor Ease' sake I give away my heart;

(p. 28, II, ll. 1-2)

How often sit I, poring o'er
My strange distorted youth,
Seeking in vain, in all my store,
One feeling based on truth;

(p. 30, V, ll. 1-4)

-- Like a child
In some strange garden left awhile alone,
I pace about the pathways of the world,
Plucking light hopes and joys from every stem.

(VI, ll. 1-4)

R.M. Gollin suggests that Clough's insincerity in lamenting his moral condition accounts for the inflated and pre-²⁴tentious language of these poems. Clough does not feel genuine remorse for departing from his Rugby way of life, but he is not yet willing to admit it. Gollin's suggestion supports my belief that during his last two years at Balliol, Clough began to formulate a more satisfying philosophy than the one he had lived by at Rugby. "Come back again, my olden heart" is representative of the crude expression of much of Clough's early poetry, in which the thought is complicated and subtle, but Clough's diction cannot handle it gracefully. In the second stanza, for instance, he clumsily expresses the constant contradictions arising from varying influences:

I said, Perceptions contradict,
 Convictions come, anon depart,
 And but themselves as false convict.
 Assumptions hasty, crude and vain,
 Full oft to use will Science deign.

(p. 10, ll. 26-30)

Later in Dipsychus he was to use the technique of the two voices to convey the conflict in his mind; here he unsuccessfully employs a single voice.

In some of the Balliol poems Clough achieves a degree of objectivity by presenting his shortcomings in general terms. He writes of giving his heart away to "the vilest things beneath the moon" (p. 28, II, l. 1). This use of general terms frequently gives rise to effective ambiguity, as in the double meaning of "spent" and "nothing" in "Here am I yet":

Here am I yet, another twelvemonth spent,
 One-third departed of the mortal span,
 Carrying on the child into the man,
 Nothing into reality.

(p. 28, I, ll. 1-4)

In the next four lines, which are tightly bound together by the use of alliteration and assonance, he continues the image of life as a journey:

Sails rent,
 And rudder broken, -- reason impotent, --
 Affections all unfixed; so forth I fare
 On the mid seas unheadingly, so dare
 To do and to be done by, well content.

(ll. 4-8)

Up to this point the poem is successful. From here, however, its power declines because of the improbability of the new idea introduced in the closing lines:

So was it from the first, so is it yet;
 Yea, the first kiss that by these lips was set
 On any human lips, methinks was sin.

(ll. 9-11)

One cannot accept Clough's incredible linking of "the first kiss" with "sin". By employing abstract diction in ll. 3 and 4 of "Would that I were" Clough is able to convey his indecision. The ambiguity of "ought" in l. 8 is effective:

Would that I were, -- O hear thy suppliant, thou,
 Whom fond belief still ventures here to see, --
 Would that I were not that which I am now
 Nor yet became the thing I wish to be!
 What wouldst thou? Poor suggestion of today
 Depart, vain fancy and fallacious thought!
 Would I could wish my wishes all away,
 And learn to wish the wishes that I ought.

(p. 49)

Although the diction of Clough's poems of natural description is conventional, his best Balliol poems are those in which he uses natural description to convey his mood. In "When soft September brings again" he achieves a remarkable objectivity. The strength of the poem lies in withholding the main statement until the last line:

When soft September brings again
 To yonder gorse its golden glow,
 And Snowdon sends its autumn rain
 To bid thy current livelier flow;
 Amid that ashen foliage light
 When scarlet beads are glistering bright,

While alder boughs unchanged are seen
 In summer livery of green;
 When clouds before the cooler breeze
 Are flying, white and large; with these
 Returning, so may I return,
 And find thee changless, Pont-y-wern. ph

(p. 11)

In "Sweet streamlet bason! at thy side" he uses quiet imagery that is in direct contrast to his own torment:

Sweet streamlet bason! at they side m/
 Weary and faint within me cried
 My longing heart, -- In such pure deep
 How sweet it were to sit and sleep;
 To feel each passage from without
 Close up, -- above me and about,
 Those circling waters crystal clear,
 That calm impervious atmosphere!

(p. 11, ll. 1-8)

The landscape imagery of "Whence com'st thou, shady lane" conveys the poet's mood directly without moral comment:

Again in vision clear thy pathwayed side
 I tread, and view thine orchard plots again
 With yellow fruitage hung, and glimmering grain
 Standing or shocked through the thick hedge espied.
 This hot still noon of August brings the sight,
 This quelling silence as of eve or night,
 Wherein Earth (feeling as a mother will
 After her travail's latest bitterest throes)
 Looks up, so seemeth it, one half repose,
 One half in effort, straining, suffering still.

(p. 45, ll. 5-14)

Because this poem lacks a moral, it was not printed in the Ambarvalia volume of 1849, for to satisfy his poetic theory Clough invariably in these Balliol poems drew a moral. The manuscripts of "Sweet streamlet bason" (1840), for instance, contain an obvious moral comment that is

lacking in the 1849 Ambarvalia text. If one wishes to be healed of weariness,

go then and find
 For body it may be, or mind,
 Some poor mechanic task, nor grudge
 Some short sad while to play the drudge.

(p. 468)

The 1849 text is concerned only to define the speaker's mood by natural contrast; the manuscript versions explicitly state the value of work, even of drudgery, as an antidote to his ennui.

This moralizing impulse afflicts a number of the poems in the "Blank Misgivings" group. The ninth begins with a description of a landscape which reflects the poet's mood:

Once more the wonted road I tread,
 Once more dark heavens above me spread,
 Upon the windy down I stand,
 My station, whence the circling land
 Lies mapped and pictured wide below; --
 Such as it was, such e'en again,
 Long dreary bank, and breadth of plain
 By hedge or tree unbroken;
 A wide, and yet disheartning view,
 A melancholy world.

(pp. 31-2, ll. 1-8, 20-1)

He then turns from description and provides the text of his sermon:

'Tis true,
 Most true; and yet, like those strange smiles
 By fervent hope or tender thought
 From distant happy regions brought,
 Which upon some sick bed are seen

To glorify a pale worn face
 With sudden beauty, -- so at whiles
 Lights have descended, hues have been,
 To clothe with half-celestial grace
 The bareness of the desert place,

(p. 32, ll. 21-30)

and from here the poem becomes a tract. In the last poem of the series "I have seen higher holier things than these" the opening stanza provides the text of the sermon which begins in the second stanza (p. 34).

The best example in Clough's Balliol poems of his insistence on (pointing) a moral is the arrangement of the ten "Blank Misgivings" poems. The progression from despair to exultant hope which they reveal is artificial and misleading. The tenth poem was not written last; in fact the "Summum Pulchrum" stanza, in which the moral is most carefully stated, was written on November 13, 1841, some six months after the other stanzas. More important is the date assigned to the eighth poem which is the bleakest of the series:

O kind protecting Darkness! as a child
 Flies back to bury in his mother's lap
 His shame and his confusion, so to thee
 O Mother Night, come I! within the folds
 Of thy dark robe hide thou me close; for I
 So long, so heedless, with external things
 Have played the liar, that whate'er I see, . . .
 Look me in the face! O hide me, Mother Night!

(p. 31, ll. 1-7, 14)

The date in the 1839-42 Notebook is November 22, 1840

[41] ²⁵, a week later than the "Summum Pulchrum" stanza.

At Rugby Clough wrote edifying and homiletic poems; at Balliol he wrote confessional poems, but it is clear that the moral value of poetry was still an important element in his poetic theory.

Wordsworth's influence on Clough has already been noted. There is in Clough, however, at least in the Balliol poems, none of that intense delight in nature which characterizes the early Wordsworth and of which The Prelude is the authentic record. In Clough's poems of natural description -- as I have shown in my discussion above -- he uses nature to express his own mood. At times, though, there are strong verbal resemblances to Wordsworth, so close that one questions the sincerity of Clough's sentiments:

Oh well do I remember then the days
 When on some grassy slope, what time the sun
 Was sinking and the solemn eve came down
 With its blue vapour upon field and wood
 And elm-embosomed spire, once more again
 I fed on sweet emotions;

(p. 46, ll. 22-7)

With silent woods and hills untenanted
 Let me go commune.

(p. 29, III, ll. 9-10)

In "Yes, I have lied, and so must walk my way" he laments his loss of the Wordsworthian spirit:

Therefore for me sweet Nature's scenes reveal not
 Their charms.

(IV, ll. 9-10)

Clough, it should be noted, said of the "Blank Misgivings" poems, on which Wordsworth's influence is most obvious, that "there may be something of affectation in them."²⁶

Although the structure and the title of "Blank Misgivings of a Creature moving about in Worlds not realized" takes one back to Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality", the mood is very different. (The title is ll. 144-5 of the Ode.) Also it lacks the unity of the Ode.

Two of the Balliol poems lie outside these groups. Personal and social hypocrisy, which Clough was to satirize in his later poems, is the theme of "Duty -- that's to say complying". Its tone resembles the songs of the Spirit in Dipsychus:

Duty -- that's to say complying
 With whate'er's expected here;
 On your unknown cousin's dying,
 Straight be ready with the tear;
 Upon etiquette relying,
 Unto usage nought relying,
 Lend your waist to be embraced,
 Blush not even, never fear.

(p. 27, ll. 1-8)

It is one of Clough's bitterest poems, but the passion is uncontrolled, the expression repetitive, and the versification rough. It is too much the result of uncontrolled ill temper to be successful.

In "A golden key on the tongue" Clough expresses a desire to be coping "with life's real tempest (p. 43, l. 14). That his interest has moved beyond himself to the outside world is seen by "To the Great Metropolis" in which he

condemns the commercialism and the heartlessness of London. The colloquial diction -- especially the imagery of the last few lines -- points ahead to The Bothie and Amours de Voyage.

Traffic, to speak from knowledge but begun,
 I saw, and travelling much, and fashion -- Yea,
 And if that Competition and Display
 Make a great Capital, then thou art one,
 One, it may be, unrivalled neath the sun.
 But sovereign symbol of the Great and Good,
 True Royalty, and genuine Statesmanhood,
 Nobleness, Learning, Piety was none.
 If such realities indeed there are
 Working within unsignified, 'tis well;
 The stranger's fancy of the thing thou art
 Is rather truly of a huge Bazaar,
 A railway terminus, a gay Hotel,
 Anything but a mighty Nation's heart.

(pp. 48-9)

His effective use of cliché for satiric purpose -- "unrivalled neath the sun" (l. 5) and "a mighty Nation's heart" (l. 14) -- is another early example of the satiric quality of Clough's mind.

3. "The Duty to do"

The largest group of Clough's Oriel poems are love lyrics. Apart from their interest as early utterances of a poet who treats love and marriage in his major poems, a few are fine lyrics.

Clough's biographers James I. Osborne and Goldie Levy find these lyrics impersonal and intellectualized, and judge the emotion superficial and the conventional

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diction academic and stilted. All these weaknesses appear in "When panting sighs the bosom fill". The poem is an impersonal analysis of heavenly love and its relation to earthly love and to reason, but no attempt is made to connect the discussion with any particular human experience; the analysis is completely general. The conventional imagery of the first stanza is typical of that in the rest of the poem:

When panting sighs the bosom fill,
 And hands by chance united thrill
 At once with one delicious pain
 The pulses and the nerves of twain;
 When eyes that erst could meet with ease,
 Do seek, yet, seeking, shyly shun
 Extatic conscious unison, --
 The sure beginnings, say, be these,
 Prelusive to the strain of love
 Which angels sing in heaven above?

(p. 4, ll. 1-10)

Frederick Mulhauser in an important article in Modern Philology for February, 1945²⁸ compares the published version of this poem with three unpublished versions. (These three versions are published in the Notes to the 1951 Poems.) Malhauser demonstrates, firstly, "that the argument of the poem was originally not an intellectualized philosophical discussion of the relation between love and reason but a personal consideration of the best time for a young man to marry,"²⁹ and secondly, that the stilted poetic diction of the published version was not present in the earliest manuscript version, but was added in successive

drafts. He concludes:

although critics may have been justified in writing that the poem is intellectualized, impersonal, and general, it is misleading to imply that Clough conceived it in those terms and that all his considerations of love, even all his early considerations of love, were inevitably intellectualized and general. The first two versions of the poem . . . are not completely impersonal love lyrics but are full of the excellence of earthly love.³⁰

It is significant that in a letter to Burbidge,³¹ to whom he sent the first three versions, Clough acknowledges "a certain sympathy and understanding with the quidam who loquiturs in them [the verses]."³² This personal interest which Clough admits in his subject accounts, I believe, for the relative success of the first two versions, although none of the versions is great poetry.

The success of "The Silver Wedding! on some pensive ear" and "O Theos Meta Sou", the two best love lyrics of Clough's Oriel days, can be traced also to his personal interest in the subject and emotion of the lyrics. "The Silver Wedding!" (pp. 19-21) was inspired by a visit to the home of Theodore Walrond,³³ on the occasion of the silver wedding anniversary of Walrond's parents. The poem is to some extent intellectualized and academic because of the elaborate working out of the "silver" image, but the emotion is genuine. So real is the emotion of "O Theos Meta Sou" that it has been quoted as proof that Clough had an unfortunate love affair in the Highlands.³⁴ A contrast

is immediately obvious when one compares the tone and diction of these lines from the first stanza,

I shall see they soft brown eyes dilate to wakening woman
 thought,
 And whiter still the white cheek grow to which the blush
 was brought;
 And oh, with mine commixing I thy breath of life shall
 feel,
 And clasp the shyly passive hands in joyous Highland
 reel;
 I shall hear, and see, and feel, and in sequence sadly
 true,
 Shall repeat the bitter-sweet of the lingering last adieu;
 I shall seem as now to leave thee, with the kiss upon the
 brow,
 And the fervent benediction of -- O Theos Meta Sou,

(p. 39, ll. 7-14)

with the impersonal tone and the conventional diction of these stanzas from "Oh, ask not what is love, she said," and "On Latmos":

Oh, ask it not, she said, she said,
 Thou winn'st not word from me!
 -- Oh, silent as the long long dead,
 I, Lady, learn of thee;

(p. 11, ll. 5-8)

On the mountain, in the woodland,
 In the shaded secret dell,
 I have seen thee, I have met thee!
 In the soft ambrosial hours of night,
 In darkness silent sweet
 I beheld thee, I was with thee,
 I was thine, and thou wert mine!

(p. 39, ll. 1-7)

If one excludes "The Silver Wedding!", "O Theos Meta Sou" and the first two versions of "When panting sighs", Osborne's estimate of the Oriel love lyrics is a fair one:

In these early love lyrics he is a poet of love who is not as yet making professed use of any experience in the field that he may himself have accumulated. Love exacts meditation from him as a beautiful vision on the one hand, and a serious responsibility on the other hand, but there is nothing to indicate a connection between this meditation and any particular case. Everything Clough has to say about love is perfectly general.³⁵

The majority of Clough's Balliol poems, as I have shown, are consciously confessional, but they are not convincing. During Clough's undergraduate days he lived on two levels: on one level he was still a pupil of Dr. Arnold and felt the proper remorse for his "sins"; on the other level he was glad to be free from Rugby and was seeking a broader basis on which to formulate a philosophy. The confessional poems represent one side of Clough's nature; "Duty -- that's to say complying" and "To the Great Metropolis" represent another and more genuine side. Clough's understanding of the spirit and manners of his age, as shown in these latter poems, indicates that he will not be satisfied with a superficial philosophy. His search for Truth -- for he strongly believed that it could be discovered -- led him to resign his Oriel Fellowship. A poem written during his last year at Oxford expresses in general terms his reason for leaving there:

Why should I say I see the things I see not,
 Why be and be not?
 Show love for that I love not, and fear for what I fear not?
 And dance about to music that I hear not?

(p. 21, ll. 1-4)

Clough's correspondence, especially that with Dr. Hawkins, the Provost of Oriel,³⁶ reveals that his decision was the result of long and mature thinking. His rebellion had no tinge of bitterness or intolerance about it, and was firmly based in an intellectual and moral scepticism which demanded high respect. The patience and open-mindedness with which Clough set about his pursuit of truth appears in one of the earliest of his Oriel poems "The human spirits saw I on a day" (1844), (pp. 1-2). He describes a spirit going around to various human beings "hardly tasking, subtly questioning" them -- "Dost thou not know that these things only seem?", "What shall avail the knowledge thou hast sought?", "What is the end of strife?" They reply that it would be of no advantage to know the answers to these questions, and that meanwhile they are content to do their duty. Clough is not yet very explicit about what his duty is, but he realizes that once he has decided on it he must act. He is, however, more definite in the forceful "Hope evermore and believe, O man":

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and the stars
 direct thee,
 Go with the girdle of man, go and encompass the earth.
 Not for the gain of the gold, for the getting, the
 hoarding, the having,
 But for the joy of the deed; but for the Duty to do.
 Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition and
 action,
 With the great girdle of God, go and encompass the
 earth.

(pp. 62-3, ll. 13-8)

In the face of such a statement it is not possible to assent to H.V. Routh's statement: "Having resigned Oxford, he resigned himself."³⁷

The profound influence which Carlyle had on Clough will be referred to in succeeding chapters. "Qui Laborat, Orat" which Clough wrote in 1845, two years after the publication of Past and Present, reveals how strong Carlyle's influence was even at this date in his Oriel career. The poem blends Clough's theistic faith with a belief in Carlyle's gospel of work. Parts of the poem are the nearest Clough came in his Oxford verse to perfect expression, but other parts are marred by clumsy phrasing. In the first two stanzas, which present the idea of God as a spirit dwelling in the human spirit, we get, for instance, unhappy phrases like "mortal moral strife" (1.3), "inly brought" (1.5) and "self-encentered thought" (1.7):

O Only Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see and feel,
But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
Alone aright reveal!

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought,
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine;
Chastised each rebel, self-encentered thought,
My will adareth Thine.

(pp. 12-3, ll. 1-8)

The idea of work as prayer is stated in stanza five:

O not unowned, Thou shalt unnamed forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart prepare;
And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer.

(p. 13, ll. 17-20)

Those who think that despair and failure are the terms which best describe Clough's life would do well to return to this statement of his faith.

Clough was indeed sceptical about traditional religion, yet he firmly believed in loyalty to an ideal of truth. The form Clough's scepticism took appears in a letter he wrote to his sister in May, 1847:

I cannot feel sure that a man may not have all that is important in Christianity even if he does not so much as know that Jesus of Nazareth existed. And I do not think that doubts respecting the facts related in the Gospels need give us much trouble. Believing that in one way or another the thing is of God, we shall in the end know perhaps in what way and how far it was so. Trust in God's Justice and Love, and belief in his Commands as written in our Conscience stand unshaken, though Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John or even St. Paul, were to fall.³⁸

This view is expressed again in "Epi-Strauss-ium", written in the same year:

Matthew and Mark and Luke and holy John
 Evanished all and gone! . . .
 Lost, is it? lost to be recovered never?
 However,
 The place of worship the meantime with light
 Is, if less richly, more sincerely bright,
 And in blue skies the Orb is mainfest to sight.

(p. 49, ll. 1-2, 11-5)

One who could write this is not likely to be disturbed long by theological arguments. Many years later Clough gave a more detailed statement of his religious views in "Notes on the Religious Tradition".³⁹ Clough did not believe that Truth was to be found in any one creed, indeed the "Religious

Tradition" did not refer to "the religion of the majority of mankind, but to the religion of the best, so far as we can judge in past history."⁴⁰ It was to be found

Everywhere; but above all in our own work: in life, in action, in submission, so far as action goes, in service, in experience, in patience, and in confidence. . . . The Religious Tradition . . . as found not only among clergymen and religious people, but among all who have really tried to order their lives by the highest action of the reasonable and spiritual will. I will go to Johnson; I will go to Hume, as well as to Bishop Butler. . . . Every rule of conduct, every maxim, every usage of life and society must be admitted. . . . Everywhere -- to India, if you will, and the ancient Bhagvad Gita and the Laws of Menu 41

Religion for Clough, then, was a sort of "Perennial Philosophy", a code of universal morals fused with Carlyle's gospel of work. It was Clough's answer to the religious dilemma of the nineteenth century, and indeed a surprisingly modern one.

Two other poems of Clough's Oriel days deserve attention, for they reflect his belief that poetry should deal with man's "ordinary feelings", a belief that accounts for the subject matter of his longer poems. In "Sic Itur" and "Qua Cursum Ventus" Clough treats the theme of friendship. The underlying idea of both poems is that there is more than one way to arrive at Truth.

As, at a railway junction, men
Who came together, taking then
One the train up, one down, again

Meet never! Ah, much more as they
Who take one street's two sides, and say
Hard parting words, but walk one way.

("Sic Itur", p. 7, ll. 1-6)

The two friends, Clough concludes in the last stanza, are seeking "the self-same end". "Qua Cursum Ventus", written when W.G. Ward became a Roman Catholic, expresses with great sympathy the pathos and tragedy of conflicting viewpoints. The iambic tetrameter lines are flawless. The fine image of the first two stanzas leads to the introduction of the theme of "estranged" friendship in stanza three:

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
 With canvas drooping, side by side,
 Two towers of sail at dawn of day
 Are scarce long leagues apart described;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
 And all the darkling hours thay plied,
 Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
 By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so -- but why the tale reveal
 Of those, whom, year by year unchanged,
 Brief absence joined anew, to feel
 Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

(pp. 34-5, ll. 1-12)

The poem ends on the same note as "Sic Itur":

One port, methought, alike they sought,
 One purpose hold where'er they fare, --
 O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
 At last, at last, unite them there!

(p. 35, ll. 25-8)

The railway image used in "Sic Itur" -- a similar one has already been noted in "To the Great Metropolis" -- and the image from the sea and ships in "Qua Cursum Ventus" appear often in Clough's later poetry. The imagery of the

Oriel poems also reveals Clough's interest in science.⁴²

In "When Israel came out of Egypt" he makes satiric use of deterministic ideas about the existence of God:

And as of old from Sinai's top
 God said that God is One,
 By Science strict so speaks He now
 To tell us, There is None!

Earth goes by chemic forces; Heaven's
 A Mécanique Céleste!
 And heart and mind of human kind
 A watch-work as the rest!

(p. 17, ll. 53-8)

Imagery from alchemy and metallurgy appear in "The Silver Wedding":

Come years as many yet, and as they go,
 In human life's great crucible shall they
 Transmute, so potent are the spells that know,
 Into pure gold the silver of to-day.

Strange metallurge is human life! 'Tis true;
 And Use and Wont in many a gorgeous case
 Full specious fair for casual outward view
 Electrotpe the sordid and the base.

(pp. 20-1, ll. 33-40)

Most interesting is "Natura Naturans" (pp. 36-8), which traces the stages of evolution from the geological level, through plant and animal life, to the human plane. Clough's statement is more in line with nineteenth century science than are the views of Tennyson or Browning.

"The human spirits saw I on a day", "Qui Laborat, Orat", and "Qua Cursum Ventus" are the only Oriel poems which show considerable improvement in form over Clough's

undergraduate poems.⁴³ These reveal a heightened emotional intensity and a firmer grasp on ideas, but grace and melody are not their dominant characteristics.

Clough rarely wrote wholly successful lyrics; in my opinion he succeeds only twice. In the well known "Say not the struggle nought availeth" (1849) and in "Where lies the land to which the ship would go?" (1852-3) he achieves a dignity and a beauty of expression by using a simple, yet heightened, diction that is unmarred by the clumsy phrases of his Oxford lyrics. The last stanza of "Say not the struggle" and the last two stanzas of "Where lies the land" exemplify this:

And not by eastern windows only,
 When daylight comes, comes in the light,
 In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
 But westward, look, the land is bright;

(p. 63, ll. 13-6)

On stormy nights when wild north-westerns rave,
 How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
 The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
 Exults to bear, and scorn to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
 Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
 And where the land she travels from? Away,
 Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

(p. 104, ll. 9-16)

Clough here uses a language which conveys both the intellectual and the emotional qualities of his ideas.

Clough resigned his Oriel Fellowship in October, 1848, and in November published The Bothie of Toper-na-Vuolich.

This poem is Clough's first attempt at story-telling and character analysis in verse, and indicates the direction of his poetic development.

NOTES

- 1 Anne is quoted in the Memoir prefixed to the Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. his wife, (London, 1888), 9.
- 2 This aspect of Dr. Arnold's character is discussed by Willey, Nineteenth Century Studies, (London, 1955), 52-5, and by Trilling, Matthew Arnold, (London, 1955), 62-73.
- 3 A.P. Stanley, Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, (London, 1858), I, 33. The comment is attributed to Bonamy Price (1807-88), an occasional pupil of Dr. Arnold at Laleham, and afterwards a master at Rugby. DNB, XVI, 322-3.
- 4 The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. Malhauser, (Oxford, 1957), I, 13; hereafter cited as Corres., I or II.
- 5 Ibid., 15.
- 6 Ibid., 18.
- 7 Ibid., 20.
- 8 John N. Simpkinson (1817-94), a pupil at Rugby 1831-5, then at Cambridge. Curate, Schoolmaster and Rector.
- 9 Corres., I, 35.
- 10 Ibid., 16.
- 11 Ibid., 39.
- 12 Ibid., 62.
- 13 Published quarterly between July, 1835 and November, 1837. Clough was for a time editor and chief contributor.

- 14 Quoted in the Introduction to The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. Lowry, (London, 1932), 8.
- 15 All page references are to The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. Lowry, Norrington, Mulhauser, (Oxford, 1951); hereafter cited as Poems.
- 16 Corres., I, 64.
- 17 Ibid., 102.
- 18 Ibid., 98.
- 19 Chapman, English Literature in Account with Religion, (Boston, 1910), compares Clough and Bunyan: "while Bunyan gave a singularly responsive conscience over to excess of belief, Clough lent his to excess of doubt." 428. A more recent critic -- Chew in A Literary History of England, ed. Baugh (London, 1948) -- says: "at Oxford the Tractarians drew him one way and the liberal theologians another with the consequence that he wandered between two worlds, a perplexed spirit, hesitating almost to the point of paralysis." 1405.
- 20 William George Ward (1812-82), Clough's Mathematics Tutor at Balliol. Passages in his book The Ideal of a Christian Church (1844), which praised the Roman Catholic Church, were censured by the vice-chancellor "as inconsistent with the Thirty-Nine articles." Ward thereupon resigned his fellowship, and on September 5, 1845 he was received into the Roman Communion. DNB, XX, 801-5.
- 21 Corres., I, 97.
- 22 Ambarvalia was published in January, 1849, with the subtitle Poems by Thomas Burbidge and Arthur Hugh Clough. Clough's twenty-nine poems were published separately in 1850.

- 23 Thomas Arnold, D.D., Christian Life, its Hopes, its Fears, and its Close, (London, 1845), especially "Christian Conscience", 142-52.
- 24 Gollin, Arthur Hugh Clough's Formative Years: 1819-1841, (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1959), 254.
- 25 Corrected to 1841 by editors of Poems, 469.
- 26 Corres., I, 107.
- 27 Osborne, Arthur Hugh Clough, (London, 1920), 82-3.
Levy, Arthur Hugh Clough, (London, 1938), 92.
- 28 Mulhauser, "Clough's 'Love and Reason'", Modern Philology, XLII (1945), 174-86.
- 29 Ibid., 174.
- 30 Ibid., 186.
- 31 Thomas Burbidge (1816-92), a pupil at Rugby 1830-4. Co-author, with Clough, of Ambarvalia.
- 32 Quoted by Mulhauser from a MS. letter, Modern Philology, 177.
- 33 Theodore Walrond, a pupil and afterwards a Master at Rugby.
- 34 Turner, "A Study of Clough's Mari Magno", PMLA, XLIV (1929), 579.
- 35 Osborne, Clough, 82-3.
- 36 Corres., I, 191-8.

- 37 Routh, Towards the Twentieth Century, (New York, 1937), 170.
- 38 Corres., I, 182.
- 39 Prose Remains, 415-21.
- 40 Ibid., 419.
- 41 Ibid., 418.
- 42 Clough's knowledge of science is discussed by Palmer in "The Bearing of Science on the Thought of Arthur Hugh Clough", PMLA, LIX (1944), 212-25; and in Bush, Science and English Poetry, (New York, 1950), 130-32.
- 43 Garrod in Poetry and the Criticism of Life, (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), 116, passes a different judgement: "On the same level as 'Qui Laborat, Orat' I should put only one other piece -- that entitled, in the later editions, 'A Protest'." ("Light words they were, and lightly, falsely said", Poems, 12).

Chapter II

THE BOTHIE OF TOBER-NA-VUOLICH

After reading The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Emerson wrote Carlyle: "He is a stout, solid reliable man and friend, -- I knew well; but this fine poem has taken me by surprise."¹ Emerson's impression of Clough -- he had met him at Oxford in 1848, and later saw him frequently in Paris -- was of a serious Oxford scholar interested in contemporary questions, so he was surprised to read a frolicsome, exuberant poem about an Oxford reading party in the Highlands. Because Clough had recently resigned his Oriel Fellowship, his friends at Oxford expected a theological discourse on his religious views, and were likewise surprised. If Emerson had recalled Clough's gaiety and vitality during the excitement of the 1849 revolution,² he would, however, have understood the high spirits of The Bothie.

Clough's decision to leave Oxford has been variously commented upon,² but if one can judge from The Bothie it was a wise one.³ He wrote Gell³ about his hesitation in signing the thirty-nine articles:

It is not so much from any definite objection to this or that point as general dislike to Subscription and strong feeling of its being after all . . . a bondage, and a very heavy one, and one that may cramp and cripple one for life.⁴

The important words are "general dislike to Subscription", for when Clough left Oxford he felt free of the shackles which had oppressed him for so long. The freshness of

The Bothie reflects this new found freedom.

Clough hastily wrote The Bothie in September, 1848, and revised it in 1859 acting on a criticism, as he told C.E. Norton, "that the letters and sermonizing parts were too long and least to the point."⁵ Yet much of the revised version of the poem is taken up with philosophical discussion between the members of the party, and this discussion -- some of it presented in the form of letters -- is not closely connected with the simple plot. The structure of the poem, therefore, is weak, but the story is told with gaiety and excitement. The plot is centered around the radical Oxford undergraduate Philip Hewson and his love-making in the Highlands. A discussion of ideal womanhood, the democratic ideal of equality and the dignity of labour is introduced in Canto II, and these topics are presented from several points of view in the seven remaining Cantos.

For this poem Clough drew heavily upon his experiences with Highland reading parties. According to J.C. Shairp, some of the incidents and characters in The Bothie were taken from the reading party which Clough led in the long vacation of 1847.⁶ Also, the original title The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich was named from the location of a forester's hut.⁷ It seems almost certain that the poem is connected with the lyric "Farewell, my Highland lassie!" (pp. 38-9), with its description of "life in some black bothie", and it

has been suggested that the love affair which inspired the lyric received fuller expression here.⁸ Yet most of the subject matter of the poem is fictional. The dedication to the 1848 edition reads: "My long-vacation pupils will I hope allow me to inscribe this trifle to them, and will not, I trust, be displeased if in a fiction, purely fiction, they are here and there reminded of times we enjoyed together."⁹

The careful detail, the technique of repetition, and the informality, which characterize the poem, are all present in the opening lines:

It was the afternoon; and the sports were now at the ending.
 Long had the stone been put, tree cast, and thrown the hammer;
 Up the perpendicular hill, Sir Hector so called it,
 Eight stout gillies had run, with speed and agility wondrous;
 Run too the course on the level had been; the leaping was over:
 Last in the show of dress, a novelty recently added,
 Noble ladies their prizes adjudged for costume that was perfect,
 Turning the clansman about, as they stood with upraised elbows,
 Bowing their eye-glassed brows, and fingering kilt and sporran.
 It was four of the clock, and the sports were come to the ending,
 Therefore the Oxford party went off to adorn for the dinner.

(I, 1-11)

This condensed and ordered description firmly sets the scene in the Highlands of Scotland, and establishes the colloquial quality of the language.

This introduction is followed by a description of some of the undergraduates and the Tutor as they appear dressed for the dinner given in honour of a gathering of chieftains and clansmen. Clough, with frequent touches of ironic humour, minutely describes the externals of his characters, especially their dress. He characterizes them simply by broad, embracing adjectives, and often by slipping in a word or phrase which conveys what it might otherwise take several lines to express. Next to Wordsworth Clough admired Chaucer, and his description shows how great his debt to him was. Hope is presented first:

Hope was first, black-tied, white-waistcoated, simple,
His Honour.

(I, 13)

Then the Tutor is sketched:

Still more plain the Tutor, the grave man, nicknamed Adam,
White-tied, clerical, silent, with antique square-cut
waistcoat
Formal, unchanged, of black cloth, but with sense and
feeling beneath it;
Skilful in Ethics and Logic, in Pindar and Poets unrivalled;
Shady in Latin, said Lindsay, but topping in Plays and
Aldrich.

(I, 20-4)

The poem abounds in little details of Oxford life like these references to "Pindar and Poets" and "Plays and Aldrich".

Lindsay is described next:

Somewhat more splendid in dress, in a waistcoat work of a
lady,
Lindsay succeeded; the lively, the cheery, cigar-loving
Lindsay,

Lindsay the ready of speech, the Piper, the Dialectician,
 This was his title from Adam because of the words he
 invented,
 Who in three weeks had created a dialect new for the party;
 This was his title from Adam, but mostly they called him
 the Piper.
 Lindsay succeeded, the lively, the cheery, cigar-loving
 Lindsay.

(I, 25-31)

The repetition not only fixes the description in the minds
 of the readers, but also conveys the enthusiasm with which
 Clough creates his characters. The description of Arlie
 is one of the most pleasing in the poem:

Arlie descended the last, effulgent as god of Olympus;
 Blue, perceptibly blue, was the coat that had white silk
 facings,
 Waistcoat blue, coral-buttoned, and white-tie finely ad-
 justed,
 Coral moreover the studs on a shirt as of crochet of women:
 When the fourwheel for ten minutes already had stood at
 the gateway,
 He, like a god, came leaving his ample Olympian chamber.

(I, 39-44)

In Canto II, Hobbes is described with the same wit and humour:

the great Hobbes, contemplative, corpulent,
 witty,
 Author forgotten and silent of currentest phrases and
 fancies,
 Mute and exuberant by turns, a fountain at intervals
 playing,
 Mute and abstracted, or strong and abundant as rain in
 the tropics;
 Studious; careless of dress; inobservant; by smooth per-
 suasions
 Lately decoyed into kilt on example of Hope and the Piper.

(II, 124-9)

In later Cantos Clough slips in further descriptions of
 these characters, but basically they remain as they are
 described here.

The characters who appear briefly are also memorably sketched: "Eager, the grey, but boy-hearted Sir Hector, the Chief and the Chairman." At the banquet appear "the shrewd, ever-ciphering Factor", "the Guardsman mute and stately", and "Members of Parliament many, forgetful of votes and blue-books". Perhaps the finest stroke is Clough's identification of one of the Pipers: "Pipers five or six, among them the young one, the drunkard." His eye also catches the dress of the clansmen and chieftans:

Many with silver brooches, and some with those brilliant
crystals
Found amid granite-dust on the frosty scalp of the
Cairn-Gorm.

(I, 54-5)

a thin man clad as the Saxon,
Trousers and cap and jacket of homespun blue, hand-woven.

(I, 175-6)

The description of Philip at the end of Canto I is concerned more to establish him as a type than to paint the externals of his character. His main function in the poem is to expound Carlylean ideas, and this first description carefully establishes his cast of mind. The description of Hope, Lindsay and Arlie carefully notes their aristocratic qualities, so Philip appears in ironic contrast:

Philip Hewson, a poet,
Hewson a radical hot, hating lords and scorning ladies,
Silent mostly, but often reviling in fire and fury
Feudal tenure, mercatille lords, competition and bishops,
Liveries, armorial bearings, amongst other matters the
Game-laws.

(I, 124-8)

This prepares us for Philip's satiric touch during his speech at the banquet:

I have, however, less claim than others perhaps to this honour,
For let me say, I am neither game-keeper, nor game-preserver.

(I, 160-1)

Social distinction is a theme of The Bothie, and in addition to Philip's direct reference here, Clough slyly introduces into Canto I a number of small details which become significant only when the theme is more fully developed. The postman, for instance, who "made out he [Hope] was heir to the Earldom of Ilay," addresses him "Always his Honour at least, sometimes the Viscount of Ilay." Then at the banquet the tables are arranged: "These for Chairman and Groupier, and gentry fit to be with them."

At the opening of Canto II Clough catches the spirit of the party on the morning after a late dance:

Breakfast, commencing at nine, lingered lazily on to noon-day.

Tea and coffee were there; a jug of water for Hewson;
Tea and coffee; and four cold grouse upon the side-board;

Gaily they talked, as they sat, some late and lazy at breakfast,

Some professing a book, some smoking outside at the window.

(II, 8-12)

During their gay talk they begin to discuss the "noble ladies and rustic girls" who have been their partners at the dance. Philip, however, "the chartist", as Clough carefully notes,

"sick of the very names of your Lady Augustas and Floras"
turns to his friends:

Oh, if our high-born girls knew only the grace, the
attraction,
Labour, and labour alone, can add to the beauty of women,
Truly the milliner's trade would quickly, I think, be at
discount,
All the waste and loss in silk and satin be saved us,
Saved for purposes truly and widely productive.

(II, 25-9)

This leads to a long discussion on women of high and low
degree. Philip explains that he never knew "of the feelings
between men and women" until one day in a village field he saw

a capless, bonnetless maiden,
Bending with three-pronged fork in a garden uprooting
potatoes.

(II, 43-4)

This sight moved him, but he wondered "Was it the air? . . .
or herself?" and concluded that "in part it was the charm
of the labour." Since this experience his views on women
have changed, and balls, hearing them singing and "per-
forming dull farces of escort" seem

like a sort of unnatural up-in-the-air balloon-work, . . .
Utter removal from work, mother earth, and the objects of
living.

(II, 59, 61)

Philip prefers to look at love in close association with work,
and asserts that women must learn

how the blood of true gallantry kindles,
How the old knightly religion, the chivalry semi-quixotic
Stirs in the veins of a man at seeing some delicate woman
Serving him, toiling -- for him, and the world.

(II, 74-7)

He believes, in fact, that nothing is beautiful which is not at the same time useful. A view, as Arthur points out, which has been advanced before about "Gothic buildings and Beauty". This reference is picked up by Hobbes:

Philip shall write us a book, a Treatise upon The Laws of Architectual Beauty in Application to Women;

Illustrations, of course, and a Parker's Glossary pendent,
Where shall in specimen seen be the sculliony stumpy-columnar,

(Which to a reverent taste is perhaps the most moving of any,)

Rising to grace of true women in English and Early and Later,
Charming us still in fulfilling the Richer and Loftier stages,

Lost, ere we end, in the Lady-Debased and the Lady-Flamboyant:

Whence why in satire and spite too merciless onward pursue her

Hither to hideous close, Modern-Florid, modern-fine-lady?

(II, 143-53)

The description of Hobbes in Canto II notes his wit and exuberance, and this statement reinforces our picture of him. He remains the satirist of the party, and his ironic comments are heard often.

The Tutor, true to our impression of him, advises Philip on two points, the need for everyone to do his duty, and the impossibility of equality. With this Philip has no patience, and he replies with gusto:

Alas! the noted phrase of the prayer-book,
Doing our duty in that state of life to which God has called us,

Seems to me always to mean, when the little rich boys say it,

Standing in velvet frock by mama's brocaded flounces, . . .
Seems to me always to mean, Eat, drink, and never mind others.

(II, 202-5, 7)

With the question having been discussed from several points of view, Clough with a touch of humour and satire sends Philip -- "smit by the charm of a lovely potato-upreoter" -- off to the mountains to "Study the question of sex in the Bothie of What-did-he-call-it." Clough's humour and satire serve him well in Canto II. They permeate the philosophical discussion and are the source of our pleasure. The poem becomes more serious towards the end, and some of the long sermonizing sections, devoid of Clough's ironic humour, are wearisome.

In Canto III we hear from Lindsay "corrected of Arthur" that Philip has found his ideal woman, "golden-haired Katie", beautiful as she goes about her farm and household work. To this, Hobbes makes a characteristic ironic comment:

Did you not say she was seen every day in her beauty and
 bedgown
 Doing plain household work, as washing, cooking, scouring?
 How could he help but love her? nor lacked there perhaps
 the attraction
 That, in a blue cotton print tucked up over striped linsey-
 woolsey,
 Barefoot, barelegged, he beheld her, with arms bare up to
 the elbows,
 Bending with fork in her hand in a garden uprooting po-
 tatoes?

(III, 229-34)

Much of the information in Canto IV is conveyed through letters, a technique that Clough uses with some skill in Amours de Voyage. We learn that Philip, recognizing the social distance between himself and Katie, and re-

alizing how a marriage with her could interfere with his career, renounces her and falls in love almost immediately with Lady Maria. In 1849 Clough wrote William Allingham telling him that he had just read his "Pilot's Pretty Daughter" and that he thought The Bothie "not without resemblance perhaps, in thought."¹⁰ Philip's reasons for renouncing Katie are reminiscent of Allingham's lines:

A fisher's hut, the scene perforce
Of narrow thoughts and manners coarse,
Coarse as the curtains that beseem
(Festoons of net) the smoky beam,
Would never lodge my favourite dream,
 Though fair my Pilot's Daughter.¹¹

Clough's best satire in The Bothie is his manipulation of the plot to produce this change in Philip. Philip now recants all he has said previously in favour of the poor and against the rich, and argues that beauty may be ornamental as well as useful. Philip, it should be noted, is ruefully aware of his own inconsistency. In the letter to Adam in which he argues this, he prefaces each of his arguments by such statements as -- "Often I find myself saying, and know not myself as I say it," "Often I find myself saying, in irony is it, or earnest?" and "You will wonder at this, no doubt! I also wonder!" This detail helps give Philip more stature as a character, because it makes him very real. Up to this point in The Bothie the satire has been genial and light; here it is bitter and intense. Philip argues, for instance, that toil and

suffering are justifiable if at the top women like Lady Maria are produced:

Were it not well that the stem should be naked of leaf
and of tendril,
Poverty-stricken, the barest, the dimmallest stick of the
garden;
Flowerless, leafless, unlovely, for ninety-and-nine long
summers,
So in the hundredth, at last, were bloom for one day at
the summit,
So but that fleeting flower were lovely as Lady Maria.

(V, 45-9)

The satire on the way in which the rich tolerate the poor is amongst the most savage in Victorian literature:

What of the poor and the weary? their labour and pain is
needed.
Perish the poor and the weary! what can they better than
perish,
Perish in labour for her, who is worth the destruction of
empires?

(V, 51-3)

Dig in they deep dark prison, O miner! and finding be
thankful;
Though unpolished by thee, unto thee unseen in perfection,
While thou art eating black bread in the poisonous air of
thy cavern
Far away glitters the gem on the peerless neck of a
Princess,
Dig, and starve, and be thankful; it is so, and thou
hast been aiding.

(V, 64-8)

Yea, what is more, be rich, O ye rich! be sublime in
great houses, . . .
Live, be lovely, forget them, be beautiful even to
proudness,
Even for their poor sakes whose happiness is to behold
you.

(V, 70, 75-6)

In the summer of 1847, Clough, deeply moved by the suffering resulting from the Irish famine, joined the Oxford Retrenchment Association and wrote a long pamphlet encouraging economy among the undergraduates.¹² These ideas are seen behind this satire.

But it is Hobbes who brings out the ironic humour of this situation, as he gleefully assails Philip for his recantation of his earlier extravagances on beauty and usefulness:

So had I formally opened the Treatise upon the Laws of Architectural Beauty in Application to Women.
 So had I writ. -- But my fancies are palsied by tidings
 they tell me,
 Tidings -- ah me, can it be then? that I, the blasphemous
 accounted,
 Here am with reverent heed at the wondrous Analogy working,
 Pondering thy words and thy gestures, whilst thou, a
 prophet apostate,
 (How are the mighty fallen!) whilst thou, a shepherd
 travestie,
 (How are the mighty fallen!) with gun, -- with pipe no
 longer,
 Teachest the woods to re-echo thy game-killing recantations,
 Teachest thy verse to exalt Amaryllis, a Countess's
 daughter?

(V, 99-108)

Clough is here mildly, but determinedly, satirizing the youthful radical type represented by Philip, and the attraction yet impracticability of his Carlylean views.

The last four Cantos of The Bothie are concerned with the progress of Philip's love for Elspie Mackaye of the bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich. By his marriage to her he proves

what he began by preaching, that beauty in women is enhanced, not diminished, by participation in homely labours: Carlyle illuminated by sex, one writer on The Bothie has suggested.¹³ Indeed much of what Philip has to say is in the vein of Teufelsdröckh. Even the "capless, bonnetless maiden" has its counterpart in George Fox's leather suit. Philip's letter to Adam at the beginning of Canto IX "There may be beings, perhaps, whose vocation it is to be idle," in which he renounces Lady Maria, is pure Teufelsdröckh. For instance, "Only let each man seek to be that for which nature meant him" echoes Teufelsdröckh's "Know what thou canst work at."¹⁴

In the last four Cantos the mood changes; the fun and frolic of the opening Cantos ^{are} replaced by serious and diffuse philosphizing. Longfellow highly praised "the fine delineation of the passion of love"¹⁵ in The Bothie, yet the two Cantos devoted exclusively to the courtship are inferior to the rest of the poem. They are too serious; it is Clough's ironic humour as he creates character and situation which makes the rest of the poem so exciting. A reviewer in Blackwood's Magazine in 1862 must have had this in mind when he wrote:

We are not altogether sorry to part with Mr. and Mrs. Hewson; but it is with sincere regret that we leave the Highland Cottage deserted, and are not allowed to follow the remainder of the party to Oxford.¹⁶

It may have been Clough's purpose, as Charles Kingsley

suggested in his eulogistic review of the poem in Fraser's Magazine: "To make people do their duty in that state of life to which God has called them,"¹⁷ but it is not this message which impresses us. Rather we remember the descriptions of the characters and the setting, and the touches of humour and satire.

The Bothie provides abundant examples of Clough's delight in Highland scenery. His natural description has been highly praised: "No writer in prose or verse has shown so true a feeling of the beauty of Scotland, since Wordsworth gave a perfect voice to the music and pastoral loveliness of Yarrow."¹⁸ Yet in my opinion Clough's description is prosaic. Shairp tells of the wonderful eye Clough had for the countryside:

He knew the whole lay of the different dales relatively to each other; every tarn, beck, and bend in them. He used, if I remember right, to draw pen-and-ink maps, showing us the whole lineament of the district.¹⁹

This type of perception accounts for the realistic detail that we get in this description of a secluded stream:

Springing far off from a loch unexplored in the folds
of great mountains,
Falling two miles through rowan and stunted alder, en-
veloped
Then for four more in a forest of pine, where broad and
ample
Spreads, to convey it, the glen with heathery slopes on
both sides:
Broad and fair the stream, with occasional falls and
narrows;
But, where the glen of its course approaches the vale of
the river,

Met and blocked by a huge interposing mass of granite,
 Scarce by a channel deep-cut, raging up, and raging onward,
 Forces its flood through a passage so narrow a lady would
 step it. . . .

But in the interval here the boiling, pent-up water
 Frees itself by a final descent, attaining a bason,
 Ten feet wide and eighteen long, with whiteness and fury
 Occupied partly, but mostly pellucid, pure, a mirror;
 Beautiful there for the colour derived from green rocks
 under;

Beautiful, most of all, where beads of foam uprising
 Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of
 the stillness.

(III, 21-9, 34-40)

The mathematical accuracy of "falling two miles", "then for
 four more", "ten feet wide and eighteen long", and the
 colours suggested by "rowan and stunted alder", "a forest
 of pine", "heathery slopes", "mass of granite", is the type
 of description William Allingham had in mind when he said
 that Clough's landscape painting

is noteworthy for its truth and solidity. It is often
 too truthful to be good as art, resembling rather a
 coloured photograph than a picture. Something of the
 land-surveyor, one might say, mingles with the poet.
 In everything, indeed, he aims at exactness, sometimes
 with too obvious an effort.²⁰

Clough's description of the stream suffers also from its
 length, and he is, in fact, at his best when he concentrates
 on briefer descriptions: "Morn, in yellow and white, came
 broadening out from the mountains," "Bright October was
 come, the misty-bright October."

The hexameter metre of The Bothie has been so much
 discussed that often the excellence of the character
 analysis and the satire has been lost sight of. (See the

Appendix.) Perhaps the most important point to make is that the metre suits Clough's purpose well. Longfellow's comment is significant: "Of course, this poem could have been written in no other measure."²¹ Although the underlying spirit of The Bothie is serious, Clough tells the story in the manner of a classical epic, and this produces an effect of semi-burlesque or humorous parody. The narrative of The Bothie depends, as does the narrative of a classical epic, more upon character than plot, and is told more by oration than by action. In his use of repetition, epic similies, invocations to the Muses and detailed descriptions of sports and meals, Clough is parodying the classical epic. No other metre would have suited this purpose so well, for it can be used for both gay and serious effects. The buoyancy and lightness of touch in the poem are due to the metre.

Matthew Arnold in his lecture "On Translating Homer" condemns Clough's hexameters as "excessively, needlessly rough" but makes this comment:

still owing to the native rapidity of this measure, and to the directness of style which so well allies itself with it, his composition produces a sense in the reader . . . of having, within short limits of time, a large portion of human life presented to him.²²

His mention of "directness of style" is significant.

The language of The Bothie is colloquial and direct; in fact some sections are open to the criticism that they

are prose. The imagery contributes greatly to the "directness of style" which Arnold notes. Clough, in his "Review of Some Poems by Alexander Smith and Matthew Arnold" asked whether it was "so very great an exploit to wander out into the pleasant field of Greek or Latin mythology?"²³ He apparently did not think so, for there is very little classical imagery in The Bothie. Clough praised Smith's poems because

They have something substantive and lifelike, immediate and first-hand, about them. There is a charm, for example, in finding, as we do, continual images drawn from the busy seats of industry.²⁴

The Bothie also has this something that is "lifelike, immediate and first hand", but Clough does not draw his images from industry, rather from sources as varied as the sea, the Old Testament, horse racing, trees and flowers, clouds, the railway, and wrestling. A few examples will indicate their vividness and directness:

No, I do not set Philip herein on the level of Arthur,
No, I do not compare still tarn with furious torrent,
Yet will the tarn overflow, assuaged in the lake be the
torrent.

(IV, 210-2)

as sudden torrent at time of speat in the mountain
Hurries six ways at once, and takes at last to the roughest,
Or as the practised rider at Astley's or Franconi's
Skillfully, boldly bestrides many steeds at once in the
gallop,
Crossing from this to that, with one leg here, one yonder,
So, less skilful, but equally bold, and wild as the torrent,
All through sentences six at a time, unsuspecting of syntax,
Hurried the lively good-will and garrulous tale of Sir
Hector.

(I, 90-7)

Close as do the bodies and twining limbs of the wrestlers,
When for a final bout are a day's two champions mated.

(I, 148-9)

I was as one that sleeps on the railway.

(VI, 60)

Not all his images, however, are as successful as these. I have already pointed out that Clough's description of the secluded stream in Canto III suffers from its length, and that he is better when he concentrates on briefer description. Elspie's image of "the high new bridge" and "the great keystone" in Canto VII (ll. 58-103) is likewise worked out in too much detail. This is true also of the passage immediately following in which she compares herself to an inland stream (ll. 120-36).

The Rachel-Leah imagery is the most striking in the poem. Philip refers to Rachel in Canto II in his description of the ideal woman: "Milking the kine in the field, like Rachel, watering cattle." Hobbes picks it up in the next Canto, and elaborates it:

Is not Katie as Rachel, and is not Philip a Jacob?
Truly Jacob, supplanting an hairy Highland Esau?
Shall he not, love entertained, feed sheep for the Laban
of Rannoch?
Patriarch happier he, the long servitude ended of wooing,
If when he wake in the morning he find not a Leah beside
him!

(III, 235-9)

It appears again at the end of the poem. Hobbes writes to Philip: "Go, be the wife in thy house both Rachel and Leah

unto thee!" and advises him: "Neither hate thou thy Leah, my Jacob, she also is worthy." This subtle use of the Rachel-Leah story as a sort of playful commentary on the theme is one of the finest touches in the poem.

The publication of The Bothie in 1848 attracted so little attention outside Oxford that in the following year Emerson wrote: "I cannot find that your journals have yet discovered its existence."²⁵ It was reviewed contemptuously by The Spectator.²⁶ Charles Kingsley, however, gave it an enthusiastic review in Fraser's Magazine, praising its freedom from the Lyra Apostolica school of poetry. Thackeray wrote Clough:

I have been going over some of the same ground (of youth) in this present number of Pendennis: which I fear will be considered rather warm by the puritans: but I think you'll understand it.²⁷

It seems the Puritans did react to The Bothie, for Clough wrote to William Allingham: "The 'Moral World' is rather scandalized with it."²⁸

The Bothie was published in America in 1849, and its success there was greater than in England. Lowell was enthusiastic: "I do not know a poem more impregnated with the nineteenth century."²⁹ The hexameter metre and the Republican ideals partially account for its American success. C.E. Norton, Clough's American friend, gives these reasons for its success:

The fact that its essential form and local colouring

were purely and genuinely English, and thus gratified the curiosity felt in this country concerning the social habits and ways of life in the mother-land, while on the other hand its spirit was in sympathy with the most liberal and progressive thought of the age, may sufficiently account for its popularity here.³⁰

Two other contemporary reactions to The Bothie are worth noting. William Michael Rossetti's highly appreciative review in The Germ (1850) praises its realism:

In many of the images . . . there is a peculiar modernness, a reference distinctly to the means and habits of society in these days, a recognition of every-day fact, and a willingness to believe it as capable of poetry as that which, but for having once been fact, would not now be tradition.³¹

This "modernness" of imagery, and its relation "to the means and habits of society in these days" arises from Clough's desire to write a poem concerned with his own time.

The suitability of the present age for supplying the subjects of poetry was frequently discussed in the mid-nineteenth century. Matthew Arnold in his Preface to Poems (1853) quotes the view of a critic writing in The Spectator of April 2, 1853, and categorically denies his argument:

'The Poet,' it is said, and by an intellegent critic, 'the Poet who would really fix the public attention must leave the exhausted past, and draw his subjects from matters of present import, and therefore both of interest and novelty.'

Now this view I believe to be completely false.³²

In Arnold's opinion the nineteenth century is an "age wanting in moral grandeur" and unable to supply the elements needed for great art. Arnold did not like The Bothie, but

he is not specific in his criticism.³³ The reason for his dislike is not, however, difficult to discover, for the plot does not conform to his conception of "an excellent action", nor could it be treated in the grand style.

Another mid-Victorian poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, attempted in Aurora Leigh (1856) a poem set in the present. Mrs. Browning wrote to Mary Mitford explaining that she had rejected Napoleon as a suitable subject for a poem, and wished to choose a contemporary subject:

nobody is offended by my approach to the conventions of vulgar life in 'Lady Geraldine' -- and it gives me courage to go on, and touch this real everyday life of our age, and hold it with my two hands. I want to write a poem of a new class.³⁴

In the fifth book of Aurora Leigh³⁵ she gives a detailed statement of her poetic theory. In passage after passage she states her opposition to those who set their poems in classical or medieval times, (especially p. 325, ll. 112-6, and p. 326, ll. 139-50). She distrusts, she says,

the poet who discerns
No character or glory in his times,

and "trundles" back five hundred years to find a subject:

Nay, if there's room for poets in this world . . .
Their sole work is to represent the age,
Their age, not Charlemagne's, -- this live,
throbbing age,
That brawls, cheats, maddens, calculates,
aspires,
And spends more passion, more heroic heat,
Betwixt the mirrors of its drawing-rooms,
Than Roland with his knights at Roncesvalles.

(p. 327, ll. 200, 202-7)

The Bothie is, I think, an admirable attempt to write a poem with just such a contemporary setting. W.Y. Sellar, writing in the North British Review, claimed that it was "the most lively and natural description of a phase of real modern life which we know of in English verse."³⁶ Clough in his "Review of Some Poems by Alexander Smith and Matthew Arnold" gave a clear statement of why he attempted in The Bothie a poem of modern life:

poems after classical models, poems from Oriental sources, and the like, have undoubtedly a great literary value. Yet there is no question, it is plain and patent enough, that people prefer Vanity Fair and Bleak House. Why so? . . . is it, that to be widely popular, to gain the ear of the multitude, to shake the hearts of men, poetry should deal, more than at present it usually does, with general wants, ordinary feelings, the obvious rather than the rare facts of human nature?³⁷

Acutely aware of the competition from the novel, Clough took a subject from his own day and treated it in the manner of a realistic novel.

Virginia Woolf, who has said as much in favour of Aurora Leigh as is ever likely to be said, praises Mrs. Browning's poem in terms similar to those used by Sellar about The Bothie. She succeeds in giving us "a sense of life in general, of people who are unmistakably Victorian, wrestling with the problems of their own time."³⁸ But the success of The Bothie as a novel in verse rests principally, I think, on the quality of the character analysis, the excellence of which I have already demonstrated. In this

lies its superiority to Aurora Leigh. Not even Virginia Woolf is willing to claim for Mrs. Browning success in her character drawing: "if Mrs. Browning meant by a novel-poem a book in which character is closely and subtly revealed, the relations of many hearts laid bare . . . she failed completely."³⁹ Coventry Patmore's Angel in the House (1854-62) is, however, a different matter. Writing in the Edinburgh Review in 1855 Patmore praised Goethe's Hermann and Dorothea for "the fulness and verity of the psychological commentary by which its slight thread of incident is illustrated."⁴⁰ This is very fair description of his own Angel in the House, the only other poem of the period which bears comparison with The Bothie and Amours de Voyage (1849) for the quality of its psychological analysis of character.

Clough's achievement is all the more remarkable when it is realized that in 1848 psychological analysis of character in Victorian fiction was a decade away. George Eliot's Adam Bede, for instance, was not published until 1859. I think this comparison between Clough's two poems and the fiction of the next decade is justified, but I would not carry it as far as John M. Roberston, who argues that "Clough was a great and original artist in fiction,"⁴¹ and that in The Bothie and Amours de Voyage he was not "aiming at strictly poetical effects at all."⁴² A comparison of the two main characters of The Bothie, Philip and Elspie, with

certain of George Eliot's characters is not all to the advantage of Eliot. As a young radical, Philip succeeds in establishing himself as Felix Holt is never able to do. Clough handles Philip with sympathy and understanding, but without flattery, and he therefore becomes a very real character. Elspie, on the other hand, is idealized, but the degree of idealization is much below that of Maggie Tulliver and Dorothea Brooke.

The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich is a gay and witty poem, and shows unmistakably that Clough's poetic ability lies in humorous and satiric observation of character and situation. As a work of art, however, it is of uneven merit. The long passages of philosophical discussion in the last four Cantos -- devoid of Clough's characteristic humour and satire -- are tedious, and of all the discussion in the poem the least connected with the plot. Clough did not succeed in making a unified poem of The Bothie, but the excellence of the character analysis, the humour and the satire cannot be disputed. However, in his next poem Amours de Voyage, he achieves a unity that is lacking in The Bothie as he humorously and satirically observes Englishmen in an Italian setting.

NOTES

- 1 Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson, (Boston, 1892), II, 205.
- 2 Routh's comment quoted above is typical.
- 3 John P. Gell (1816-98), student at Rugby 1830-5; teacher and clergyman.
- 4 Corres., I, 124.
- 5 Prose Remains, 247.
- 6 J.C. Shairp, Portraits of Friends, (Boston, 1889), 209.
- 7 Ibid., 210.
- 8 Hewlett, "Teufelsdröckh in Hexameters", Nineteenth Century, XCI (1922), 69-70.
- 9 Poems, 496.
- 10 Letters to William Allingham, ed. H. Allingham and Williams, (London, 1911), 152.
- 11 Ibid., 296.
- 12 Prose Remains, 283-301.
- 13 Hewlett, "Teufelsdröckh in Hexameters", 73.
- 14 Thomas Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, (Oxford, 1924), 141.

- 15 Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Rusk (New York, 1939), IV, 130.
- 16 Anonymous, "Clough's Poems", Blackwood's Magazine, XCII (1862), 594.
- 17 Charles Kingsley, "The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich", reprinted in Living Age, XXI (1849), 201.
- 18 Quoted in Waddington, Arthur Hugh Clough, (London, 1883), 172, from William Yonge Sellar's article on Clough in the North British Review (XXXVII) for November, 1862.
- 19 J.C. Shairp, Portraits of Friends, 201.
- 20 William Allingham: A Diary, ed. H. Allingham and Radford, (London, 1908), 143.
- 21 Letters of Emerson, IV, 130.
- 22 Matthew Arnold's Essays, (London, 1954), 259.
- 23 Prose Remains, 356.
- 24 Ibid., 358.
- 25 Corres. Carlyle and Emerson, II, 205.
- 26 Corres., I, 240.
- 27 Ibid., 228.
- 28 Letters to Allingham, 153.
- 29 Letters of J.R. Lowell, ed. C.E. Norton, (New York, 1894), I, 202.

- 30 C.E. Norton, "Arthur Hugh Clough", Atlantic Monthly, IX (1862), 464.
- 31 W.M. Rossetti, "The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich", The Germ, No. 1 (January, 1850), 44.
- 32 Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold, ed. Tinker and Lowry, (London, 1957), xix.
- 33 See his comment in Letters of M.A. to A.H.C., 95.
- 34 Elizabeth Barrett to Miss Mitford, ed. Miller, (London, 1954), 231.
- 35 Page references are to Complete Poetical Works of Mrs. Browning, ed. Preston, (Boston, 1900).
- 36 Quoted in Letters of M.A. to A.H.C., 96.
- 37 Prose Remains, 356-7.
- 38 V. Woolf, The Common Reader, Second Series, (London, 1932), 212.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 C. Patmore, "Tennyson's Maud", Edinburgh Review, CII (1855), 514.
- 41 Roberston, New Essays towards a Critical Method, (London, 1897), 301.
- 42 Ibid., 308.

Chapter III
AMOURS DE VOYAGE

Failure to understand what Clough was attempting in Amours de Voyage has resulted in a great injustice to one of the most original poems of the Victorian period. Clough wrote Amours de Voyage in 1849 and shortly afterwards sent it to J.C. Shairp for comment, but Shairp missed the point. The epistolary method of telling the story, and the hero Claude reminded him of Goethe's The Sorrows of Werther. He could not, however, understand the "gaiety of manner" in a poem with such a theme; he condemned it as Beppoish and Don Juanish.¹ His recognition of the Wertherish, Beppoish and Don Juanish qualities of the Amours shows considerable insight, and had he considered it a little further he would have understood that Clough's mocking treatment of a serious theme was intentional. Clough, recognizing that Shairp had missed the point, replied curtly: "your criticism is not exactly what I want." It was about "execution rather than conception" that Clough wanted criticism; about the conception he was not in doubt.²

Clough gives a clue to his intention in the Amours,³ when in a letter to Lowell he writes of his "Comi-Tragedy". The emphasis in Amours de Voyage is on the comic. A second hint is his choice of the first epigraph prefixed to the poem, the reprimand that Olivia delivers against Malvolio in Twelfth Night:

Oh you are sick of self-love, Malvolio,
And taste with a distempered appetite.

For it is Clough's purpose in the Amours to portray, comically and satirically, a self-centered Victorian prig, who does not realize until it is too late that he must compromise his ideals and establish contact with society. Instead, he remains aloof and superior. This situation is, I suppose, potentially tragic, but it is Clough's purpose to concentrate on the comic element in it. Claude, it has been suggested, is an "Early Victorian Hamlet".⁴ Certainly, in his irresolution and uncertainty, he can be compared with Arnold's Empedocles and the hero of Tennyson's Maud. Yet Clough's originality lies in viewing this figure in a serio-comic manner. This must be realized before the poem can be judged.

Most critics have viewed Amours de Voyage as autobiography. Shairp regarded it as Clough's nature "ridding itself of long-gathered bile."⁵ Although Clough flatly denied this -- "Gott und ⁶Tuefel, my friend, you don't suppose all that comes from myself!" -- critics have tended to disregard this rejoinder, and have seen Claude, unable to decide on a course of action and ending in failure, as Clough's self-portrait. This difference of tone between The Bothie and Amours de Voyage seems to support this view. The buoyant humour of The Bothie has become somber in the Amours. Philip of The Bothie ends up happily married working on a farm in New Zealand, and this again contrasts

with Claude of the Amours. Even Emerson, who had proven so perceptive a critic of The Bothie, failed to understand what Clough was doing in Amours de Voyage. "I cannot forgive you for the baulking end," he wrote him. Clough's only comment was that "I meant it to be so." Indeed only such an ending was a suitable nemesis for the type of character he was satirizing.

The scene of Amours de Voyage is laid principally in Rome during the 1849 siege by French and Neapolitan forces. Against this background Clough tells the story of Claude, a self-conscious, introspective young Englishman, sceptical about everything around him. The second epigraph prefixed to the poem -- "Il doutait de tout, même de l'amour" -- sets the tone. Even Rome disappoints Claude: "Rubbishy seems the word that most exactly would suit it." The Christian faith, as he understands it, at least, "Is not here, O Rome, in any of these thy churches." Claude meets an English family, the Trevellyns, and is snobbishly satirical at their expense:

Middle-class people these, bankers very likely, not wholly
 Pure of the taint of the shop; will at table d'hôte and
 restaurant
 Have their shilling's worth, their penny's pennyworth even.

(I, 125-7)

He admits: "I can be nothing at all, if it is not critical wholly." Claude, in fact, greatly fears becoming involved in any personal relationships, and his habitual satire is

his defense. So when he begins to enjoy the company of the Trevellyn daughters he states it in a most general way, doing his best to minimize the personal element:

pleasant

Whatever else it may be, to abide in the feminine presence.

(I, 168-9)

His fear of becoming involved, however, means that his defense is never down for very long, and he immediately directs his satire against the Trevellyn mother, as he describes her in a passage full of priggish superiority:

The mother

Is -- shall I call it fine? -- herself she would tell you
refined, and
Greatly, I fear me, looks down on my bookish and mala-
droit manners;
Somewhat affecteth the blue; would talk to me often of
poets;
Quotes, which I hate, Childe Harolde, but also appreciates
Wordsworth;
Sometimes adventures on Schiller; and then to religion
diverges;
Questions me much about Oxford; and yet, in her loftiest
flights still
Grates the fastidious ear with the slightly mercantile
accent.
Is it contemptible, Eustace -- I'm perfectly ready to
think so, --
Is it, -- the horrible pleasure of pleasing inferior people?

(I, 205-14)

Claude appears most ridiculous when during the siege he wonders what he would do if the Trevellyn girls were in danger:

Am I prepared to lay down my life for the British female?
Really, who knows? One has bowed and talked, till, little
by little,
All the natural heat has escaped of the chivalrous
spirit. . . .

Ah, for a child in the street I would strike, for the full-blown lady --
Somehow, Eustace, alas! I have not felt the vocation.

(II, 68-70, 77-8)

His careful use of "the British female", "the full-blown lady" and "one" helps to keep the matter impersonal.

Although he is in love with Mary Trevellyn, he is not prepared to admit it:

I am in love, meantime, you think; no doubt you would think so.

I am in love, you say; with these letters, of course, you would say so.

I am in love, you declare. I think so; yet I grant you

It is a pleasure indeed to converse with this girl

I am in love, you say: I do not think so, exactly.

(II, 252-5, 265)

To put off having to make a decision he theorizes about love. There are, he muses, two kinds of human attraction, -- the one disturbs and unsettles, the other poises, retains, fixes and holds you. Claude does not wish to be moved:

for the will is excited; and action
Is a dangerous thing; I tremble for something factitious.

(II, 272-3)

It is not surprising, therefore, that Claude, afraid to act and refusing to establish contact with the "inferior people" around him should end in failure and disappointment. Far from being anti-climatic, this ending is the only one that would be consistent with Claude's character.

The epistolary form admirably suits Clough's analysis of Claude's character. Claude, by giving his views on

numerous things in his letters, reveals his true self.

Mary and Georgina Trevellyn in their letters give us their impression of him, so we get a very complete picture.

Throughout the poem, Clough handles Claude with such intense irony that we never have any sympathy for him, not even when he mocks and pities himself for his loneliness. Mary describes him as "what people call, I suppose, a superior man", and Georgina calls him "too shilly-shally" -- a combination of qualities which makes much of what he does and says ludicrous. Would he offer his blood "an oblation to freedom" he muses, and concludes:

no man

Finds quite distinct the assurance that he of all others
is called on,
Or would be justified, even, in taking away from the
world that
Precious creature himself. Nature sent him here to abide
here,
Else why sent him at all?

(II, 34-8)

He has seen a man killed, yet he finds it impossible to admit that he is completely sure of it:

So, I have seen a man killed! An experience that, amongst
others!
Yes, I suppose I have; although I can hardly be certain,
And in a court of justice could never declare I had seen it.
But a man was killed, I am told, in a place where I saw
Something; a man was killed, I am told, and I saw some-
thing.

(II, 164-8)

Will he fight, he wonders:

Why not fight? -- In the first place, I haven't so much
 as a musket;
 In the next, if I had, I shouldn't know how I should use
 it;
 In the third, just at present I'm studying ancient marbles;
 In the fourth, I consider I owe my life to my country;
 In the fifth, -- I forget, but four good reasons are ample.

(III, 68-72)

He plans to accept the invitation of the Trevellyns to
 accompany them to Florence, but his friend's offhand
 question about his intentions towards Mary, which Claude
 assumes has its source in the Trevellyns, makes him change
 his mind:

How could I go? Great Heavens! to conduct a permitted
 flirtation
 Under those vulgar eyes, the observed of such observers!

(III, 278-9)

Certainly this is the finest evocation of a prig in Victorian
 literature.

In much less detail Georgina and Mary Trevellyn re-
 veal themselves. The prattle of Georgina's letters and the
 reserved self-revelations of Mary's show unmistakably the
 quality of their minds:

Rome is a wonderful place, but Mary shall tell you about
 it;
 Not very gay, however; the English are mostly at Naples; . . .
 George, however, is come; did I tell you about his must-
 achios? . . .
 Who can a Mr. Claude be whom George has taken to be with?
 Very stupid, I think, but George says so very clever.

(I, 56-7, 9, 63-4)

After this we pay more attention to Mary's sensitive per-
 ception of Claude's character.

The love story of the Amours is closely interwoven with the events of the French siege, and the contrast between the excitement of the fight, the heroic, if short-lived, action of Mazzini and Garibaldi, and the doubts and waverings, the indecision and perplexity of Claude is ironically drawn. Claude for the most part expresses only a dilettante's curiosity in the events of the siege, for in political as in personal matters he is incapable of committing himself. As he sits in the Caffè Nuovo drinking his milkless nero --

Caffè-latte! I call to the waiter, -- and Non c'è latte,
 This is the answer he makes me, and this the sign of a
 battle --

(II, 102-3)

he observes:

all sorts and sizes of persons,
 Blending civilian and soldier in strangest costume, coming
 in, and
 Gulping in hottest haste, still standing, their coffee, --
 withdrawing
 Eagerly, jangling a sword on the steps, or jogging a
 musket
 Slung to the shoulder behind.

(II, 106-10)

He watches the approach of the enemy, worries about "a probable shower", waits until "it begins to be tiresome" and then goes to make sure of his dinner "before the enemy enter". Yet at times his reaction to the siege is more sensitive. When, however, we compare these sections with Clough's Rome letters we realize that this is Clough

speaking through Claude and revealing his sympathy for the Italian cause. He could, he says,

in my soul of souls, this day, with
the Gauls at the gates, shed
One true tear for thee, thou poor little Roman Republic!

(II, 21-2)

"France, it is foully done!" he exclaims. His comment on the French victory shows an understanding far in advance of his age:

While the great pain is upon us, it is great; when it is
over,
Why, it is over. The smoke of the sacrifice rises to
heaven,
Of a sweet savour, no doubt, to Somebody; but on the altar,
Lo, there is nothing remaining but ashes and dirt and ill
odour.

(II, 154-7)

Claude's continual self-criticism and self-mockery -- "Pitiful fool that I was, to stand fiddle-faddling in that way," "I am more a coward than ever, Chicken-hearted, past thought," "I have had pain, it is true: have wept; and so have the actors" -- prevent us from identifying ourselves with his problem as we do, say, with Hamlet's, but mainly it is the hexameter measure and the epistolary form which allows us to remain detached observers, while Claude makes a spectacle of himself. Clough knew that readers acquainted with the classics would enjoy the various jests of style which the hexameter metre allows, and that the mock-heroic effect of describing the ineffectual Claude in the metre

which Homer and Virgil had used to describe the heroic deeds of the ancients would increase the reader's objectivity, so that he could observe Claude with amusement. Again, since the epistolary form is so obviously artificial, the reader's awareness that he is reading letters assures that he will remain detached.

In pointing out that Amours de Voyage is more than the wailings of a Werther, one must not under-emphasize the autobiographical element. After his resignation from Oxford and before taking up his appointment as Principal of University Hall, the hostel established for the Presbyterian and Unitarian students attending University College, Clough visited Italy, and was in Rome during the French siege. It has been pointed out that during his last years at Oxford he developed a philosophy, the essentials of which were to remain with him. Important in this philosophy was Carlyle's gospel of the necessity and the nobleness of work. In The Bothie he examines this view of work in relation to love. Here in Amours de Voyage he examines it in more general terms. If one must state the moral aim of the poem -- and there is no reason to think that Clough had completely rid himself of his Rugby and Balliol poetic theory -- it is to demonstrate the necessity for men to concern themselves with action, rather than with speculation. For Carlyle said in Sartor Resartus that "The end of Man is an action,

and not a thought."⁹ When one considers the extent to which Clough's Balliol poems are the result of introspection and speculation, it is evident that Clough's ironic criticism of Claude is in part a self-criticism, a demonstration of the dangers of his Oxford frame of mind. To suggest, however, that Amours de Voyage reflects the state of Clough's mind in 1849 is to show an ignorance of the facts of his life. It is a significant comment on Clough's character that he was able to detach himself from what so intimately concerned him and examine it from a comic point of view. He did the same thing in The Bothie, where he could not resist occasionally satirizing the idealism of Philip's radical views, even though his own philosophy was founded on Carlyle's gospel of work.

Most comparisons of Amours de Voyage and The Bothie point out the difference between the character of Philip and Claude, and the two different endings. Yet it is, I have shown, superficial to compare the confident, life-loving Philip and the ineffectual Claude, the happy ending of The Bothie and the wayward and despondent ending of Amours de Voyage, unless one realizes the different aims of the two poems. The two poems, however, show different aspects of Clough's character. The Clough of The Bothie is gay, humorous, simple and genially satirical, while in Amours de Voyage he appears complex, sophisticated and cynically

satirical. There is nothing in The Bothie to compare with the bitterness of this passage on the Jesuits:

these vile, tyrannous Spaniards, . . .
here you see them, --

Here, with emasculate pupils and gimcrack churches of
Gesu,
Pseudo-learning and lies, confessional-boxes and postures, --
Here, with metallic beliefs and regimental devotions, --
Here, overcrusting with slime, perverting, defacing, de-
basing,
Michael Angelo's dome, that had hung the Pantheon in heaven,
Raphael's Joys and Graces, and thy clear stars, Galileo!

(I, 105, 108-14)

In Amours de Voyage, as in The Bothie, Clough makes use of a vacation experience, so it is not surprising to find in his letters comments like "Rome in general might be called a rubbishy place."¹⁰ Natural description, of which there is so much in The Bothie, appears only occasionally in Amours de Voyage, where it is confined almost wholly to the lyrics which introduce and conclude each of the five Cantos. We see from them how little the Wordsworthian spirit had deserted Clough, for they reveal Clough's preference for the grandeur of nature rather than the art and antiquity of Rome. He longs to leave the city and go

Where, upon Apennine slope, with the chestnut the oak-
trees imingle,
Where amid odorous copse bridle-paths wander and wind,
Where under mulberry-branches the diligent rivulet
sparkles,
Or amid cotton and maize peasants their water-works ply.

(III, 9-12)

The two lyrics "There is a home on the shore of the Alpine

sea" at the end of Canto IV, and "There is a city, upbuilt on the quays of the turbulent Arno" at the beginning of Canto V, so full of the spirit of Italy, contain Clough's finest natural description.

The tourist interest in Amours de Voyage has been highly praised by V.S. Pritchett,¹¹ who considers the poem "the best evocation of the tourist's Rome, indeed of the tourist himself"¹² that we have had. Indeed not until the novels of E.M. Forster do we again "meet with the distinguishing portrait of the English tourist in our literature."¹³ In a way that recalls The Bothie, Clough, by giving a few incidental details, catches the atmosphere of a typical English family on tour in Italy:

Here we are, you see, with the seven-and seventy boxes,
 Courier, Papa and Mama, the children, and Mary and Susan.

(I, 52-3)

Clough also makes use of the tourist element to reinforce his theme. The tourist in a foreign country, as Clough conceives him, is a detached and uncommitted person, who wanders from place to place, never staying long enough in any one spot to become attached to it; a symbol, in fact, of the character Clough is satirizing.

The poetic theory behind Amours de Voyage is the same as that behind The Bothie. Again Clough is dealing with a subject from contemporary life, a subject so removed from Arnold's conception of "elevated poetry" that he could only

say, when pressed by Clough to give an opinion, "as to the Italian poem, if I forbore to comment it was that I had nothing special to say -- what is to be said when a thing does not suit you."¹⁴ Amours de Voyage is a more finished poem than The Bothie, which even after its 1859 revision shows signs of its hasty composition. Clough worried about the execution of the Amours: "I believe that the execution of this is so poor that it makes the conception a fair subject of disgust."¹⁵ Yet this deprecation of his own work after it was completed was a commonplace with him. The hexameters of The Bothie are rough and slipshod compared with the more polished ones of the Amours. In short, Amours de Voyage is skillfully composed: the threads which make up the story are excellently harmonized, the evolution of the moods is subtly managed, the background of the French scene is vividly sketched, and the academic flavour of the hexameters fits in well with the over-culture and the artificial refinement of Claude's mind, just as they fitted so well the Oxonian atmosphere of The Bothie. Yet with all these virtues it was not until 1858 that Clough hesitatingly consented to allow J.R. Lowell to publish the poem in The Atlantic Monthly.¹⁶ Perhaps Clough took the disapproval of some of his friends -- Shairp and Arnold particularly -- as a warning of what the public reaction would be. Certainly, had he published it in 1849, its sceptical religious tone would have done nothing to enhance his reputation at University Hall.

Amours de Voyage has, in fact, an unusually modern tone. E.M.W. Tillyard in his Poetry Direct and Oblique, first published in 1934, has some interesting comments that help to determine the relationship of Amours de Voyage to later poetry:

There are signs to-day of a wish to revive direct poetry, and it is worth asking whether there is any lead such a revival could follow. The eighteenth century tradition . . . is so distant and the break with it was so serious that it cannot be restored. It is more profitable to remember that direct poetry did not die out in the nineteenth century. . . . Indeed, about the middle of the century the case of direct poetry looked more hopeful.¹⁷

He mentions particularly Clough's Amours de Voyage and Patmore's Angel in the House. Amours de Voyage is, he says,¹⁸ "poetry of statement" with "an agreeable social tone."

Two years later Michael Roberts in his Introduction to the first edition of The Faber Book of Modern Verse (1936) noted that the "tone of semi-satire and half belief" of the Amours resembles the tone of Ezra Pound's Cantos.¹⁹

From another point of view, the poetic diction of Amours de Voyage attains a natural colloquial ease which in places reminds one of T.S. Eliot's The Cocktail Party. In 1951, Eliot, in a lecture at Harvard University entitled Poetry and Drama, spoke of his admiration for the "con-
20
versational, colloquial verse" of some of Shakespeare's scenes. He said of himself that in The Family Reunion his first concern had been "to find a rhythm close to con-
21
temporary speech", and that he made there

a good deal of progress in finding a form of versification and an idiom which would serve all my purposes, without recourse to prose, and be capable of unbroken transition between the most intense speech and the most relaxed dialogue.²²

In The Cocktail Party Eliot is even more successful in using this versification and idiom. I think it justifiable to claim that Clough in Amours de Voyage has also made some progress along these lines. Here is part of the conversation between Julia and Peter at the opening of The Cocktail Party:

Peter: Go on with the story about the wedding cake.

(Edward leaves the room)

Julia: No, we'll wait until Edward comes back into the room.

Peter: But do go on. Edward wasn't listening anyway.

Julia: No, he wasn't listening, but he's such a strain --
Edward without Lavinia! He's quite impossible!
Leaving it to me to keep things going.
What a host! And nothing fit to eat!
The only reason for a cocktail party
For a gluttonous old woman like me 23
Is a really nice tit-bit. I can drink at home.

Eliot's handling of this inane chatter reminds one of Clough's success in conveying the same quality in Georgina's letters. The ease with which Eliot passes from this relaxed dialogue to more intense speech, but still keeps to the same basic idiom, is paralleled in Clough. In The Cocktail Party Celia asks Edward "What is it that you want?" and Edward replies:

I am not sure.

The only thing of which I am relatively certain
Is, that only since this morning
I have met myself as a middle-aged man
Beginning to know what it is to feel old.

That is the worst moment, when you feel that you have lost
 The desires for all that was most desirable,
 And before you are contented with what you can desire;
 Before you know what is left to be desired;
 And you go on wishing that you could desire
 What desire has left behind. But you cannot understand.
 How could you understand what it is to feel old?²⁴

Here is Claude to Eustace:

Action will furnish belief, -- but will that belief be the
 true one?

This is the point, you know. However, it doesn't much
 matter.

What one wants, I suppose, is to predetermine the action,
 So as to make it entail, not a chance-belief, but the true
 one.

Out of the question, you say; if a thing isn't wrong, we
may do it.

Ah! but this wrong, you see -- but I do not know that it
 matters.

(V, 20-5)

Michael Roberts points out the similarity of Claude,
 Prufrock and Mauberly: "there is the same detachment, the
 same denial of commonly-accepted responsibility,"²⁵ all are
 typical inhabitants of the "Waste Land", whose worlds end
 "not with a bang, but a whimper".

Amours de Voyage, Clough's second poem of contemporary
 life, is his most finished composition. His originality lies
 in his mocking treatment of a serious theme. The skill with
 which he creates Claude and the Trevellyns, and harmonizes
 the theme with the seige and the tourist motif makes Amours
de Voyage Clough's most satisfying poem.

NOTES

- 1 Corres., I, 275.
- 2 Ibid., 276.
- 3 Corres., II, 540.
- 4 Jump, "Amours de Voyage", English, IX (1953), 178.
- 5 Corres., I, 275.
- 6 Ibid., 276.
- 7 Corres., II, 548.
- 8 Ibid., 551.
- 9 T. Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, 135.
- 10 Corres., I, 252.
- 11 Pritchett, Books in General, (London, 1953), 1-6.
- 12 Ibid., 1.
- 13 Ibid., 2.
- 14 Letters of M.A. to A.H.C., 132.
- 15 Corres., I, 276.
- 16 It appeared serially in The Atlantic Monthly, then under the editorship of James Russell Lowell, from February to May, 1858.

- 17 Tillyard, Poetry Direct and Oblique, (London, 1945), 105.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 The Faber Book of Modern Verse, ed. M. Roberts, (London, 1960), 11-2.
- 20 T.S. Eliot, Poetry and Drama, (London, 1951), 16.
- 21 Ibid., 27.
- 22 Ibid., 31.
- 23 T.S. Eliot, The Cocktail Party, (New York, 1950), 14-5.
- 24 Ibid., 65.
- 25 Faber Book of Modern Verse, 12.

Chapter IV

DIPSYCHUS

It is surprising that only a few critics have pointed out the similarity between Dipsychus and Amours de Voyage,¹ for Dipsychus and Claude have much in common. The similarity is so striking that it seems certain Clough intended Dipsychus as a companion piece to his humorous psychological study in Amours de Voyage. In Dipsychus Clough departs from the epistolary form and the hexameter measure, casts his study into a quasi-dramatic mould, and uses a variety of measures; Dipsychus expresses himself frequently in blank verse monologues. The poem has little dramatic action or structure, for the two characters Dipsychus and the Spirit do not reveal themselves dramatically, but live entirely by their self-revelations. The plot is really a "thought" plot, a long debate between Dipsychus and the Spirit. The dialogue takes place at various places in Venice,² but much of it has no connection with the scene. The resulting lack of unity reminds one of The Bothie, but is in contrast to Amours de Voyage in which the Roman scene is carefully harmonized with Claude's introspection. Clough, in his disregard of dramatic form, is at one with the Romantics, especially Byron, whose Manfred often has been compared with Dipsychus.³ The characters of another dramatic poem of the period, Sir Henry Taylor's Philip van Artevelde (1834), likewise live only by their self-revelations.⁴ The idea of a dialogue between the conflicting sides of a man's mind was

used by Tennyson in the "Two Voices", but the most obvious influences on Clough are the dialogues between Faust and Mephistopheles in Goethe's Faust (Clough read German well and translated some of Goethe's lyrics), and between Festus and Lucifer in the then popular Festus (1839) of James Philip Bailey. Dipsychus and these two poems cannot, however, be compared in aim or scope, for the resemblance does not go beyond certain surface similarities. In fact, considering Clough's use of parody to reinforce the theme in The Bothie and Amours de Voyage, it seems likely that the echoes of Faust in Dipsychus -- especially the summoning of the Spirit in Scene VIII and the dialogue in Scene X, culminating in the Spirit's cry,

Submit, submit!
 'Tis Common Sense and human wit
 Can find no higher name than it.
 Submit, submit! --

(ll. 191-4)

are meant to humorously emphasize the petty nature of the struggle in Dipsychus compared with the universal significance of the struggle in Faust.

Most noticeable is the difference between Clough's characters and those of Goethe and Bailey. Mephistophles and Lucifer are as clearly personifications of evil as Faust and Festus are personifications of good, but Clough gives the traditional story a characteristic twist, so that there is doubt as to what the characters stand for. A hint

is given though in the conversation between Dipsychus and his uncle in the important prose Epilogue. The uncle, who regards the Spirit as the devil, is speaking: "Not that he didn't say much which, if it hadn't been for the way he said it, and that it was he who said it, would have been sensible enough." Dipsychus replies: "perhaps he wasn't a devil after all. That's the beauty of the poem; nobody can say," (ll. 8-13). What is certain is that the Spirit has the best of the argument and the sympathy of the reader, and I think this was Clough's intention, for in Dipsychus he is again satirizing a psychological type. In the Epilogue, Dipsychus further explains: "the thing which it is attempted to represent is the conflict between the tender conscience and the world. Now, the over-tender conscience will, of course, exaggerate the wickedness of the world" (ll. 13-6).

Here then is one level on which Dipsychus can be looked at: Dipsychus represents the over-tender conscience, and the Spirit the power of the world. Yet the word "dipsychus" means, or at least is so translated in the King James Version of the Bible (James iv, 8), "double-minded", so the two characters may be more accurately thought of as Dipsychus and his projected questioning self. Dipsychus is another example of the introspection which Clough's contemporaries regarded as characteristic of their times. Matthew Arnold in his 1853 Preface called it the "dialogue

of the mind with itself".⁵ The nature of the conflict in Dipsychus can be stated in many different ways, as between faith and doubt, between Epicureanism and a sterner philosophy, between the spiritual self and the more material self, between the ideal and the worldly, but the recurrent theme is the conflict between the desire for seclusion and the desire for action, the values of passive self-communion, and active social participation. It is this theme which connects Dipsychus so closely with Amours de Voyage. The poem is not a debate between clear right and wrong, but rather between the two sides of a difficult question.

In the Epilogue the uncle blames the over-tender conscience on Dr. Thomas Arnold,⁶ but Dipsychus speaks rather of the "over excitation of the religious sense", arising from "The religious movement of the last century, beginning with Wesleyanism, and culminating at last in Puseyism" (ll. 83-5). Clough is more explicit in his "Review of Some Poems by Alexander Smith and Matthew Arnold":

There is something certainly of an over-educated weakness of purpose in Western Europe . . . a disposition to press too far the finer and subtler intellectual and moral susceptibilities; to insist upon following out, as they say, to their logical consequences, the notices of some organ of the spiritual nature; a proceeding which perhaps is hardly more sensible in the grown man than it would be in the infant to refuse to correct the sensations of sight by those of touch.⁷

Dipsychus is an example of this "over-educated weakness of purpose", and the poem is a satirical analysis of his mind.

Writing in 1951, Kingsbury Badger expressed the traditional view of Dipsychus: "His Amours de Voyage, composed during the trip abroad in the summer of 1849, foreshadows the period of greatest darkness, of doubt and disillusionment, when Clough became Dipsychus."⁸ Although H.F. Lowry noted in 1932 that Dipsychus was a "humorous and penetrating psychological study",⁹ critics have paid little attention to his suggestion, and prefer to regard it as a typical nineteenth century lament for a lost faith. Clough's contemporaries, convinced by Arnold's "Thrysis" that his "piping took a troubled sound",¹⁰ regarded Dipsychus as a poem of disillusionment. Arnold was not, however, wholly to blame, for the editors of the 1865 edition, in which Dipsychus first appeared, omitted many passages and a whole scene which they considered too outspoken about religion and sex. These omitted passages usually sharpen the point of Clough's intention. Because levity in matters of sex and religion was banned throughout the Victorian period¹¹ -- Kathleen Tillotson has the interesting observation that the sixties was one of the high points of squeamishness¹² -- it is not surprising that the editors censored Dipsychus. The omitted passages on religion range from the Spirit's remark:

Our lonely pious altitudes
 Are followed quick by prettier moods.
 Who knows not with what ease devotion
 Slips into earthlier emotion?

to his satire on the Church of England, (V, 136-51).

By far the greatest number of omitted passages are on sex, and they extend from one line of the Spirit's description of a Venetian crowd: "Some pretty faces here and there", and these lines from Dipsychus's account of his dream:

Speak, outraged maiden, in thy wrong
 Did terror bring no secret bliss?
 Were boys' shy lips worth half a song
 Compared to the hot soldier's kiss?

(V, 75-8)

to some twenty-six lines at the end of Scene II and the whole of Scene IIA in which Dipsychus with extraordinary animation minutely discusses his temptations as he wanders among the women of the streets of Venice. In all fairness to the editors, though, it must be pointed out that Clough was himself a product of the Victorian prudery which demanded the use of Thomas Bowdler's Family Shakespeare (1818), and led Charlotte Bronte -- herself criticised for the freedom with which she spoke of sex -- in recommending a reading list to write: "Omit the comedies of Shakespeare and the Don Juan, perhaps the Cain of Byron."¹³ Clough himself, for instance, cut away from the manuscript of "Easter Day II" the ten lines which define the "sin" -- a sexual "sin" -- that caused him in "Easter Day, Naples, 1849" to exclaim "Christ is not risen!"¹⁴ The editors of the 1951 Poems restored all the passages omitted by the early editors, so it is now possible to judge Clough's achievement in Dipsychus.

The text of Dipsychus in the 1951 edition consists of a prose Prologue and Epilogue, fourteen scenes and a hundred and ninety line fragment called Dipsychus Continued. "Easter Day", which Clough wrote at Naples in 1849, is, however, the more suitable Prologue. In "Easter Day" Clough expresses in passionate and fluent verse the difficulty of reconciling what he sees in "the great sinful streets of Naples" with the reality of Christ's resurrection. The denial of the resurrection by the Higher Criticism makes this difficulty all the more significant. "Easter Day" is recalled in Scene I of Dipsychus. The scene has shifted to Venice and the time is a year later, but the refrain is the same: "Christ is not risen!" For in Venice

people, true enough, appear
To appreciate more and understand
Their ices, and their Austrian bands,
And dark-eyed girls.

(I, 39-42)

Dipsychus is the intellectual, reflective, sensitive, self-mocking type we are familiar with in the character of Claude. His assertion that "Christ is not risen!" provokes the Spirit to reply:

Dear, how odd!
He'll tell us next there is no God.
I thought 'twas in the Bible plain,
On the third day he rose again.

(I, 15-8)

This flippancy is characteristic of the Spirit, who mocks

and sneers at all of Dipsychus's ideals. The Spirit encourages Dipsychus to cease his conscientious questionings and join the crowd who

Enjoy the minute
And the substantial blessings in it.

(I, 50-1)

In Scene II the Spirit observes:

'Tis here, I see, the custom too
For damsels eager to be loved
To go about with arms uncovered;
And doubtless there's a special charm
In looking at a well-shaped arm,

(II, 49-53)

and prods Dipsychus to follow up a glance from one of them, but Dipsychus is irresolute:

Spirit

There was a glance, I saw you spy it --
So! shall we follow suit and try it?
Pooh! what a goose you are! quick, quick!
This hesitation makes me sick.

(II, 66-9)

Dipsychus

Sweet thing! ah well! but yet I am not sure.
Ah no. I think she did not mean it. No.

(II, 72-3)

The tone is more piquant than in Amours de Voyage, but Dipsychus is another Claude, and Clough is handling him with the same ironic humour.

It has recently been pointed out by Walter E. Houghton that a first draft of Clough's review of F.W.

Newman's The Soul (1849)¹⁵ appears in the 1850 (Venice)
Notebook among "what appear to be monologues for Dipsychus."¹⁶

This review throws important light on the poem, especially on the suggestion in the Epilogue that the Spirit is not a devil. This passage suggests that he is rather the personification of common sense or worldly wisdom:

A spiritual friend of some experience relates that, when he was a boy at school, tormented by the very obvious contradiction between the evangelical exhortations given him at home, and the common school-boy views of life and conduct, distracted between conscientiousness and sociability, he received a relief, which he never forgot, from hearing one of his elders, whom he respected, speak of an act which he regarded himself as being dreadfully sinful, simply as foolishness.¹⁷

The similarity of the Spirit's statement in Scene IIA of his aim in taunting Dipsychus is obvious:

O yes, you dream of sin and shame --
 Trust me, it leaves one much the same.
 'Tisn't Elysium any more
 Than what comes after or before:
 But heavens! as innocent a thing
 As picking strawberries in spring.
 You think I'm anxious to allure you --
 My object is much more to cure you.

(IIA, 12-19)

The worldly wisdom of the Spirit and the close similarity of Claude and Dipsychus is very striking in Scene III. It opens with Dipsychus condemning himself, in language that recalls Amours de Voyage, because he "half-yielded" to the Spirit:

Oh weak, weak fool! Alas, how quietly
 Out of our better into our worse selves,

Out of a true world which our reason knew
 Into a false world which our fancies make
 Down the swift spiral opening still the same
 We slide and never notice. Oh weak fool!

(III, 2-7)

The Spirit now places before Dipsychus the advantages of good society, and even suggests that he should marry, but Dipsychus, who fears the corrupting influence of society, refuses to listen to him.

Scene IV opens with Dipsychus gaily singing about the joys of floating in a gondola, but he does not remain gay for long, for he realizes that to give him this pleasure there is a "slaving brother set behind." The Spirit's cynical remark "Nature meant him for no better," points ahead to his satiric song later in the scene. Dipsychus's ideal and his fear of action receive their finest expression here:

O let me love my love unto myself alone,
 And know my knowledge to the world unknown;
 No witness to the vision call,
 Beholding, unbeheld of all;
 And worship thee, with thee withdrawn, apart,
 Whoe'er, what'er thou art,
 Within the closest veil of mine own inmost heart.

Better it were, thou sayest, to consent,
 Feast while we may, and live ere life be spent;
 Close up clear eyes, and call the unstable sure,
 The unlovely lovely, and the filthy pure;
 In self-belying, self-deceivings roll,
 And lose in Action, Passion, Talk, the soul.

(IV, 82-94)

The contrast between the metre and diction of this and the

Spirit's reply is the finest poetic effect in the poem:

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,
 May be an unreal mere appearance;
 Only -- for my inside, in fine,
 They have a singular coherence.

This lovely creature's glowing charms
 Are gross illusion, I don't doubt that;
 But when I pressed her in my arms
 I somehow didn't think about that.

This world is very odd, we see;
 We do not comprehend it;
 But in one fact can all agree
 God won't, and we can't mend it.

(IV, 106-17)

Clough uses this contrast often in Dipsychus. The jingling metre and the sensuous imagery of the Spirit's verse suit his philosophy, just as the more serious movement of the lines and the abstract, indefinite diction suit the philosophy of Dipsychus. A further contrast is the lightness of touch in Dipsychus's song (ll. 236-45), which is achieved by the use of iambic tetrameter lines and a careful selection of water and light images.

The satire in the Spirit's song shows how deeply Clough has realized the hypocrisy of the self-satisfied life which the new rich lived. He views with amused detachment their hypocritical respectability and moral callousness:

I sit at my table en grand seigneur,
 And when I have done, throw a crust to the poor;
 Not only the pleasure, one's self, of good living,
 But also the pleasure of now and then giving.
 So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
 So pleasant it is to have money.

(IV, 136-41)

I drive through the streets, and I care not a damn;
 The people they stare, and they ask who I am;
 And if I should chance to run over a cad,
 I can pay for the damage if ever so bad.
 So pleasant etc.

(148-53)

It was but last winter I came up to town,
 But already I'm getting a little renown;
 Am beginning to see the nobility too.
 So pleasant etc.

(172-7)

It is too bad that Clough did not find a Sullivan, for the taut athletic wit and the display of rhyme remind one of Gilbert.

Clough's fondness for refrain appears again in the dream of Dipsychus in Scene V. The tinkling of the bells which ring out man's relief because "there is no God" --

Ting, ting, there is no God; ting, ting;
 Come dance and play, and merrily sing --
 Ting, ting a ding; ting, ting a ding!
 O pretty girl, who trippest along,
 Come to my bed -- it isn't wrong.
 Uncork the bottle, sing the song!
 Ting, ting a ding --

contrasts with the clanging when he realizes its horrible implications --

Ye mighty men of arms, come forth,
 And work your will, for that is just;
 And in your impulse put your trust,
 Beneath your feet the fools are dust.
 Alas, alas! O grief and wrong,
 The good are weak, the wicked strong;
 And O my god, how long, how long?
 Dong, there is no God; dong!

(V, 16-22, 65-72)

Clough's metrical versatility certainly was not confined to hexameters.

The tone and technique of "The Latest Decalogue" and "In the Great Metropolis" are seen in the terse and strongly rhythmical reply of the Spirit:

'There is no God,' the wicked saith,
'And truly its a blessing,
For what he might have done with us
It's only better guessing.'

(V, 154-7)

'Whether there be,' the rich man says,
'It matters very little,
For I and mine, thank somebody,
Are not in want of victual.'

(166-9)

But country folks who live beneath
The shadow of the steeple;
The parson and the parson's wife,
And mostly married people;

Youths green and happy in first love,
So thankful for illusion;
And men caught out in what the world
Calls guilt, in first confusion;

And almost every one when age,
Disease, or sorrow strikes him,
Inclines to think there is a God,
Or something very like him.

(174-85)

The deification of the indefinite in the last line is typical of Clough's irony.

The Spirit receives the sympathy of the reader because he is, in H.W. Garrod's phrase, "a first-class literary performer."¹⁸ Garrod in his 1931 "C.E. Norton Lecture" on

Clough comments further:

The best parts of the poem are those in which Clough yields himself, not merely to satire, but to irresponsible satire. . . . the Spirit is -- after Butler and Byron -- the best satirist our literature can shew in that order of satiric verse of which Hudibras and Don Juan are the supreme examples. It is a reproach to our criticism that a satire so gay and so going should be so little read.¹⁹

The reported action at the beginning of Scene VI is the occasion for some excellent satire on Victorian missionary practices. Dipsychus is insulted by a German officer, but refuses to follow the Spirit's advice to "Go up to him!" His excuse recalls Claude's reasons for not fighting the French:

He's violent: what can I do against him?
I neither wish to be killed nor to kill:
What's more, I never yet have touched a sword
Nor fired, but twice, a pistol in my life.

(VI, 10-3)

Dipsychus philosophizes at great length on the futility of avenging such petty personal hurts, and argues that "The flower and top of life" is

To bleed for other's wrongs
In vindication of a Cause.

(VI, 126-7)

To this the Spirit answers:

The downright things, twixt you and me,
The wrongs we really feel and see,
The hurts that actually try one,
Like common plain good deeds close by one,
Decidedly have no existence --
They are at such a little distance!
But to protect the lovely figures

Of your half ourang-outang niggers,
 To preach the doctrine of the Cross
 To worshippers in house of joss,
 To take steps for the quick conversion
 Of Turk, Armenian, Jew and Persian,
 Or send up missions, per balloon,
 To those poor heathens in the moon --
 Oh that -- But I'm afraid I storm;
 I'm quite ashamed to be so warm.

(VI, 165-81)

Clough hesitates to condemn further, and this, together with his refusal to allow his wife to read the manuscript ²⁰ points to the significance of James Sutherland's remark: "In a more congenial atmosphere than that of the Victorian age A.H. Clough might have written more of the original and polished satire we get in Dipsychus." ²¹

Dipsychus's admiration of bleeding for a cause leads him in Scene VIII to desire action as well as thought. He summons the Spirit and tells him that he wishes to bargain for his merchandise. The Spirit cynically advises:

You'll go to church of course, you know;
 Or at the least will take a pew
 To send your wife and servants to.

(VIII, 60-2)

He suggests Dipsychus enter a profession: "If not the Church, why then the Law," but upon one thing he insists: "scruples must be cast behind." Dipsychus is mainly concerned that the Spirit find for him "some not unworthy work".

In the five remaining scenes Dipsychus weighs and reweighs the claims of living to himself and of joining the

compromising everyday world of active men. The blank verse monologues, suggestive of Elizabethan models, are over-studied and wearisome. His conclusion is that

high deeds
Haunt not the fringy edges of the fight,
But the pell-mell of men. Oh, what and if
E'en now by lingering here I let them slip,
Like an unpractised spyer through a glass,
Still pointing to the blank, too high!

(IX, 68-73)

It has often been claimed that Dipsychus has no conclusive ending, but despite Dipsychus's continual fears about the debasing influence of the world, his realization that high deeds are not to be found in seclusion, and his statement in Scene XII --

O the misery
That one must truck and practise with the world
To gain the 'vantage-ground to assail it from;
To set upon the giant one must first,
O perfidy! have eat the giant's bread.
If I submit, it is but to gain time
And arms and stature: 'tis but to lie safe
Until the hour strike to arise and slay: . . .
How much soe'er
I might submit, it must be to rebel --

(XII, 36-43, 50-1)

foreshadows action. Clough has not brought Dipsychus to a solution of all his problems, but neither has he left him in a hopeless stalemate. One needs to remember that even Claude admitted: "Knowledge is painful often, and yet when we know we are happy."

Clough's review of Newman's The Soul is again helpful.

This passage confirms my suggestion that Dipsychus's frame of mind at the end of the poem foreshadows action:

We are here, however we came, to do something . . . to serve God: the world is here, however it came here, to be made something of by our hands. Not by prayer, but by examination; examination, not of ourselves, but of the world, shall we find out what to do, and how to do it. Not by looking up into our Master's face shall we learn the meaning of the book which He has put into our hands. . . . We have said, Look not up into the empty air, but upon the solid, somewhat dirty earth around, underfoot.²²

This last sentence is a prose summary of Scene IX, ll. 68-73 quoted above.

In Scene X Dipsychus states a view of evil that helps, I believe, to explain the fragmentary Dipsychus Continued:

What we call sin,
I could believe a painful opening out
Of paths for ampler virtue.

(X, 34-6)

This view of sin was frequently expressed in the nineteenth century, so it is not surprising to find it in Clough.

Browning, for instance, believed that all that is commonly called evil serves to promote God's end for man:

this life proves a wine-press -- blends
Evil and good, both fruits of Paradise;

(²³"Jochanan Hakkadosh")

And, as I saw the sin and death, even so
See I the need yet transciency of both;

(²⁴"A Death in the Desert")

We garland us, we mount from earth to Heaven,
Just because exist what once we estimated
Hindrances, which better taught, are helps, we now confess.

(²⁵"Pietro of Abano")

The New England Transcendentalists, according to Frothingham, also had this view of evil. To them:

Evil was but the prophecy of good, wrong the servant of right, pain the precursor of peace, sorrow the minister of joy.²⁶

Clough's close association with Emerson, the seer of New England Transcendentalism, and his acquaintance with the novels of Nathaniel Hawthorne,²⁷ who was much concerned with the paradox of the occasional regenerative power of sin, account for Clough's view. I have not found in Clough's published correspondence any mention of Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter, published in 1850, shortly before the visit to Venice which inspired Dipsychus, but his interest in Hawthorne makes it almost certain that he read it. In The Scarlet Letter Hester Prynne, ostracised because of her adultery, gains a more comprehensive view of life because of it.

In 1860, five years before the publication of Dipsychus, Hawthorne gave striking expression to his conception of sin in The Marble Faun:

Is sin, then -- which we deem such a dreadful blackness in the universe -- is it, like sorrow, merely an element of human education, through which we struggle to a higher and purer state than we could otherwise have attained? Did Adam fall that we might ultimately rise to a far higher Paradise than his?²⁸

In Donatello's case good evolved out of sin, the impulsive murder led to his becoming a morally conscious man. It was

this idea, I believe, that Clough had in mind in Dipsychus Continued. Dipsychus, now Lord Chief Justice, is visited by a miserable woman whom years before he had wronged. Yet from his "sin" towards her had come the impulse for his action. To her protestations he replies:

Woman, if I have wronged you, it was for good --
 Good has come of it. Lo, I have done some work;
 I have served the State, have helped my fellow men.
 Over the blasted and the blackened spot
 Of our unhappy and unhallowed deed
 I have raised a mausoleum of such acts
 As in this world do honour unto me,
 But in the next to thee.

(II, 57-64)

Dipsychus Continued is too incomplete to judge Clough's full intention.

Dipsychus has less local colour than The Bothie and Amours de Voyage, though like the Amours it has caught the hue of the Italian scene. This is particularly true of Scene IV, "In a Gondola". Just as in The Bothie Clough carefully observed the manners, customs and scenery of the Highlands, so here the characteristic features of Venice are vividly described -- the squares, the buildings, the people:

The whole square they fill
 From the red flaunting streamers on the staffs,
 And that barbaric portal of St. Mark's;

The Campanile to the silent stars
 Goes up, above -- its apex lost in air.

(I, 43-5, 48-9)

From the Public Garden they see

the Palace and the Place,
And the white dome. Beauteous but hot;

The great Alps, rounding grandly o'er,
Huge arc, to the Dalmatian shore?

(II, 6-7, 11-2)

In Scenes IV and V there are excellent lines on the swift,
noiseless movements of the gondola and the sights to be
seen from it:

And on the island's other side,
The place where Murray's faithful Guide
Informs us Byron used to ride;

Look back; one catches at this station
Lagoon and sea in combination.

(V, 189-91, 195-6)

In the interior arcade of the Doge's Palace the Spirit
observes:

This grand arcade where our Venetian
Has formed of Gothic and of Grecian
A combination strange, but striking,
And singularly to my liking.

(VII, 3-6)

These scenes are not harmonized with the theme of the poem,
as are Rome and the theme of Amours de Voyage, but they are
sensitive observations of Venice.

The colloquial diction and the conversational rhythms
of Amours de Voyage are found in Dipsychus, as is also the
commonplace imagery of The Bothie. Dipsychus replies to the
Spirit's ridicule:

By heaven, it falls from off me like the rain
From the oil-coat.

(VI, 33-4)

He speaks of "The easy-chair of use and wont." In Scene XI we get Clough's favourite image of the ship: his thirst for action, Dipsychus says, is gone,

Gone, like a ship that passes in the night
On the high seas.

(ll. 3-4)

Dipsychus is Clough's second humorous psychological study of introspection. The twist which he gives the traditional Faust story -- Humbert Wolfe calls it an "utterly un-Victorian . . . rendering of Faust"²⁹ -- is another example of his originality. Dipsychus is Clough's most ambitious work, but the execution is not equal to the conception. Clough's failure to completely harmonize the theme and the setting is the poem's most serious weakness. Dipsychus's blank verse monologues in the final scene are dull, but much of the dialogue in the first eight scenes -- especially the songs of the Spirit -- is Clough's most brilliant and witty satire.

NOTES

- 1 Thomas Arnold (younger brother of Matthew) wrote: "His [Dipsychus's] mental conditions are much the same as those of Claude." "Arthur Hugh Clough: A Sketch", Nineteenth Century, XLIII (1898), 113. Levy in her Clough, exhibiting her usual tendency to view all Clough's characters as close self-portraits, observes: "Dipsychus . . . is . . . reminiscent of Claude in the Amours de Voyage and of Clough himself." 202.
- 2 Clough took up his position as Principal of University Hall, London on October 17, 1849. In the autumn of 1850, after his first year there, he spent a short holiday in Venice, and this visit inspired Dipsychus.
- 3 Waddington, Clough, 247-51.
Osborne, Clough, 144-6.
- 4 Taylor's conception of a dramatic poem is discussed by Abercrombie in his essay on Taylor in The Eighteen-Sixties, ed. Drinkwater, (Cambridge, 1932), 5-8.
- 5 Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold, xvii.
- 6 In its criticism of Dr. Arnold, the Epilogue is well in advance of the age; Clough's criticism is very similar to Lytton Strachey's censure in Eminent Victorians. More detailed criticism appears in Clough's review of F.W. Newman's The Soul, which is discussed later in the chapter.
- 7 Prose Remains, 372.
- 8 Badger, "Clough as Dipsychus", Modern Language Quarterly, XII (1951), 47.
- 9 Letters of M.A. to A.H.C., 22.
- 10 Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold, 264.

- 11 Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, (New Haven, 1957), esp. 356-8.
- 12 Tillotson, Novels of the Eighteen-Forties, (Oxford, 1956), 64.
- 13 E. Gaskell, The Life of Charlotte Bronte, (London, 1908), 85.
- 14 The ten lines are printed in the Notes to Poems, 479.
- 15 "Review of Mr. Newman's The Soul" in Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. his wife, (London 1869), I, 293-305; hereafter cited as Poems and Prose Prose Remains, I or II.
- 16 Houghton, "Prose Works of Arthur Hugh Clough: A Checklist and Calendar, with Some Unpublished Passages", Bulletin of the New York Public Library, LXIV (1960), 383.
- 17 Poems and Prose Remains, I, 296.
- 18 Garrod, Poetry and the Criticism of Life, 125.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Corres., II, 350.
- 21 Sutherland, English Satire, (Cambridge, 1958), 77.
- 22 Poems and Prose Remains, I, 304-5.
- 23 Robert Browning, The Poetical Works of Robert Browning, (London, 1896), II, 653.
- 24 Ibid., I, 586.

- 25 Ibid., II, 619.
- 26 Frothingham, Transcendentalism in New England, (New York, 1959), 191.
- 27 Clough refers to The Blithedale Romance, Corres., I, 318.
- 28 Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, (Boston, 1886), 519.
- 29 Wolfe, "Arthur Hugh Clough" in Eighteen Sixties, ed. Drinkwater, 24.

Chapter V

MARI MAGNO

Clough wrote Dipsychus during or shortly after his visit to Venice in the autumn of 1850, and like The Bothie and Amours de Voyage it is set in the country of his visit. He visited America in 1852, but not until his travels in Europe in 1861 did he use the experience of his voyage across the Atlantic on the H.M.S. Canada. Then, between April and his death at Florence in November, he wrote Mari Magno or Tales on Board. The American voyage provided the framework, but the Tales use a variety of settings, including America, England, Ireland, the Highlands, and many Continental countries.¹ The structure of Mari Magno is reminiscent of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and though the poem is incomplete and only partially revised, it shows Clough, in the final months of his life, attempting a type of poem different from anything he had tried before. The editors of the 1951 volume point out that Clough's original plan, as outlined in a notebook, was for a Preface and four Tales,² so the other four Tales were later additions to the scheme. From 1863 editors printed only six of these Tales. The 1951 editors, however, restored "The American's Tale" to its proper place in the scheme -- it was omitted originally because it was considered improper -- and printed the incomplete "Officer's Story" in the Notes, so it is now possible to judge the whole of Clough's achievement in Mari Magno.

The Preface sets the scene for the story-telling.

"The Lawyer's First Tale" tells of the hero's love for Emily and of her marriage to his former school friend. "The Clergyman's First Tale" tells of the love of Edmund and Emma, who spend their time philosophizing about love, but eventually marry. "The American's Tale" tells of the meeting of a man and woman under unusual circumstances and of their marriage. The fourth or "My Tale" describes a journey by diligence from Mont Dore to Luchon in the Pyrenees. "The Mate's Story" tells how a French governess, stranded penniless in Liverpool, is saved from misfortune by marrying the ship's captain. "The Clergyman's Second Tale" tells of the marriage of Edward and Jane, of Edward's infidelity, his penance and their reconciliation. "The Lawyer's Second Tale" is an involved story of a love affair between a college tutor and a Highland girl. The incomplete "Officer's Story" is about the marriage of an old man.

The two most obvious influences on Mari Magno are Chaucer and Crabbe. Clough's lecture on "The Development of English Literature",³ delivered on October 14,⁴ 1852 at University College, London, reveals his admiration for Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. He particularly praises the "Prologue" for its fine picture of medieval life and quotes some of the description of the monk.⁵ He praises Crabbe in a letter to F.J. Child (November 13, 1856): "Have you re-published Crabbe? If not, you ought to do so. . . . His

descriptions remind even me of things I used to see, hear, and hear of in my boyhood. And sometimes, though rarely, he has really the highest merit." ⁶ The influence of the Canterbury Tales on Mari Magno is seen most clearly in its structure and its technique of character description, while certain details of plot and style in the Tales themselves are derived from Crabbe.

Mari Magno opens with a Preface which closely resembles the "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales. Just as Chaucer begins with eighteen lines on the wonder of spring and the joy of pilgrimages, so Clough begins with eighteen lines in which after saying that he is on a voyage, he describes the delights of ocean travel. In both poems the narrators are then described and an account is given of how the story telling begins. Similarly both poets provide links between the Tales, in which the previous Tale is discussed and the next Tale is introduced, but Clough's links provide few of the lively discussions that we get in Chaucer.

In Chapter II, I compared Clough's technique of character description in The Bothie with Chaucer's technique in the Centerbury Tales. He employs the same technique in Mari Magno, particularly in the "Preface" and "My Tale", and his power of depicting character in a few words is as strong as in the earlier poem. He describes one of the

story tellers:

An English clergyman came spick and span
 In black and white -- a large well-favoured man,
 Fifty years old, as near as one could guess.
 He looked the dignitary more or less.
 A rural dean, I said, he was, at least,
 Canon perhaps; at many a good man's feast
 A guest had been, amongst the choicest there.
 Manly his voice and manly was his air:
 At the first sight you felt he had not known
 The things pertaining to his cloth alone.
 Chairman of Quarter Sessions had he been?
 Serious and calm, 'twas plain he much had seen,
 Had miscellaneous large experience had
 Of human acts, good, half and half, and bad.
 Serious and calm, yet lurked, I know not why,
 Sometimes a softness in his voice and eye.
 Some shade of ill a prosperous life had crossed;
 Married no doubt; a wife or child had lost?
 He never told us why he passed the sea.

(p. 308, ll. 34-52)

The compression, the concentration on details of dress and appearance, the Chaucerian ring of "as near as one could guess" in line 3, the subtle undertones of lines 8 and 9, and the technique of introducing in the last line an after-thought that throws new light on the character takes one back to the "Prologue" of the Canterbury Tales. The character sketches in "My Tale", especially those of the soldier --

Feeble he seemed and nothing had to say,
 And fumbled with his papers as he lay.
 I questioned him, but little answer drew.
 Pock-marked he was, I hoped it was not new --

(p. 345, ll. 57-60)

of the priest --

Under his beaver sat and looked demure;
 Faintly he smiled the company to please,
 And folded his hands above his knees --

(p. 348, ll. 160-2)

and of the postillion --

in his smock of blue,
His pipe into his mouth's far corner drew --

(p. 349, ll. 193-4)

are of the same type. The sketch of the vicar in "The Lawyer's First Tale" (pp. 312-3, ll. 57-84) should also be mentioned.

The Canterbury Tales and Mari Magno can be further compared. The discussion on marriage in the Preface,

Of marriage long one night they held discourse,
Regarding it in different ways, of course.
Marriage is discipline, the wise had said,
A needful human discipline to wed;
Novels of course depict it final bliss, --
Say, had it ever really once been this?

(p. 309, ll. 85-90)

which leads the New Englander to suggest,

'You'll reason on till night and reason fail;
My judgement is you each shall tell a tale;
And as on marriage you can not agree,
On love and marriage let the stories be,'

(p. 309, ll. 95-8)

was inspired, I believe, by the "Marriage Debate" initiated in the Canterbury Tales by the "Wife of Bath's Prologue". In each of the Mari Magno Tales there is an implied or an explicit statement on marriage, in fact, love and marriage is the dominant theme in all but "My Tale". G.L. Kittredge did not identify the "Marriage Debate" in the Canterbury Tales until 1915,⁷ but Clough, throughout his life a careful student of Chaucer, shows by his imitation that he was

aware of it.

The restoration of "The American's Tale" to its proper place by the 1951 editors points up another similarity. Just as in Chaucer the long and serious "Knight's Tale" is followed by the short, humorous and coarse stories of the Miller and the Reeve, so in Clough the serious Tales of the Lawyer and the Clergyman -- together they take up more than one quarter of the poem -- are followed by the short, humorous and mildly improper "American's Tale", which tells of an incident that happened once in "a huge American hotel":

Two sisters slept together in one bed.
 The elder, suffering with an aching head,
 Early retired: the younger, late who came,
 Found her asleep; in haste to be the same,
 Undressed, but ready into bed to go,
 Her watch remembered in a room below.
 Just-robed she slipped away; with silent pace
 Returned, she thought, and took her usual place
 And slept, nor woke the sleeper by her laid.
 The sun was shining high, ere woke the maid;
 At once she woke, and waking, wondering eyed
 In bed upseated, gazing, at her side
 A youth: -- her error flashed upon her mind,
 And from the stranger's bed her own to find
 Just-robed, she fled, and left her watch behind.

(p. 342, ll. 3-17)

The spirited manner in which this story is told reminds one of The Bothie, while the incident echoes the mistake about the beds in the "Reeve's Tale". (This favourite literary device of mistaken beds appears also in Pickwick Papers; Mr. Pickwick, who likewise goes to a downstairs room to get his watch, finds himself in the bed of the lady in curlers.)

These similarities to Chaucer, suggest I believe, that Clough was consciously copying him. His reference to Chaucer in "My Tale" (ll. 314-5) certainly indicates the direction of his thinking.

The influence of Crabbe on Mari Magno has been noted frequently. A contemporary reviewer in Blackwood's wrote that the Tales were "in the style of Crabbe": another in the Cornhill judged that they had "some affectation of Crabbe's prosaic plainness".⁸ This was echoed by Oliver Elton in 1920: "The tales, in neat Crabbe-like lines, of Clough's last long production, Mari Magno, run to a Crabbe-like prosiness."⁹ It is Clough's unadorned treatment of love, with the emphasis often on the darker side, which places him most firmly in the Crabbe tradition. Also, occasional passages written in neo-classical style, the moralizing impulse evident in some of the Tales, and several details of plot are reminiscent of Crabbe.¹⁰

The style of "The Clergyman's First Tale", with its motto "Love is fellow service", is very close to Crabbe. It is written, like all the Tales except the first, in decasyllabic couplets:

'Are there degrees of love, and different kinds
 Proportioned to the sizes of our minds?
 There are who say. I held there was but one,
 One love, one deity, one central sun.
 As he resistless brings the expanding day,
 So love, I held, on his victorious way.
 If light at all, can light indeed be there

Yet only permeate half the ambient air?
 Can the high noon be regnant in the sky
 Yet half the land in light and half in darkness lie,
 Can love, if love, be occupant in part,
 Hold, as it were, some chambers in the heart;
 Tenant-at-will of so much of the soul,
 Not lord and mighty master of the whole?

(p. 335, ll. 95-108)

At the end of this Tale there is a strong moralizing passage which states in detail the view that "love is fellow-service". The plots of "The Clergyman's Second Tale" and "The Lawyer's Second Tale" closely resemble situations in Crabbe. The "fall from virtue" of the husband and his consequent pangs of conscience in "The Clergyman's Tale" also provides the theme of Crabbe's Tale "Edward Shore". (Edward is the husband's name in both Tales.) The seduction of a Highland "waiting-maid" by a college tutor in "The Lawyer's Tale" is paralleled in Crabbe by the unfortunate love affair of Frederick, the "youth from College", and Martha, the daughter of a poor widow, in "The Maid's Story".

But Mari Magno is much more than a series of Tales modelled on Crabbe and Chaucer. Like "The American's Tale", "The Mate's Story" is short -- together they run to less than a hundred and fifty lines -- and is sketched rather than fully worked out. Perhaps Clough intended to expand them later, but died before he could do so. "The Lawyer's First Tale" and "Second Tale" must be read, I think, as parody. There is a connection also between "The Lawyer's

First Tale" and "The Clergyman's First Tale"; both contain studies of Clough's favourite psychological type, the introspective youth. "The Clergyman's Second Tale" is meant, I contend, as an ironic comment on the traditional view of atonement. "My Tale" is a miniature Mari Magno; there are descriptions of the varied travellers who get on the diligence during the drive to Luchon, and these travellers tell short stories.

Although "The American's Tale" and "The Mate's Story" are not worked out in as much detail as the other Tales, they show one aspect of love and marriage. The youth and sister of "The American's Tale" who meet under such unusual circumstances become happily married:

Of marriage, as of treason, one may say
We do not seek, we find it in our way.

(p. 343, ll. 37-8)

This statement is reinforced by the simply told "Mate's Story", about the French governess who misses her steamer and, stranded penniless in Liverpool, marries the ship's captain because she sees no other way out of her predicament: "Marry they did, and married live this day."

Fanny Price, in a short note in Notes and Queries, suggests that "The Lawyer's First Tale" is "a very friendly parody and summary" of Coventry Patmore's 'Faithful for Ever' (1860).¹¹ ('Faithful for Ever' was the third part of The Angel in the House and the first part to be written in

couplets instead of quatrains.) Clough knew The Angel in the House, and said of 'Faithful for Ever': "I like it, on the whole, better than the others."¹² Another poem in the epistolary form undoubtedly pleased him, and this explains the friendly tone which Miss Price finds in the parody.

The opening lines are a parody of the verse; here Emily of "The Lawyer's First Tale" writes to her cousin:

'Dearest of boys, please come to-day,
 Papa and mama have bid me say,
 They hope you'll dine with us at three;
 They will be out till then, you see,
 But you will start at once, you know,
 And come as fast as you can go.
 Next week they hope you'll come and stay
 Some time, before you go away.
 Dear boy, how pleasant it will be!
 Ever your dearest Emily!'

(p. 311, ll. 1-10)

Compare this with the opening of 'Faithful for Ever':

Frederick writes his mother in identical iambic tetrameter couplets:

Mother, I smile at your alarms!
 I own, indeed, my Cousin's charms,
 But, like all nursery maladies,
 Love is not badly taken twice.
 Have you forgotten Charlotte Hayes,
 My playmate in the pleasant days
 At Knatchley, and her sister, Anne,
 The twins, so made on the same plan,
 That one wore blue, the other white,
 To mark them to their father's sight;
 And how, at Knatchley harvesting,
 You bade me kiss her in the ring,
 Like Anne and all the others?¹³

Miss Price does no more than suggest the similarity between the two plots, but a careful comparison of the first

three parts of The Angel in the House and "The Lawyer's First Tale" reveals that the Lawyer's Tale is in part a summary and a variation of Patmore's poem up to and including 'Faithful for Ever'. Patmore's Frederick, shy and awkward, loses Honoria to the accomplished Felix and meets them unexpectedly while they are on their honeymoon. Clough's hero -- introspective, busy with his books, and disliking company -- likewise loses Emilia to the confident Helston:

Helston, whom formerly I knew,
My schoolfellow, was at the ball,
A man full-statured, fair and tall,
Helston of Helston now, they said,
Heir to his uncle, who was dead;
In the army, too: he danced with three
Of the four sisters,

(p. 319, ll. 106-12)

and is similarly confronted by them on their honeymoon. There is a similarity also in small details. Honor of The Angel in the House becomes later in the story Honoria, and Emily of "The Lawyer's First Tale" becomes Emilia.

The parody can be interpreted, I believe, from another point of view. "The Lawyer's First Tale" and "Second Tale" considered together suggest that Clough is parodying the stock plots of popular Victorian fiction. (I use "popular" in the sense in which Margaret Dalziel uses it in Popular Fiction 100 Years Ago: "By popular literature we understand here the books and magazines that are read purely for pleasure by people to whom pleasure is incompatible with the expenditure of intellectual or emotional effort ¹⁴ .") Writing

to his sister in 1847, Clough criticised the popular novels of Mrs. Marsh¹⁵ because they do not "make you think":

I have not read Emilia Wyndham, but I did read a long time ago Two Old Men's Tales by the same author (Mrs. Marsh); and they certainly were, as I am told Emilia Wyndham also is, too pathetic a great deal. I don't want to cry except for some good reason: it is 'pleasant, but wrong' in my mind. A novel ought to make you think, and if it does that, the more vivid it is the better, and of course it follows, that now and then it will make you cry: but I am not aware that Mrs. M. does make you think.¹⁶

It has been suggested that Patmore based his rather thin plot on one of the sentimental novels of the German writer Ida Kahn-Kahn.¹⁷ Whether or not this is so, his story of the disappointed suitor and the successful rival is a familiar one in Victorian feminine fiction.

So also is the story of "The Lawyer's Second Tale" about the seduction of a Highland "waiting-maid" by a college tutor. Deceived by her aunt and uncle about the tutor's intention to marry her, she goes with them to Australia where her child is born. (Miss Dalziel points out that in popular Victorian fiction: "A major cause of trouble between lovers was the misunderstanding based on false information or mistaken suspicion."¹⁸) The tutor, unable to find her, soon marries Lady Mary, "a widow, wealthy, and of noble blood," but continues to look for "his lost Australian boy":

Still he will seek, and still he hopes to find.
Yet will he go.

At this point in the Tale, the story-teller is interrupted by the Chaucerian 'I' of the author:

Said I, 'O let him stay,
 And in a London drawing-room some day --
 Rings on her fingers, brilliants in her hair,
 The lady of the latest millionaire --
 She'll come, and with a gathering slow surprise
 On Lady Mary's husband turn her eyes,
 The soft brown eyes that in a former day
 From his discretion lured him all astray.
 At home, six bouncing girls, who more or less
 Are leaning English of a governess,
 Six banging boys, as like as pear to pear;
 Only the eldest has a different air.'

"'You just,' . . . 'indeed it happened so,'" the story-teller replies, and continues:

From a great party just about to go,
 He saw, he knew, and ere she saw him, said
 Swift to his wife, and for the doorway made,
 'My Highland bride! to escape a scene I go,
 Stay, find her out -- great God! -- and let me know.'

(pp. 376-7, ll. 302-19)

This is, I think, an obvious parody. Other passages of unmistakable parody are ll. 39-55, and the closing lines:

O love, love, love, too late! the tears fell down.
 He dried them up -- and slowly walked to town.

(p. 382, ll. 510-1)

It is significant that the Tale is introduced in the discussion following "The Clergyman's Second Tale" as "a tale of human suffering and tears", a phrase that recalls Clough's description of Mrs. Marsh's books. Several other references in Mari Magno to novels support this view of Clough's intention: A passage on marriage in the Preface, which I have

already quoted, has the lines

Novels of course depict it final bliss, --
Say had it ever really once been this?

(p. 309, ll. 89-90)

In "The Clergyman's First Tale" Edmund philosophizes about love and concludes:

By books, not nature, thus have we been schooled,
By poetry and novels been befooled.

(p. 337, ll. 142-3)

Clough's intention in these two Tales has been little understood. Mrs. Clough wrote to C.E. Norton that two of the Tales "are rather terrible",¹⁹ and decided to omit them both from the 1862 volume. Henry Sidgwick wrote Mrs. Clough about his article in the Westminister Review (1869):

I am afraid you will have been vexed with what I say of the Mari Magno Tales. However, you probably knew that I did not appreciate them. . . . The truth is, when I wrote, I was antipathetically affected by the deliberately infantile simplicity of style in which parts of them (especially the First Tale) are written. This I call Ultra-Wordsworthian, Patmorean, and other bad names.²⁰

Sidgwick realized that the style was deliberate, but failed to see that it was meant to emphasize the parody.

In Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus Clough meticulously analyses the minds of Claude and Dipsychus, both of whom are hindered by their excessive introspection. In "The Lawyer's First Tale" and "The Clergyman's First Tale" we have similar psychological types, but Clough does not handle them with the intense irony and humour of the other two. The hero's

introspection in "The Lawyer's First Tale" prevents him from making up his mind until it is too late. He attends a ball, but the impulse to take part in it does not arrive until after the ball is over. Not until he meets Emilia and Helston on their honeymoon does he realize that he loves her:

It is -- Emilia, whom I love;
 'Emilia, whom I love,' the word
 Rose to my lips, as yet unheard,
 When she, whose colour flushes to red,
 Half turned, and soft, 'My husband,' said;
 And Helston came up with his hand,
 And both of them took mine.

(p. 328, ll. 126-33)

In "The Clergyman's First Tale" Clough states explicitly why Edmund prefers philosophizing about love to action:

One former frailty haunted him, a touch
 Of something introspective overmuch.

(p. 334, ll. 39-40)

Edmund, however, eventually marries, and the hero of "The Lawyer's Tale" follows Emilia's advice to resign his college fellowship, and in the words of a passage printed in the 1863 edition goes

Forth to the war of life . . .
 Courageous, and not ill content.²¹

Critics have called the ending of Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus inconclusive; I have shown that the attitude of Dipsychus at the end of the poem foreshadows action, and that even Claude admits "Knowledge is painful often, and yet when we know we are happy," though, of course, Clough

implies their future action rather than states it explicitly. In these Mari Magno Tales he is definite about the action of his heroes.

Clough spent his life re-thinking his "Received Tradition",²² especially his received religious tradition. In a letter to Anne in 1847 he asked: "What is the meaning of 'Atonement by a crucified Saviour'? How many of the Evangelicals can answer that?"²³ "The Clergyman's Second Tale" is, I think, an ironic comment on the traditional view of atonement. Briefly, the story tells of Edward and Jane whose happy marriage is disrupted when Edward's health forces him to leave England. After three weeks in the south, he feels lonely for England and his family and wishes to return, but his wife encourages him to stay for the full three months of his leave. His desire for company leads to an affair with "a beauteous woman", but he is soon overcome with guilt at his infidelity. He confesses all to his wife, but refuses to live with her and their children:

a whole year this penance he endured,
Nor even then would think that he was cured.

(p. 363, ll. 215-6)

He returns when he realizes the truth of his wife's statement:

'Twas I, you know, who let you leave your home
And bid you stay when you so wished to come;
My fault was that: I've told you so before,
And vainly told; but now its something more.
Say, is it right, without a single friend,
Without advice, to leave me to attend
Children and mother both? Indeed I've thought

Through want of you the child her fever caught. . . .
 And you, I tell you now, and I am sure,
 Neglect your duty both to God and man
 Persisting thus in your unnatural plan.

(p. 365, ll. 294-301; 309-11)

The discussion at the end of the Tale restates these last two lines. The Artillery Captain comments:

life could not be meant
 To be so altogether innocent.
 What did the atonement show? He, for the rest,
 Could not, he thought, have written and confessed.
 Weakness it was, and adding crime to crime
 To leave his family that length of time.

(p. 366, ll. 330-5)

Yet Clough, always anxious to see another side of a problem, lets another view be stated:

The lawyer said; the American was sure
 Each nature knows instinctively its cure.

(p. 366, ll. 336-7)

This moving Tale is told with much human sympathy. The concentration of detail and the vigour of the description makes the effect all the more powerful.

The Chaucerian character drawing and the short stories of the travellers in "My Tale" have already been mentioned. The soldier's outline of his career (ll. 61-108), the conducteur's song lamenting that he is too old to marry (ll. 135-58), the priest's story about the miraculous cure of a little girl (ll. 163-86) and Clough's own "Currente calamo" about the Pyrenees (ll. 240-300) are delivered with concise directness. The tourist motif in "My Tale" is also

worth noting. The places of interest around Mont Dore are described in ll. 1-18, and the stages of the ten hour drive in the banquette of a diligence to Luchon are carefully noted: Dordogne, Ussel, Tulle. There is too a pastoral element in the Tale: the "green pastoral heights" of Auvergne are referred to in l. 11; the conducteur's song is marked by a pastoral simplicity; peasants are mentioned in ll. 43, 77; and the conversation which introduces "Currente calamo" (ll. 207-39) and the song itself are about a peasant girl. Clough's friends interrupt his Tale and ask to hear about

A peasant beauty, beauteous past compare,
Who fed her cows the mountain peaks between.

(p. 350, ll. 210-1)

Clough, however, with a realism and a lack of sentimentality that reminds one of Crabbe's treatment of peasants, describes a rustic girl leading a donkey.

Each of the Mari Magno Tales is concerned with an aspect of the practical problems of love and marriage. The view put forth in the Preface that marriage is a needful human discipline is stated again in the original draft of "The American's Tale";²⁴ Emilia's advice to the hero in "The Lawyer's First Tale":

And for your happiness in life
Sometimes you'll wish to have a wife,

(p. 329, ll. 27-8)

states the necessity of marriage in different terms. "The

American's Tale" and "The Mate's Story" are brief but effective comments on happy marriages which result from chance meetings; in "The Mate's Story" the marriage is immediate. The conducteur's lament in "My Tale" because he is too old to marry contrasts with the marriage of the old man in the incomplete "Officer's Story".

The most explicit statement of Clough's views on marriage is in "The Clergyman's First Tale". First, Montaigne's view is stated and humorously dismissed:

'Montaigne, I know, in a realm high above
Places the seat of friendship over love;
'Tis not in love that we should think to find
The lofty fellowship of mind with mind;
Love's not a joy where soul and soul unite,
Rather a wondrous animal delight; . . .
O, but I will not tamely yield to this!
I think it only shows us in the end,
Montaigne was happy in a noble friend
Had not the fortune of a noble wife.'

(p. 336, ll. 111-6, 124-7)

The epigraph "Love is fellow-service" is the clue to Clough's view, which the clergyman states at the end of the Tale:

'Not to provide, -- I scorn it, I disdain, --
A kind, soft pillow for a wearying pain,
Fatigues the cares to lighten, to relieve;
But love is fellow-service, I believe.'
'No, truly not, it was not to obtain,
Though that perchance were happiness were gain,
A tender breast to fall upon and weep,
A heart, the secrets of my heart to keep;
To share my hopes, and in my griefs to grieve;
Yet love is fellow-service, I believe.'

(p. 340, ll. 267-76)

The condemnation of Edward in "The Clergyman's Second Tale" reinforces the idea of love as fellow-service and suggests

that Clough believed that there are worse sins in marriage than infidelity. I attribute these views on love and marriage to Clough personally because his letters contain similar statements. He writes to his sister:

Then again there comes the question of reconciling marriage with one's work, which for me is a problem of considerable difficulty. It is not everyone who would like to be an helpmate in the business I am likely to have.²⁵

He writes to Blanche Smith, his future wife:

Love is not everything, Blanche; don't believe it, nor try to make me pretend to believe it. 'Service' is everything. Let us be fellow-servants.²⁶

Do you think that though you and all womankind together cast me off that Truth would not be true, earth beautiful, the sky bright, honour honour, and work work -- only a little harder. I tell you, yes; take it as you will. I ask no girl to be my friend that we may be a fond foolish couple together all in all each to the other.²⁷

The mere man's idea of a wife as a helpmate in duty is not in my judgement an insult to womankind, though it may require modification and purification and correction.²⁸

This, as Waddington comments, "if it be not a very ardent, or enthusiastic, view of love and marriage, is, at any rate, thoroughly sane and intelligent."²⁹

There is a passage in John Ruskin's "Fiction, Fair and Foul" in which Ruskin compares the position of love and marriage in the novels of Sir Walter Scott and in "modern" novels:

But there is another difference in the woof of a Waverly novel from the cobweb of a modern one, which depends on Scott's larger view of human life. Marriage is by no means, in his conception of man and woman, the most important business of their

existence; nor love the only reward to be proposed to their virtue or exertion. It is not in his reading of the laws of Providence a necessity that virtue should, either by love or any other external blessing, be rewarded at all; and marriage is in all cases thought of as a constituent of the happiness of life, but not as its only interest, still less its only aim.³⁰

This view of love and marriage which Ruskin found in Victorian novels is found also in much Victorian poetry, in, for instance, Patmore's Angel in the House, in D.G. Rossetti's House of Life, in a number of Tennyson's poems -- it receives clear expression in "Vastness":

Love for the maiden, crowne'd with
marriage, no regrets for aught
that has been,
House hold happiness, gracious children,
debtless competence, golden mean;³¹ --

and in a number of Browning's. In "Dis Aliter Visum" Browning presents love as something, which once attained,

would make time
break,
And let us pent-up creatures through
Into eternity, our due?³²

This is not Clough's conception, yet he could express a more "romantic" view, as the conclusion of "The Clergyman's First Tale" shows:

Alone they met, from alien eyes away
The high shore hid them in a tiny bay.
Alone was he, was she; in sweet surprise
They met, before they knew it, in their eyes.
In his a wondering admiration glowed,
In hers a heaven of tenderness o'erflowed;
In a brief moment all was known and seen
That of slow years the wearying work had been:
Morn's early odorous breath perchance in sooth,

Awake the old natural feeling of their youth:
 The sea, perchance, and solitude had charms,
 They met -- I know not -- in each other's arms.
 Why linger now -- why waste the sands of life?
 A few sweet weeks, and they were man and wife.

(p. 340, ll. 251-64)

But the bulk of Clough's references to love and marriage expounds the view of love as fellow-service.

Henry Sidgwick criticised Mari Magno in the letter to Mrs. Clough quoted above, but had to admit that Clough showed great skill "in the limpid ease with which it the style is maintained."³³ He adds: "I have been made to feel this by a comparison with the only other Crabbean poem I know of recent times, Allingham's Lawrence Bloomfield."³⁴ It was natural that for story-telling in verse Clough should adopt the rhymed couplet used by Chaucer and Crabbe, the two masters in English of tales in verse. Clough handles the couplet well, as the passages already quoted show. The octosyllabic couplets of the first Tale (I exclude the unfinished "Officer's Story" also in octosyllabics) and the decasyllabic couplets of the other Tales attain a musical ease that is different from the halting stiffness of many of Crabbe's lines. These couplets remind one more of Chaucer:

Fifty years old, as near as one could guess.
 He looked the dignitary more or less.

(p. 308, ll. 36-7)

A guest had been, amongst the choicest there.
 Manly his voice and manly was his air.

(p. 308, ll. 40-1)

Some of the most pleasing couplets in the poem occur in passages of parody, as for example the closing couplet of "The Lawyer's Second Tale":

O love, love, love, too late! the tears fell down.
He dried them up -- and slowly walked to town.

(p. 382, ll. 510-1)

The Tales of Mari Magno are simply told, concise and direct. The poem was unfinished at Clough's death, and the exact relationship of the Tales to each other and to the scheme as a whole cannot be determined. The theme of love and marriage gives the poem a definite unity, which, however, "My Tale" detracts from because the theme is present only in the conducteur's song, although in itself the Tale is excellent. Of the same high quality is the parody of the first and last Tales. The Chaucerian character sketches are very fine; those of the English clergyman and the lawyer are as perfect in their way as any of the Canterbury pilgrims. Mari Magno proves unmistakably that at the end of his life Clough was growing in stature as a poet.

NOTES

- 1 Turner, "A Study of Clough's Mari Magno", 569-89, studies (overstudying some parts to my mind) the considerable autobiographical element in the poem.
- 2 Poems, 551.
- 3 Prose Remains, 333-51.
- 4 Houghton suggests this date in Prose Works of Clough: A Checklist, 387.
- 5 Prose Remains, 334-5.
- 6 Corres., II, 522.
- 7 Kittredge, Chaucer and His Poetry, (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), 185-211.
- 8 Anonymous, "Clough's Poems", Blackwood's, 597.
- 9 Anonymous, "Clough's Life and Poems", reprinted in Living Age, XCI (1866), 264.
- 10 Elton, A Survey of English Literature, 1830-1880, (London, 1955), II, 96.
- 11 Price, "Clough and Patmore", Notes and Queries, CLXXXIII (1942), 376.
- 12 Corres., II, 584.
- 13 Coventry Patmore, The Poems of Coventry Patmore, ed. Page, (London, 1949), 211.
- 14 Dalziel, Popular Fiction 100 Years Ago, (London, 1957), 1.

- 15 Mrs. Anne Marsh-Caldwell (1791-1874), "Mrs. Marsh was one of the most popular novelists of her time. . . . her novels chiefly describe the upper middle class and the lesser aristocracy." DNB, XII, 1104.
- 16 Corres., I, 181-2.
- 17 Page, Patmore -- A Study in Poetry, (London, 1933), 63-6. Ida Kahn-Kahn (1805-80), German author, she wrote novels "bearing a certain subjective resemblance to those of George Sand . . . and dealing almost exclusively with aristocratic society." Encyclopaedia Britannica (11th. edition), XII, 819.
- 18 Dalziel, Popular Fiction, 110.
- 19 Poems, 551.
- 20 Henry Sidgwick: A Memoir, (London, 1906), 216.
- 21 Poems, 557.
- 22 Gollin, Arthur Hugh Clough's Formative Years, 1.
- 23 Corres., I, 182.
- 24 Poems, 559.
- 25 Corres., I, 170.
- 26 Ibid., 300.
- 27 Ibid., 301.
- 28 Corres., II, 435-6.

- 29 Waddington, Clough, 286.
- 30 John Ruskin, The Works of John Ruskin, ed. Cook and Wedderburn, (London, 1908), XXXIV, 284-5.
- 31 Alfred Tennyson, Poetical Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson, (London, 1950), 588.
- 32 Robert Browning, Poetical Works, I, 575.
- 33 Sidgwick: A Memoir, 216.
- 34 Ibid.

Chapter VI

CLOUGH: THE MAN AND THE POET

Arthur Hugh Clough was in close contact with many aspects of the nineteenth century. He was a pupil at Rugby when Dr. Arnold's fame as Headmaster was at its height, and an undergraduate at Balliol College, Oxford during the Oxford Movement. His undergraduate career (1837-42) spanned the years when in the Balliol common room disputes raged endlessly between W.G. Ward and A.C. (later Archbishop) Tait.¹ Passionately interested in European politics, he was in Paris during the revolution of 1848, and in Rome during the short-lived Roman Republic of 1849. For two years, he was principal of a Presbyterian and Unitarian hostel in London. During his visit to America (1852-3), he was warmly received by the great literary figures of New England. From the summer of 1853 until his death in 1861, he was an Examiner in the Education Office, London, and spent the greater part of his free time in the service of Florence Nightingale. (Clough's wife was her niece.)

Anyone nurtured on the traditional view of Clough as a man whose early promise failed of fulfilment because of indecisiveness is surprised by the judgement of his contemporaries. For Clough gained the admiration and respect of some of the leading figures of the Victorian period, including Carlyle and Emerson. He was a close friend of Matthew Arnold, Walter Bagehot, J.A. Froude, and of F.J. Child, C.E. Norton and J.R. Lowell in America. The letters and journals of

these men contain glowing references to him. Emerson, for instance, wrote to Carlyle: "I was glad to see Clough here, with whom I had established some kind of robust working-friendship, and who has some great permanent value for me."² When Clough died, Matthew Arnold wrote: "That [Clough's death] is a loss which I shall feel more and more as time goes on, for he is one of the few people who ever made a deep impression upon me."³ This is a more deeply felt tribute than his "Thrysis". Froude's own admiration is mingled with this account of Carlyle's opinion: "Of Clough Carlyle had formed the very highest opinion, as no one who knew him could fail to do. . . . Clough to Carlyle [was]⁴ as a diamond sifted out of the general rubbish heap." Yet the man who is praised in these terms by contemporaries of the stature of Matthew Arnold, Carlyle and Emerson is dismissed summarily at the end of the century by George Saintsbury: "On the whole, Clough is one of the most unsatisfactory products of that well-known form of nineteenth century scepticism which has neither the strength to believe nor the courage to disbelieve 'and have done with it'."⁵

Clough's reputation as a poet is closely connected with his reputation as a man, and it has fared no better. During his lifetime he published only The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich (November, 1848) and Ambarvalia (January, 1849). Amours de Voyage was printed serially in the Atlantic Monthly (February-May, 1858). Ambarvalia was ignored by the

literary journals, and although The Bothie was reviewed enthusiastically by Charles Kingsley and W.M. Rossetti, it was not reprinted until the Poems of 1862. Amours de Voyage, available only in the Boston Atlantic Monthly, did not reach a large public. Shortly after Clough's death, Mrs. Clough prepared an edition of the poems which was published in 1862 with a Memoir by Francis Turner Palgrave. Palgrave refers to the poems as "an exhibition of Clough's own mind"⁶ and until recently this was the characteristic note in Cloughian criticism. The posthumous editions were popular in Victorian England (the 1869 Poems and Prose Remains was reprinted fourteen times before the end of the reign), but the poems were looked upon as an interesting, if somewhat painful, index of Clough's personality. The 1862 volume was published three years after Darwin's Origin of Species (1859), a time in Victorian England when it was customary to classify everyone under the banner of Faith or Doubt, so it is not surprising that the tone of Palgrave's Memoir, and the lines in "Thrysis",

It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest. . . .
 Some life of men unblest
 He knew, which made him droop, and fill'd his head.
 He went; his piping took a troubled sound
 Of storms that rage outside our happy ground;
 He could not wait their passing, he is dead,⁷

-- which Arnold did not mean as a complete picture of Clough -- stamped him as a poet of doubt, and his poems as a useful index of his perplexity. The omissions, especially from

Dipsychus, but also from Mari Magno, helped to blind the public to the high spirits and gusto which were the predominant elements in Clough's character.

There is much in the traditional view of Clough which needs correcting, and recently several articles -- notably those by Michael Timko of the University Of Illinois ⁸ -- have pointed out the positive elements in his religious and social views. My assumption in the above chapters is that Clough lost faith in his Rugby inheritance, was disturbed by the Oxford Movement and the Higher Criticism, but resolved his "religious" and "moral" difficulties by developing a philosophy which included a view of God as an unnamable Deity ("O not unowned, Thou shalt unnamed forgive" he says in "Qui Laborat, Orat"), a belief in the "essense" of Christianity, and a belief in duty as service to one's fellow men. Clough's religion, with its emphasis on the social rather than the theological, may be considered no religion at all, but the important point is that it satisfied him.

There is, I think, some truth in Palgrave's assertion that the poems are "an exhibition of Clough's own mind", but as a generalization it cannot be applied indiscriminately. I have shown that the Oxford poems are autobiographical; in them can be traced the development of a philosophy which led Clough to leave Oxford. But to overemphasize the autobiographical element in The Bothie, Amours de Voyage,

Dipsychus and Mari Magno is to minimize the detachment with which he created character and situation in these poems.

To readers of anthologies of English poetry, Clough is best known for his fine lyric "Say not the struggle nought availeth" and his short satiric poem "The Latest Decalogue". "Say not the struggle" is not, however, representative of his poetry, for he is not a lyric poet, but rather an intellectual, a philosophical wit, whose characteristic tone is ironic. The Bothie and Mari Magno are narratives of contemporary life and display Clough's flare for portraying character; Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus are discerning psychological studies of introspection, which was also, as I noted in Chapter IV, a topical subject.

Clough began his poetic career at Rugby and Oxford as a lyric poet. Many of his Balliol lyrics are weakened by their pretentious and inflated language, but the objectivity which he achieves when he uses natural description to convey his despair ("When soft September brings again" is the best example) is worth remembering. His Oriel love lyrics are marred by their intellectualism and stilted diction. He shows a remarkable control, however, of the subject and emotion of the Oriel lyrics "The human spirits", "Qui Laborat, Orat" and "Qua Cursum Ventus", but even these suffer from the clumsy use of language which characterizes all his Oxford poems. After Clough left Oxford he wrote a

number of other lyrics, but only "Say not the struggle" and "Where lies land" are remarkable for their exact and polished diction.

The element of narrative in Clough's poems, his use of contemporary subjects, his analytical study of character and his metrical versatility connect him closely with his age. The tourist motif of Amours de Voyage, Dipsychus and "My Tale" should also be mentioned in passing. The mid-Victorian poets were keenly aware that supremacy was passing from poetry to fiction, and that to compete with the novel they had to write poems which treated the life of their own day. Tennyson's The Princess, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" and Aurora Leigh, and Patmore's Angel in the House are, like The Bothie and Mari Magno, narratives of everyday life. As a discussion of contemporary questions, The Bothie, in its avoidance of the literary conventions which hamper the argument in The Princess and Aurora Leigh, seems the most successful. The main theme of The Bothie is the glorification of work, and it especially points out its value for women. Labour, Clough argues, adds grace and attraction to the beauty of women, and he particularly recommends that they choose occupations of service. This practical, yet subtle, treatment of the woman's question must have been welcomed by those women who were longing for freedom to live in their own way:

You, young girl, who have had such advantages, learnt so
 quickly,
 Can you teach? O yes, and she likes Sunday school extrem-
 ely,
 Only it's soon in the morning. Away! if to teach be your
 calling,
 It is no play, but a business: off! go teach and be
 paid for it.
 Lady Sophia's so good to the sick, so firm and so gentle.
 Is there a nobler sphere than of hospital nurse and
 matron?
 Hast thou for cooking a turn, little Lady Clarissa? in
 with them,
 In with your fingers! their beauty it spoils, but your own
 it enhances;
 For it is beautiful only to do the thing we are meant for.

(IX, ll. 31-9)

Clough's advice is all the more interesting when it is re-
 alized that it is from a man who became a trusted adviser to
 Florence Nightingale, and whose sister, Anne, became the
 first principal of Newnham College, Cambridge.

The three views current in Victorian England on the
 place of women in society are presented in The Princess:
 the conservative view of the Prince's father, "Man for the
 field and woman for the hearth" (V, 437-41); the advanced
 view of Princess Ida, "Two heads in council, two beside the
 hearth" (II, 155-61); and the middle position -- Tennyson's
 view -- which assumes that "woman is not undeveloped man,
 But diverse" (VII, 253-60). There is in The Bothie, however,
 none of Tennyson's compromise between tradition and ex-
 periment, for Clough's view is that of Princess Ida, as his
 similarly practical treatment of love and marriage in Mari
 Magno shows.

The habit of introspection, which Kathleen Tillotson⁹ has emphasized as "a 'note' of the thirties and forties", and of which Sartor Resartus, In Memoriam and Empedocles on Etna are the most notable examples, receives new and original treatment in Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus. Clough regards the excessive introspection of Claude and Dipsychus as a malady of the times; his originality lies in his comic and satiric treatment of the theme. His originality is seen again in his use of the hexameter. A number of Victorian poets were interested in classical prosody, notably Tennyson among the greater ones. Longfellow and Kingsley, as well as Clough, attempted to adapt the hexameter to English use, and as I show in the Appendix Clough was the one most conscious of the problem. Clough's innovation is his use of the hexameter for an essentially comic purpose, namely to achieve an effect of parody which in turn reinforces his satire. Most notable in Amours de Voyage, it is equally important in The Bothie.

But Clough's real field is the observation and analysis of man in particular social settings: the members of an Oxford reading party in the Highlands, introspective Englishmen in Rome and Venice, a group of travellers on a ship crossing the Atlantic. J.C. Shairp's reminiscence of Clough's unsuccessful try for a Balliol Fellowship in 1842 is revealing: "I remember one of them [the examiners]

telling me at the time that a character of Saul which Clough wrote in that examination was, I think he said, the best, most original thing he had ever seen written in any examination."¹⁰ Three years before this Clough wrote to his friend J.P. Gell asking him to visit Oxford before leaving England:

It is also advisable that you should see the Arch-Oxford-Tractator before you leave this part of the world, that you may not be ignorant on a topic doubtless interesting even to the remote barbarians in Van D's Ld. It is said that Romanists are increasing, Newmanists increasing, Scotians also, and Rationalists increasing perhaps, all other kinds of men rapidly decreasing; so that on your return to England perhaps you will find Newman Archbp. of Canterbury and father-confessor to the Queen; Lord Melbourne (if not burnt) excommunicated, and philosophers in the persons of the Apostles' apostolically ordained successors fairly and platonically established as Kings. The seeds of which contingent revolutions it is requisite to come and contemplate in Oxford. You will also have the opportunity of seeing Conybeare Pater issuing fulminatory condemnations of the Fathers at the heads of astonished Newmanists from St. Mary's pulpit: himself in shape, conformation and gestures most like one of his own ichthyosauri and his voice evidently proceeding from lungs of a fossil character. Again you will see Chevalier Bunsen, Poet Wordsworth, and Astronomer Herschel metamorphosed into Doctors of Civil Law, a sight worthy, especially in the second case, of all contemplation. Furthermore there will be boat races with much shouting and beer-drinking, a psychological study of great interest.¹¹

This is the Clough of The Bothie, Amours de Voyage, Dipsychus and Mari Magno, not a religious moper, but rather a brilliant and witty observer of the spirit and manners of his age.

Clough's analysis of his characters is of two kinds: in The Bothie and Mari Magno he is the behaviourist psychologist who minutely observes their appearance and behaviour;

in Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus he meticulously dissects their minds. Philip of The Bothie is an attempt at a similar study, but it lacks the subtlety of his analysis of Claude and Dipsychus. However, when compared with Browning, whose real field is also the analysis of character, Clough's limitations are easily seen. Within the narrow range of the men and women whom Clough analyses, he probes as deeply as Browning into the inner springs of their characters, but he has neither the breadth of sympathy nor the imagination which allows Browning to depict characters as splendid and as varied as Guido Francheschini and Andrea del Sarto, or the Bishop who "orders his tomb" and Fra Lippo Lippi. Clough could sympathize with Philip, the Carlylean radical of The Bothie, with the members of an Oxford reading party, with Elspie, the Highland lass, with introspective youths like Claude and Dipsychus and the heroes of the first two Tales of Mari Magno, because he understood them well from experience. To do justice to Clough, however, it should be pointed out that the characters of "The Mate's Story", though they are only sketched, are convincing. Also in "The Clergyman's Second Tale", the most satisfying Tale in Mari Magno, Clough analyses with great pathos the near-tragedy of Edward and Jane. It is idle to speculate on what Clough might have written had he lived longer, but one can say that in his last poem he successfully portrays new types of

character.

Clough's treatment of contemporary questions and his analysis of character cannot be separated from the satire which permeates them.¹² Genial and light in The Bothie and Mari Magno, somber and subtle in Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus, it is his individual mark in mid-Victorian poetry. James Sutherland in his Clarke Lectures on English Satire has a suggestion about the lack of satire in modern poetry; "It may well be that the modern poet is too tentative and exploratory, too unsure of his own beliefs, to commit himself to satire. The satirist, at least, must know his own mind, and know it before he begins to write."¹³ I have shown that Clough from his Oriel days was sure of his beliefs, but it is worth observing that he wrote his best poetry -- and his best poetry is satiric in intention -- under stress. The years between 1848, when he resigned his Fellowship, and 1853, when he took up his position at the Education Office, were not easy ones. The light and genial satire of The Bothie is that of a man rejoicing in his new-found freedom; the intense and bitter satire of Amours de Voyage and Dipsychus is that of a man suffering because of his rebellion, frustrated, in fact, in his attempt to work out the practical aspects of his philosophy. His first year at University Hall was, as his letters show, extremely unhappy; he found his position there as restrictive as his Oxford Fellowship

had been. At the end of this first year he wrote Dipsychus, his most ambitious work, which contains his best satire. He wrote no other major poem until 1861, again a year of stress, but this time the stress of failing health. His work at the Education Office and for Florence Nightingale gave him, in these last years, a sense of accomplishment, a feeling that he was putting into practice his philosophy of service to his fellow-men. The appreciation which his poetry received in America (C.E. Norton, who wrote in November, 1860 that Clough's poems "have never had in England half the credit they deserve,"¹⁴ was preparing an American edition at the time of Clough's death) was no small factor in the happiness of his final years. This contentment is reflected in the calm assurance which permeates Mari Magno. In this poem the voice of satire is subdued, but not silent, for irony, which appeared as early as "Duty -- that's to say complying" (1840), was a permanent part of Clough's temperament. For the greater part of Clough's life he was at odds with his age, and it was his rebellion and his sense of isolation which developed his poetic genius. His post at the Education Office, his work for Florence Nightingale, and his marriage to Blanche Smith dampened his rebellious spirit and brought him into closer contact with society. Only when he was again free from all this, and aware perhaps that his health would not improve, did he write another long

poem. It is significant that for his subject he returned to an experience of 1852.

It is not my intention to claim that Clough is a major Victorian poet, but I do think that he is of real significance. Clough's attempt in 1859 to revise The Bothie indicates that he was aware of the lack of finish in his work. One may criticize the lack of unity in Dipsychus and The Bothie, and lament that Clough died before he could finish Mari Magno, but it must be admitted that Amours de Voyage, the songs of the Spirit (with these must be put "The Latest Decalogue" and "To the Great Metropolis"), "The Clergyman's Second Tale" in Mari Magno, and the lyrics "Say not the struggle" and "Where lies the land" are as artistically fine as the best poetry of the period. The Bothie, Dipsychus and Mari Magno -- Clough's stature as a poet depends on our judgement of his four long poems -- cannot be included in this list, for although they are very satisfying in parts, they are not artistic wholes.

The independence of Clough's opinions about religion and society, and his poetic originality are the marks of a rare and gifted mind. His success in following his instinct for the modern, the realistic and the satirical in poetry justify calling him the chief minor poet of mid-Victorian England.

NOTES

- 1 Faber, Jowett, (London, 1957), 138-9.
- 2 Corres. Carlyle and Emerson, II, 257a.
- 3 M. Arnold, Letters of Matthew Arnold, ed. Russell, (London, 1895), I, 152.
- 4 J.A. Froude, Thomas Carlyle, (New York, 1910), I, 390.
- 5 Saitsbury, History of Nineteenth Century Literature, (London, 1896), 309.
- 6 Poetical Works of A.H. Clough, (London, [1906]), x.
- 7 M. Arnold, Poetical Works, 264.
- 8 Timko, "Arthur Hugh Clough: A Portrait Retouched", Victorian Newsletter, No. 15 (1959), 24-8.
-----, "The 'True Creed' of Arthur Hugh Clough", Modern Language Quarterly, XXI (1960), 208-22.
Palmer, "Was Clough a Failure?", Philological Quarterly, XXII (1943), 58-68.
- 9 Tillotson, Novels of the Eighteen-Forties, (Oxford, 1956), 131.
- 10 J.C. Shairp, Portraits of Friends, 198.
- 11 Corres., I, 91-2.
- 12 Clough's abilities as a satirist have been praised frequently; Garrod and Sutherland have been quoted above. The most important essay on Clough as a satirist is by Humbert Wolfe; he claims that "born in a happier time", Clough would "have found a place beside Dryden and Byron as one of the greatest of the English in the satiric mode."
Eighteen-Sixties, 50.

- 13 Sutherland, English Satire, 77-8.
- 14 C.E. Norton, Letters of C.E. Norton, ed. S. Norton and De Wolfe Howe, (Boston, 1913), I, 211.

APPENDIX

CLOUGH AND ENGLISH HEXAMETERS

The classical hexameter is the six-foot dactylic measure of Greek and Latin poetry. English poets of the sixteenth century -- Gabriel Harvey, Richard Stanyhurst, Sir Philip Sidney and Abraham Fraunce to name the more important -- tried to naturalize the metre into English. They did not have, however, a clear understanding of what quantity meant, and their attempts were so unmusical that from this time the hexameter was considered contrary to the genius of the English language, and went out of use.

In the nineteenth century the hexameter was revived in England, and also made its appearance in America and Germany. The metre of The Bothie, according to Clough, was inspired by a reading aloud of Longfellow's Evangeline (1847), and a re-reading of Homer (Corres., I, 241). When Clough was writing in 1848, Southey had already published A Vision of Judgement (1821), but Kingsley had yet to publish Andromeda (1859). Reaction to Clough's metre in 1848 was for the most part antagonistic. Emerson wrote to Carlyle: "But no, you will never forgive him his metres" (Corres. Carlyle and Emerson, II, 204-5). The poet Edward Quillian wrote to Henry Crabbe Robinson: "Clough's spondaic lines are, to my ear, detestable" (Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabbe Robinson, ed. Sadler, (London, 1869), III, 339). Kingsley's comment in Fraser's, however, has a different tone: "his verses are not properly hexameters at all, but a

fire-new discovery of his own genius, to be christened henceforth, Bothiaics" (Reprinted in Living Age, XXI (1849), 200).

Between 1848 and 1862, when the first collected edition of Clough's poems was published, many discussed whether the hexameter was an English metre. William Whewell's article in Macmillan's Magazine (1862, "New Hexameter Translation of the Iliad"), and Sir John Herschel's translation of the first book of the Iliad in the Cornhill (1862, "The Iliad in English Hexameters, Book I") did much to win support for the hexameter. So although Blackwood's review of the 1862 volume wrote: "We are no admirers of English hexameters; but Mr. Clough's rough dactyls are really good of their kind" (Blackwood's XCII (1862), 589), the reviewer in the Christian Remembrancer thought a little differently: "if it [the hexameter] triumphs, as we think that it eventually may, no slight share in the gaining of that victory ought in fairness to be allotted to Clough" (Reprinted in Living Age, LXXVI (1863), 385).

The most sensible discussion of English hexameters and of Clough's contribution to their use is found in the Introduction to H.S. Milford's edition of the Poems of Clough, (London, 1910). Milford points out that writers of the nineteenth century hexameters only dimly realized that "accent, not quantity, must be the basis of a naturalized

hexameter" (v). That Kingsley, for instance, in Andromeda

did not clearly realize what accentual hexameters could be made is shown perhaps chiefly by the extreme care with which he avoided all licences such as an unaccented first syllable compensated by an accented second or third; the result is surely that the rhythm is monotonous and fatigues the ear. (vii)

Clough, however, if one can judge by the note prefixed to the first edition, understood the implications of using the hexameter in English: "The reader is warned to expect every kind of irregularity in these modern hexameters" (Poems, 496). Milford's summary of Clough's achievement is worth quoting:

by bold reliance on accent . . . by the frequent use of 'spondaic' endings, light beginnings . . . and inversions of accent in every foot except the last: and by skillful variation of caesura and distribution of stresses, he proved that the accentual hexameter was capable of sustaining the weight of a long narrative without sinking into a flat monotony of rhythm, 'the very false gallop of verses,' (ix-x).

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