

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY
OF
THOMAS ARNOLD THE YOUNGER.

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A SHORT ABSTRACT

Thomas Arnold was Dr. Arnold's second and favourite son. Born in Laleham, Middlesex, in 1823, he spent all his formative years under his father's influence except for one year he and Matthew spent at Winchester before being brought back to Rugby. Dr. Arnold died in 1842 and in that year Thomas began his undergraduate life in Tractarian Oxford as a scholar at University College. He soon developed a social conscience and suffered a collapse of faith, so that despite taking a First he rejected the chance of a Fellowship and in a mood of idealism emigrated to New Zealand in 1847. Two years as a colonial settler were enough to temper his idealism and in 1850 he gladly accepted the post of Inspector of Schools in Tasmania, offered by the Governor Sir William Denison. Within months he had married Julia Sorell, had begun to organise the re-structuring of the island's school system, and regain his Rugby faiths. By 1855 he had decided to become a Roman Catholic and this almost destroyed his marriage since his wife was, and remained, fiercely opposed to Catholicism. He was received in 1856; his marriage survived but he lost his post as Inspector of Schools.

Through contact with J.H. Newman he was appointed Professor of English Literature in the Catholic University in Dublin in 1856, but after six years in the strife-torn University he joined Newman in the Oratory School in Birmingham. As friend of Newman and Sir John Acton he was at the centre of Catholic politics during the difficult mid-century period; disillusionment set in and in 1865 he left the faith to return to Oxford.

The next eleven years established his academic reputation as

the editor of the Works of John Wyclif and numerous works for the Rolls series; it was only his return to the Catholic Church in 1876 that prevented his election to the Chair of Anglo-Saxon in Oxford. It ruined his career and his marriage. He spent the last years of his life as Professor and Fellow of the declining University College in Dublin, continuing with academic work until his death in 1900.

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PREFACE.

The materials for this biography have been made available to me through the kindness of four scholars who either now have custody of the manuscripts or who owned them at the time. My thanks are therefore due to Dr. K. Noakes for permission to refer to the Pusey House collection of the letters of Mrs. Humphry Ward, to Professor James Bertram for reporting the existence of Thomas Arnold's letters among the Correspondence of Lord Acton in the Cambridge University Library, and to Father Stephen Dessain of the Birmingham Oratory for permission to use and copy the letters in the Newman archives. Thanks are also due to my supervisor, Dr. G. Parry, of the University of Leeds, for his advice and help during the writing of the study. Above all, however, my thanks are due to Dr. Mary Moorman, of Bishop Mount, Ripon, great grand-daughter of Thomas Arnold, for without her help this study could and would never have been written. She not only made available to me most of the manuscripts on which the biography is based but allowed me the privilege of using the originals at leisure, and was always willing to give me the benefit of her own scholarship and her personal knowledge of the Arnold family. My debt to her is beyond measure. The faults which remain are entirely my own.

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Arnold's life almost exactly spanned the Victorian period and its course contained so many characteristic dilemmas that it could almost serve as an exemplar of middle-class intellectual life of the period. He was brought up in a strongly religious home where conscience, not theology, was the moving force, he was taught a strict moral discipline, his intellectual education in Greek, Latin, Mathematics, Scripture, History and English composition began almost as soon as he could hold a pencil, and he was introduced quite early to discussions of the social and political questions of the Reform Bill era. Geology, rudimentary Natural History, and the methods of recent German biblical scholarship were also part of his training. He was taught by private tutor, by his father, and with his brother Matthew went to both Winchester and Rugby Schools. His scholarship to University College, Oxford, was taken almost as a matter of course in a family used to excellence, and in this fact lies concealed one of the major strains of his life for he was always troubled by the fear that he could never do more than equal his father and his elder brother. The restlessness that this produced was never fully resolved. Trying to live up to an unattainable perfection in all matters of conscience drove him to extremes of belief and behaviour: in Tractarian Oxford he lost his religious faith to wander miserably in the shades of agnosticism, he there learned the spirit of rebellion and demonstrated in the rain against the degradation of W.G. Ward, rejoiced in the notions of equality and fraternity emanating from France, and suffered a broken

love-affair in the very months when Jenny Lind was capturing the hearts of young men all over England. The only solution to his problems, it seemed, was emigration. He set sail in 1847.

The rest of his life was shaped by these same forces, always in conflict with each other. His wife came of Huguenot stock: he became a Roman Catholic; later, as Professor of English Literature in the Catholic University in Dublin he fought for an unrestricted education system while accepting the Index at the same time. Working with J.H. Newman in the Birmingham Oratory, one of the centres of English Catholicism, he lost his faith as the rational arguments of science impressed more and more on his mind: in the battle between Genesis and the Origin of Species Darwin triumphed. Finally, after his return to Oxford, where he built up an academic reputation which seemed set to ensure his election to the Chair of Anglo-Saxon, he sabotaged his career by returning to the Catholic faith in which he remained for the rest of his life.

Others in his circle of friends passed through the same difficulties but suffered less grievously except, perhaps, for A.H. Clough who, even then, was not driven to seek the solution to his problems in emigration. By comparison with A.P. Stanley, Matthew Arnold, J.A. Froude and J.C. Shairp, Thomas achieved little, but he is interesting not for what he achieved but for what he was. His life touched upon more points of the nineteenth century compass than did the lives of many of his Oxford contemporaries. He traversed half the world in search of the good life, he wandered between the extremes of belief and unbelief in the search for true religion, and though he died almost unnoticed he might well have become as famous in Oxford as

W. Skeat later became in Cambridge if the Anglo-Saxon election in 1876 had gone in his favour. He was driven by strong inner compulsions which he could not contain, and the consequences throw a revealing sidelight on the Victorian age.

CHAPTER ONE.

Laleham and Rugby.

Thomas Arnold was born in Laleham, Middlesex, on November 30th, 1823, the second son of Thomas Arnold, late of Oriel College, Oxford, but since 1819 proprietor of a small private school. His mother was the daughter of the Rev. E. Penrose of Fledborough, in Nottinghamshire, whose family connections stretched back to Cornwall where she had been born. In August 1820 Thomas Arnold had brought her to the small Middlesex village as his bride; the second son, named Thomas after his father, was her third child.

The Arnolds came from the Isle of Wight, where the family home of Slatwoods was situated, and where William Arnold worked as a customs official. Thomas, his son, had first been to school at Warminster after which, at the age of 12, in 1807, he was sent to Winchester, and thence four years later to Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He took a First Class degree at the age of nineteen and then, apparently against the odds and the other candidates, was elected Fellow of Oriel College and settled down to the life of an Oxford don. During this time he consolidated his growing friendship with John Keble and Richard Whateley, both of whom had been Fellows at Oriel for four years previously, and found time to travel throughout Europe. He clearly enjoyed his Oxford life. It was on one of his holidays in England, when he was staying with his friends the Penroses - Trevenen was one of his friends in Oxford - that he met and fell in love with Mary, and his intention of marrying her changed his whole future for he could not marry and retain his Fellowship. He

decided to resign. That in itself was simple enough, but providing for a wife was a major problem which he solved with some reluctance by turning to teaching. It happened that he had a brother-in-law already running a private school with some success, for in 1816 his sister Frances had married John Buckland, brother of William Buckland the famous Oxford geologist. John Buckland's school was in Twickenham, but when Thomas Arnold suggested that they should join forces and open a joint school he was willing to sell up and search for new premises; so it was that they bought two houses in the village of Laleham, in Middlesex. Arnold borrowed the large sum of £1,000 for the purpose since he had no other source, and for months he and Buckland painted, demolished walls, replaced floors, extended out-buildings, and opened for the first half-year in the autumn of 1819. A year later Mary Penrose became Mrs. Arnold and the two of them began their married life in Laleham.

Arnold was under no illusions about why he had taken up teaching, for he felt he had sacrificed a great deal in leaving Oxford to teach boys:

You talk to me of cutting blocks with a razor; indeed, it does me no good to lead my mind to such notions, for to tell you a secret, I am quite enough inclined myself to feel above my work, which is very wrong and foolish. I believe I am usefully employed, and I am quite sure I am employed more safely for myself than if I had time for higher studies: it does my mind a marvellous deal of good, or ought to do, to be kept upon bread and water. But be this as it may, and be the price I am paying much or little, I cannot forget for what I am paying it ... When, therefore, I find school most irksome to me, I think that it is this which enables me to think of marrying at five and twenty, without a penny of private fortune, and that puts me at once into the receipt

of an income.¹

Restless, energetic, and ambitious as he was he had the power of will to focus his energies along a pre-determined path even when that path was apparently below his original expectations. And without doubt he regarded his life as a private schoolmaster as rather less than he might have expected from his success at Oxford; in 1824 he broke with Buckland so as to take only older pupils preparing for Oxford entrance and scholarships. Buckland quietly continued with the younger boys, up to thirteen. The only point worth adding is that the breach was conducted amicably on both sides since Buckland was quite content with his lot in contrast with Arnold who was glad to leave off scholastic connection with young boys. "I have always thought" he said, "with regard to ambition, that I should be aut Caesar aut nullus, and as it is pretty well settled for me that I shall not be Caesar I am quite content to live in peace as nullus."² But it was not true; he never reconciled himself to the anonymity of Laleham, even with his older pupils, and finally found satisfaction only when he was made Professor of Modern History in Oxford shortly before the end of his life.

Mary Arnold must have been a remarkable woman for she combined a delicacy of physique with great strength of mind and rapidly became her husband's strongest supporter, recording every year in her journal her thanks to God for yet another year of very happy marriage. In 1821 she gave birth to their first child Jane,

¹Letter to George Cornish, February 1820, Moorman MS., BL.

²Quoted in A.P. Stanley, The Life and Letters of Thomas Arnold D.D., London 1844, p.33. (revised edition 1903)

always affectionately known as 'K'; in December 1822 came Matthew, their first son, and then, eleven months later, on 30th. November 1823, she gave birth to Thomas, who bore his father's name but not his personality. From the start he was delicate in health, easily given to illness and usually pale in complexion. As he grew up and began to talk his parents realised that he suffered from an almost uncontrollable stammer which stayed with him for the rest of his life despite the attempts of various doctors to cure it for him. Throughout the period of his early manhood he struggled to control it, or disguise it, and to a very large extent he succeeded, but it served to increase his natural reserve and shyness in company. Perhaps it was this tendency to delicacy that drew a particular affection from his father, for Stanley has it that Thomas was his father's favourite son, though there is no evidence of any favouritism in the family. In 1828 Thomas contracted a mysterious illness which developed into a fever accompanied by violent sickness and a disturbing mental derangement during which he could not bear the light near his eyes. Two characteristic reactions have been left as a result of that illness, one of them relating to Thomas, one to his father. As Thomas recovered he began to play with his books and his favourite jig-saw puzzles and his mother recorded him "consulting the Indexes of his little books and making the references ... with his accustomed accuracy."¹ Even at the age of five he demonstrated that logical, ordering mind, with a

¹

Notebook of Mrs. Arnold's, October 1828, Moorman MS., BL.

concern for accuracy - like his father - which became a feature of his academic work later in life. His father, however, watching Thomas gradually recover from what had seemed to be a fatal illness, wrote a number of verses in which, as always, he equated life with heavenly life, sleep with death, and parental love with Divine love. With such ideas and such images his children were constantly surrounded, always made aware of time, the brevity of human life and the need - almost the obligation - to use time well, in fact the Arnold family exemplifies what is typically called 'the Protestant work ethic' in which the proper use of the time of earthly life for God-given work becomes a major principle of life. Mary Arnold's journals reflect this attitude on every page with prayers of thanks for past happinesses and fears that there might not be a future. To an age which has other means of recording daily events, and in which there is little fear for the future, her journals have a passionately intense mood, for she wrote them as record of her life with Thomas Arnold, to be handed on to their children as a memorial of their lives together. Daily events were always set in this larger time-scale of life and eternal life, God was an ever-present companion from whom nothing could be hidden and who had all things in his control. He was a living presence to them, and nowhere is this better illustrated than in the entry for July 1828, after a great storm which lashed the house, lifting the slates and bringing down part of the nursery roof. The children had to be removed in the middle of the night from the dripping

nursery, as the storm was at its height. Mary, who was three, was very frightened but her mother records in her journal :
 "... but when I told her it was from God, and that we were in his care, she became quite her own cheerful happy little self again."¹ With his God so close to him Arnold was his family's own best example of how to live their lives. His wife recorded in her journal for 1828:

His manner is indeed at all times of going to his labours as it were his play and recreation, of never dwelling on any accumulation of work as a hardship - but on the contrary taking it cheerfully as a thing to be expected not for a day or a year - but for all his life long. Dear Children I would entreat you as far as you can to encourage the same happy dutiful temper.²

His manner of working and of organising his household - which was also his school, at Laleham - has been fairly well documented. One of his pupils, H.E. Strickland, has left this picture of their routine :

Mr. Arnold sits in his room, and each of us in turn go in to say our lessons to him twice a day ... so that when the last has been in the first time, it is time for the first to go in a second time. The first lecture, as it is called, consists, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, of Herodotus, and the second of Livy; on Friday and Saturday, there is only one lecture; on the former of those days I do Sophocles, and on the latter I am examined in Hallam's Middle Ages. We get up at 7a.m., dine at 5¹/₂p.m., tea 8p.m., go to bed, or supposed to do so, 10p.m. We have moreover three themes a week, which are shown up on Saturday; and twice a week go in with Greek Testament between dinner and tea.³

Every day was similarly regulated, parcelled out in a meticulous manner. It was a habit of mind which made a

¹ Mary Arnold's Journal for 1828, Moorman MS., BL.
² Ibid.
³ Quoted in T.W. Bamford, Thomas Arnold, London 1960, p.16.

visitor, Sarah Hutchinson, see a great similarity between Arnold and the poet Southey, about whom it is said :

Southey was a man of marvellous powers of work. He had the habit of dividing his time into little parts each of which was filled up, and he told the Quaker (friend) what he did in this hour and that and so on through the day until far into the night. The Quaker listened and at the close said, "Well, but, friend Southey, when dost thou think?"

Whether the comparison with Southey was true or false there is no doubt that Arnold drove himself hard during the Laleham years, and taught his children to do the same. He scrupulously recorded in his pocket book the contents of his own pockets, kept detailed accounts of expenditure, took on the duties of unpaid curate at Laleham Church, taught himself German so as to be able to read the latest German bible and history scholars, Niebuhr in particular, wrote and published a volume of sermons, began his study of the works of Thucydides for a new edition, and wrote historical articles for the Encyclopoedia Metropolitana. Yet all this time he was gradually building up his school, and spending his holidays touring the Continent, or the North and West of England. It was while he was exploring the Lake District that he first conceived the plan of building a house in the Ambleside area if ever he could afford it. And his financial situation steadily improved, so that by November 1827 he had paid off the debt on his schoolhouse. For boys thinking of Oxford entrance he charged 70 guineas a year, plus boarding charges; for scholarship candidates he charged 200 guineas a year all included. Yet he was never short of pupils, hence his success in paying off his debt. As early as April 1823 he was able to report to George Cornish :

¹Quoted in Cyril Bibby, T.H. Huxley, London 1959, p.137n.

"The Trade is very flourishing at present ... I shall have 9 pupils for a part of this half year."¹

His experience of teaching at Laleham convinced him that moral education was more important than intellectual education, so that although he worked his pupils hard he was even more concerned with the total education environment in which they lived. This is nowhere better illustrated than in a letter, written in 1836, in which he set out his conception of the relationship between Physical Science and moral education. It is important to remember that he was a keen amateur botanist, had an interest in geology, and was generally interested in the most recent advances in medicine :

If one might wish for impossibilities, I might then wish that my children might be well versed in Physical Science, but in due subordination to the fullness and freshness of their knowledge on moral subjects. This however, I believe, cannot be and Physical Science, if studied at all, seems too great to be studied *Ἐν τῷ Παιδείᾳ*: wherefore, rather than have it the principal thing in my son's mind, I would gladly have him think that the Sun went round the Earth, and that the stars were so many spangles set in the bright blue firmament. Surely the one thing needful for a Christian and an Englishman to study, is Christian and moral and political Philosophy.²

Since Mr. Arnold's pupils lived in with the family the life of school and home was virtually synonymous; the children grew up listening to the conversation of men with an academic background, Greek, Latin, Mathematics, History, Politics, Geography, and some Geology and Botany were their daily fare and their days were organised for them as if they had been born into school-life. Exactly how they were taught to read and write is not recorded,

¹Letter to George Cornish, April 4 1823, Moorman MS., BL.

²Letter to W. Greenhill, May 9 1836, Moorman MS., BL.

but at the age of five they were each able to read and had already begun their study of Latin and Greek. It is also clear that although Arnold loved his children dearly, and was affectionate towards them, they grew up with a confused image of him in their minds: he was a fused double personality, father and teacher. Thomas's own comments, written down more than half a century after the time they describe, still illustrate this double picture they all had of their father:

My father delighted in our games, and sometimes joined in them. Stern though his look could be - and often had to be - there was a vein of drollery in him, a spirit of pure fun, which perhaps came from his Suffolk ancestry. He was not witty, nor - though he could appreciate humour - was he humorous; but the comic and grotesque side of life attracted him strongly. He gave to each of his children some nick-name more or less absurd, and joked with us, while his eyes twinkled, on the droll situations and comparisons which the names suggested. In a sense we were afraid of him; that is, we were very much afraid, if we did wrong, of being found out and punished, and still worse, of witnessing the frown gather on his brow. Yet in all of us on the whole love cast out fear; for he never held us at a distance, was never impatient with us; always, we knew, was trying to make us good and happy.¹

He was for them the personification of God, and remained so for the rest of their lives. The final remark, that he wanted to make them "good and happy", is a telling phrase for it neatly summarises Arnold's basic aim: first of all he wanted to see in his children, and his pupils, the growth of a "conscientious practice" which, he believed, would bring its own satisfaction. And this development of an informed conscience seemed to him to be more important than the acquisition of mere knowledge for it provided the conceptual

¹ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.9.

framework within which such knowledge could have meaning and purpose. Without it knowledge had no function. Arnold knew full well the necessity of a good education for his sons, after all, his own education had provided him with a livelihood and he expected the same would apply to his children, but it did not deflect him from the view that the knowledge acquired in school has to be directed by the conscience before it can be usefully employed. The growth of that conscience, then, was the foundation on which all the rest had to be built, and though he was anxious to inculcate it in all his pupils he was concerned with it most of all in his own children. In a letter to his friend and brother-in-law, Trevenen Penrose, he spelt out his views on the matter with particular reference to his children :

Their education is a more than worldly prospect, such infinite interest may depend on it ... I am a coward now about trusting them to a public school, much more so if I were gone ... I should not be anxious to make a child's conscience very enlightened, but I should strive above all things to make him obey what it did tell him. A conscientious practice will gradually raise the conscience higher and higher, as reason grows with years, but prematurely high principles, when the practice cannot keep up with them leaves a grievous moral state, and soon becomes lowered to suit the practice. In this point I have always thought the Old Testament our model. In the childhood of the world God kept the consciences of his own people very unenlightened that they might learn the habit of obeying them, which with a higher standard they could not have done. This is my notion about my children, to train them up to Christianity, rather than try to make them high Christians prematurely. When children have been cut off young, the spiritual growth has often been quickened, so that the full-grown Christian has been developed though in miniature... In my own family for instance I should expect this premature ripeness in Tom rather than in the others.

¹Letter to Trevenen Penrose, May 17 1830, Moorman MS., BL.

It was a shrewd observation on his second son who grew up with an excessive concern for 'conscientious practice', often acting in a rigidly Puritanical manner where less scrupulous men would have happily compromised. This was particularly true when he left England in 1847, and when he left Oxford for the second time, in 1876. When his father wrote that letter, however, he was not yet seven years of age.

The year 1828 was marked by two great changes in the family: Arnold was appointed to Rugby School, and he later took his D.D. to become "Dr. Arnold, of Rugby." The transition from the small village school at Laleham to the much more exalted school house at Rugby was accomplished without difficulty in the spring of 1828. By that time there were five Arnold children: Jane (1821), Matthew (1822), Thomas (1823), Mary (1825) and Edward (1827), and since even the eldest was not yet seven years old Laleham soon became little more than a happy memory, an exchange of one garden for another. The years there had been happy, though, and Thomas later wrote :

In my boyish memory and imagination the lawn, bathed in perpetual sunshine, stretched out for a quarter of a mile between the house and the greenhouse, and the whole scene was park-like and beautiful... After some years at Rugby I visited my birthplace again; the spacious lawn was but some eighty yards across; everything was altered and shrunken in my eyes; disillusion could not be more complete.

Mary Arnold's reaction to her husband's doctorate was equally dispiriting; she noted in her journal : "The change from Mr. to Dr. seemed quite unnatural and almost ludicrous..."²

¹Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.2.

²Mary Arnold's journal for 1828; entry for Saturday 13 December, Moorman MS., BL.

During these early years at Rugby Thomas grew up as part of the school community even though he was not technically a pupil there, and so continued the kind of life he had led at Laleham. He met the pupils who came for tea, as many of them frequently did, he worshipped with his family in the school chapel in the assembled company of the whole school, the masters and their wives, and he heard a great deal of the school talk in his father's company. Although it was not all seriousness and formality - they had two gardens at Rugby, in one of which they dug fortresses and hurled mud-missiles at each other, using the youngest children as hostages, or played cricket, or quoits, or gymnastics on the lawn, or went climbing in the garden trees - Arnold had moved into a much more public situation than he had held at Laleham, and the family's private life was increasingly affected by this new sense of being on show and being important. The weekly chapel service was but the start, for Arnold was not only headmaster of the school he was a local dignitary who had begun to establish a name beyond the boundaries of the town first through his volume of sermons, published in 1827, and through his growing involvement in politics. In an attempt to take a direct hand in shaping public opinion towards social reform he established a newspaper in the town in May 1831, calling it The Englishman's Register. It came out weekly until July 1831, when Arnold could no longer afford to subsidise its losses, but when he discovered that the proprietor of a newspaper called The Sheffield Courant had sometimes quoted from his editorials he decided to keep up the attack on public opinion by writing articles

for that paper instead of his own. In 1833 he brought out his controversial pamphlet on Church Reform, advocating a much more liberal and broadly-based Church hierarchy in the hope of bringing the various Christian churches together; the proposals were widely discussed, though not implemented, and Arnold's reputation spread even further. Even more widely reported was his 1836 Edinburgh Review article entitled The Oxford Malignants, in which he attacked the Tractarians for what he regarded as their false creeds revealed in their politically-motivated assault on Dr. Hampden, the Regius Professor of Divinity in Oxford. It aroused a storm of debate in Oxford and resulted in a meeting of the Rugby Trustees, half of whom wanted to remove Arnold from his post because of his increasing reputation in academic or political matters outside the normal work of the school. Fortunately Arnold himself held the casting vote, but he had only narrowly saved his position.

The important point is that these issues, and Arnold's part in them, were public knowledge in the school; the family and Arnold's schoolboy supporters watched his progress in the social and political arena with a sense of personal identification. Clough's letters, for example, show that while he was a pupil at the school he followed Arnold's battles enthusiastically, knew the issues on which he was fighting and was even aware of the possible promotions for which the Prime Minister, Melbourne, at times considered him. The children undoubtedly heard and understood still more, and steadily grew to recognise that their picture of their father was gradually being accepted by the outside world as well, for there was

plenty of evidence to support it. In the first place the school increased in size under Arnold's leadership, from an entry of 31 boys in 1827, when Dr. Wooll retired to 152 in 1835, of whom 119 came from over 50 miles away, which indicates the pull of Dr. Arnold's reputation. And the more the school grew the greater his power became for it strengthened his most potent sanction against misbehaviour: expulsion. His reaction to a group of boys caught fishing in prohibited waters in 1834 illustrates how he used such occasions to assert his total control over the school. He immediately expelled all six of them and then addressed the assembled school :

It is not necessary that this should be a school of three hundred or one hundred or of fifty boys; but it is, necessary that it should be a school of Christian gentlemen.

Except that Arnold's income depended on it, the claim was true, and served to reinforce the growing feeling in the school that Rugby was a specially favoured place from which expulsion was tantamount to ex-communication. But outward signs of favour supported this opinion. In June 1831, when Brougham was Lord Chancellor, Arnold was offered a stall in Bristol Cathedral, at a salary of £600 a year, but Arnold declined it on the grounds that it had come too soon after his appointment as Headmaster. In August of that year he was almost offered the post of Archbishop of Dublin, which finally went to his friend Richard Whateley who, somewhat embarrassingly, was at Rugby at the time. It was a political appointment and as T.W. Bamford has remarked :

¹Quoted by T.W. Bamford, Thomas Arnold, London 1960, p.73.

"A little more pressure by the right person in the right quarter and it would have been Whateley congratulating Arnold, instead of Arnold congratulating Whateley." ¹ After the 1833 pamphlet on Church Reform it was steadily rumoured that his elevation to a Bishopric was only a matter of time. Again, in 1836, Lord Melbourne sought Whateley's advice on whether Arnold should be offered a Bishopric. In 1840 he was offered the Wardenship of Manchester College, which he also declined, but in 1841 accepted the Chair of Modern History at Oxford and so satisfied one of his dearest ambitions. These indications of favour were underlined very forcefully on Saturday 19th October 1839, when the Dowager Queen Adelaide visited the school, and in May 1840 when Arnold was summoned before Queen Victoria.

There are no records of exactly how the children reacted to this steady growth in their father's reputation and influence, but they could obviously see the immediate consequences of it in their daily lives. Success in university scholarships came too, and with it the increase in school numbers which greatly augmented Arnold's salary. T.W. Bamford has calculated that Arnold's salary amounted to at least £3,600 a year, which was far above the income of anyone else in the Rugby area, was inferior "only to that of the aristocracy"² and enabled him to buy that Lakeside home he had first hoped for during the Laleham days. It must have seemed to the family that they were permanently in the

¹ Quoted by T.W. Bamford, Thomas Arnold, London 1960, p.31.

² Ibid. p.178.

public eye for even school affairs were conducted with a formality and on a scale appropriate to public occasions. Examinations, when Oxford dons came, and prize-giving, and the great Easter speech days were festive occasions, described briefly by their Ambleside friend, Sarah Hutchinson, when she came to visit the school in 1834. This is the impression she formed :

Dr. Arnold is most like Southey in his manners and habits at home of anyone I ever saw - always occupied and yet always at leisure - the house quiet as a private one. I was up at the 7 o'clock bell which calls the Dr. into the school - then down at 8 to prayers and breakfast to the household... At Easter there is a great concourse of people attends the speeches - 18 are invited to take up their lodgings here and Mrs. Arnold will have about 300 to do the agreeable to, - but luckily those who chuse dine with the Governors at an ordinary in the town, - so that as the Dr. and Mrs. Arnold are expected to do so, they have not to give the callers any dinner. But what a life it is ! Yet by regularity you would be astonished to see how all is accomplished - and how much time they both seem to have to attend upon their own children, and the poor also.

In the eyes of the children their father was a very great man: they saw it for themselves, they saw it acknowledged by the larger outside world, they met it reflected in the opinions of their Rugby friends, some of whom, like A.P. Stanley and A.H. Clough, remained friends with them until their lives ended. Stanley described Dr. Arnold's influence on the school, commenting :

...whatever peculiarity of character was impressed on the scholars whom it sent forth, was derived not from the genius of the place but from the genius of the man. Throughout, whether in the school itself, or in its after-effects, the one image we have before us is not Rugby but ARNOLD.²

¹ Letters of Sarah Hutchinson, ed. K. Coburn, London 1963, p.94.

² A.P. Stanley, Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold D.D., London 1844, p.73. (revised edition 1903)

Though Stanley's opinion is so strong it is amply supported by others who were less closely attached to Arnold. Anne Merrivale, sister of one of the masters, also witnessed and described Dr. Arnold's powerful hold on the school and all who lived in it :

Not alone with the boys and in school hours, but with the masters also and in their seasons of relaxation and social intercourse, the words and opinions of Arnold were the constant theme of discussion and the incitement to action. With all over whom he had influence he encouraged interest in literature, religion and politics, and his brave and independent spirit led the way to the general results arrived at.

He had no more faithful disciples than those who were nearest to him- his children - for whom he became an unapproachable example of the Christian life.

One final aspect of their general life at Rugby remains to be touched upon: Fox How. In 1832 Arnold bought some land north of Ambleside, beneath Loughrigg, with Rydal to the north. He and Wordsworth settled on a plan for a house, and from then on the poet took over the general supervision of the building until its completion. In all it cost £800. From the day they first used it Fox How became their real home, even though they could only visit it in the holidays. Rugby became merely the place of work. The children, like their parents, could hardly wait for the school term to end before they set off in haste to Ambleside, and though he disliked the railway in many respects Arnold valued the fact that it could whisk them all up to their northern home faster than any other kind of transport. Though family affairs were ordered as systematically at Fox How as

¹Quoted by T.W. Bamford, Thomas Arnold, London 1960, p.162.

as they were at Rugby, complete with a schoolroom, the children regarded their days there as akin to paradise. They walked, or sailed boats in the tarns, especially their favourite tarn above Loughrigg, called 'the Mirror Pool' in their personal folk-lore, or they explored some small caves, or fought out battles with flotillas of paper boats. They shot pheasant with their father, and in the winter enjoyed the skating, or inside the grey house worked at their Fox How Magazines, which they filled with child-hood stories and pictures and wild flowers gathered from Loughrigg. As Jane and Matthew and Thomas grew older they were taken into the society of others of their own age, being invited to dances, parties and to dinner. On occasions selected Rugby boys such as A.H. Clough, A.P. Stanley, J.P. Gell, came to stay at Fox How, but generally the great joy of the place was that it was removed from the public eye and the strains of Rugby, and the children no less than their father felt the lifting of the weight. The approach of each beginning of the school year or half-year was recorded in Arnold's notebook, and in Mary Arnold's journal, with a tinge of depression coupled with thanks for the existence of Fox How.

Against this kind of family background Thomas passed from his fifth to his nineteenth year and all except one year in the company of his parents at Rugby. Matthew was sent to John Buckland's school for two years from 1829, but Thomas was kept at home, probably because he easily caught infections and was generally regarded as being delicate. When Matthew was brought back to Rugby he and Thomas were educated principally by a tutor, Herbert

Hill, a cousin of the poet Southey, whom the Arnolds sometimes met in the Lake District during their holidays. But their father remained the chief source of their education. Mary Arnold records one of the weekly Sunday examinations, in May 1831 :

those Sunday evening examinations ... those memorable examinations which you my darling will recollect with pleasure as long as you live. When your dearest father with eyes and words of love drew you around him and gently yet earnestly examined you in the Chapter he had given you to prepare for him. To me those evenings are delightful, loving as I do the Teacher and the Taught.

And likewise at Fox How, where each morning was devoted to work, each afternoon to play. One glimpse of such a morning occurs in that same journal :

...my husband is as busy as he can be with his Roman History, while you my boys Edward and William are at your morning lessons ... you Matt and Tom are at work in the dining room, while Jane, Mary and Susy are in the schoolroom...

Eventually, however, Arnold had to make a decision about whether to transfer his sons Matthew and Thomas into Rugby School, or whether to send them away. He knew and admired Longley, the Headmaster of Harrow School, but finally decided to send them to his old school, Winchester, under the care of Dr. Moberley. So the two boys left home for Winchester in the autumn of 1836. Little is recorded about how they fared, except that Matthew's confidence - almost arrogance - about his ability to cope with the work set made him unpopular with the other boys. Thomas described the consequences: a kind of schoolboy stocks at which

¹Mary Arnold's journal; entry for May 1831, Moorman MS., BL.

²Ibid, January 1832.

at which Matthew was pelted with the soft insides of bread rolls, known as 'pontos'. Otherwise the scant evidence left in Thomas's book Passages in a Wandering Life suggests that he did not find the experience particularly trying. Strangely, he seems to have enjoyed the spectacle of badger-baiting as a relief from the boredom of games afternoons in which "a great number, perhaps the majority, loafed about with their hands in their pockets."¹

Matthew won a poetry speaking competition, using a passage from Byron, and Thomas obviously came to love the countryside around the old town, and the Sunday services in Winchester Cathedral, where he was thrilled by the magnificent voice of the former Headmaster, Dr. Williams, as he sang the chants, "and the beautiful rolling melody of the responses sung by the choir."² While he was at Winchester he occasionally visited the home of John Keble, Matthew's godfather, and was as he records, "received with great kindness." And one terrible accident to the son of his father's friend George Cornish stayed in his memory, for the boy fell against an iron railing and was blinded by the pointed spike at the top. For whatever reason he may have had, Dr. Arnold decided that one year of Winchester was enough; in the autumn of 1837 both boys entered Rugby school. A.H. Clough noted simply: "Matt. Arnold in the school, the Upper 5th. His Composition Tutor is Lee, his Mathematical, Price - a balance of favour, I suppose."³

¹ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.17.

² Ibid. p.18.

³ Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. Mulhauser, 2 vols. London 1957, I, p.63.

Of Thomas he said nothing, which suggests he was placed a year behind Matthew, according to his age. Thomas himself said of it :

I followed the usual school routine at Rugby for some years, James Prince Lee ... was the master of 'The Twenty', i.e. of the upper portion of the Fifth Form. I never knew a more admirable teacher, nor one who, while interesting his pupils in the subjects taught, better preserved that personal dignity which boys look for and so well appreciate.

Beyond this neither Matthew nor Thomas have left any account of their Rugby schooldays.

Their return, however, coincided with a number of changes introduced by Dr. Arnold in an attempt to stimulate harder work in the school, and included an increased number of prizes awarded so as to reward a fairly broad spread of achievement rather than confine them to a handful of boys at the top. Clough particularly appreciated the furnishing of a Sixth Form Common Room, in which the Sixth took their supper "in the most gentlemanly fashion, in the Room together, on a tray with plates and knives..."² Into this Sixth Form Thomas eventually went, along with Matthew, in what must have been a curiously divided manner, half in the school and half at home. By this time A.P. Stanley had already gone up to Balliol as a scholar (1834) and Clough had followed him, taking the Balliol scholarship in 1836. The next to take it was Matthew, in 1840. Thomas was then nearly seventeen and looking forward to his attempt at an Oxford scholarship. The next two years, however, proved to be traumatic for the whole family. First, in 1841, Dr. Arnold was appointed

¹ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.19.

² Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. Mulhauser, 2 vols. London 1957, I, p.52.

Professor of Modern History at Oxford in an arrangement which required him to give a number of lectures each year while retaining his post as Headmaster of Rugby. When he went up to Oxford to deliver his first lectures in January 1842 Thomas went along with the rest of the family to witness his father's triumph, there to be met by Matthew, who had already gone up to Balliol, and to crowd amongst the assembled company in the Bodleian. He recorded just one glimpse of the occasion:

Those lectures, delivered with so much power, and received by a large audience with such profound sympathy, who could have thought that they were to be both the first and the last? Never can I forget how my heart seemed to stand still, as my father, in the sketch of the concentration of the French army before the invasion of Russia, uttered the words 'Earthly state has never reached a prouder pinnacle than when Napoleon in June 1812 gathered his Army at¹ Dresden ... and there received the homage of subject kings.

At the same time A.P. Stanley eagerly reported :

Arnold's lectures go on drawing audiences of 300 or 400 every time. In one he gave a most striking account of the horrors of the blockade of Genoa, at which the Master of Balliol is said to have wept ... his lectures have undoubtedly produced a deep, and I believe, lasting impression in his favour...²

Clearly, Oxford was being treated to the oratory Arnold had formerly employed in Rugby Chapel, investing the recounting of events with his customary tints of moral fervour. It was a heady time for the family, and for Thomas in particular: he had become increasingly close to his father as he grew into adolescence, and in the summer of 1841 he and Matthew had spent three wet but enjoyable weeks touring Spain with their father, savouring

¹Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.55.

²R.E. Prothero, Life and letters of Dean Stanley, 2 vols. London 1893, I, p.173.

the first tour they had made with him abroad. It was to be the only one they ever managed. After nearly two weeks the Oxford festivities, the dinner parties, the walking parties and the lectures, came to an end and the great initiation became part of their father's inevitable upward progress. They returned to Rugby and Thomas prepared for his own removal to Oxford, later in the year.

For some reason which is not easily discernible Thomas was not entered for the Balliol scholarship. At first, when the time came to make the next move, his parents debated whether to send him to Cambridge, following J.P. Gell who had left Rugby shortly before Clough. Eventually Thomas was elected to a scholarship at University College, Oxford, though the background to the decision is not clear. First is the question of Cambridge, which was seriously contemplated; second is the query over the choice of University College, which enjoyed a rather poor reputation at the time and was certainly not to be compared with Balliol. The clue lies in the personality of Thomas himself, and in the care with which his parents planned his future. Cambridge was a university less concerned with religion and theology than Oxford, and would, therefore, have put much less of a strain on Thomas's sensitive conscience, which his father had already expressed some fears about. Writing from Cambridge in October 1838 J.P. Gell said to Clough :

Are you as interested about ecclesiastical affairs at Oxford generally as Stanley seems to be; because I have never seen anything equal to it here, and I was quite delighted. The attention of the religious here is principally fixed on the personal of Christianity (sic) to the exclusion of the political.

I do not believe that of all the good men in Cambridge, a single one studies (much less understands) the question of church and state, of the foundation of church government and of tithes etc.

To which Clough replied, a month later :

Stanley was delighted ... at finding you so unusually (for a Cambridge man) like an Oxford man. There is I suppose no doubt much more interest in such matters (theological, ecclesiastical, political, etc. etc.) here than with you...²

This difference would have been well-known to Dr. Arnold - he had kept in close touch with his old boys, Gell in particular - and was probably a major factor in his deliberations which were, after all, a continuation of the decisions he had had to make some years earlier about where Thomas and Matthew should be educated. But Oxford won the day; Thomas entered for and was elected to a scholarship at University College in the late autumn of 1841. Clough's reaction raises the second query: why University? He noted simply : "Tom Arnold is not to go to Cambridge, but to come up here to University, which I am sorry for."³ The sorrow was not that he had come to Oxford, but to University College. Stanley, too, had been reluctant to accept a Fellowship at University four years earlier, in 1837, but he had finally done so because it was at least an opportunity of staying in Oxford. He had found his chances at Balliol blocked by a number of Fellows who were displeased by his sympathy for Arnold's religious and political views (which makes Matthew's Balliol scholarship in 1840 a remarkable achievement) so he was

¹ Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. Mulhauser, London 1957, I, p.84.

² Ibid. pp.84-85.

³ Ibid. p.114.

tempted by the University College Fellowship. But "even during the examination he was visited by one of those paroxysms of indecision ... So great was his distress that his former tutor, Mr. Johnson of Queen's, suggested his retiring from the candidature. But he persevered."¹ He was elected, almost shamefacedly, in July 1838. Four years later Thomas took the scholarship.

Yet the decision makes sense in itself. Thomas was a particularly sensitive young man, not strong in health and inclined to be excessively serious, a fact which caused Matthew some gentle mirth from time to time. His stammer was probably an outward sign of his great nervousness, and his parents had always been reluctant to relinquish their charge over him: only Matthew had been sent away alone to school, to John Buckland's. Matthew and Clough were already at Oxford, and Stanley was a Fellow of University College; perhaps this fact weighed sufficiently in the scales to make the final decision, after all, despite the potentially damaging effect of the Oxford intellectual climate on the mind of one so seriously inclined as Thomas, the presence of so many Rugby men and a few close friends might have been considered a sufficient safeguard. At that time, too, Dr. Arnold had no real reason to suspect that he would not also be in the university in his capacity as Professor. The decision, then, was both characteristic of him, with his profound concern for his sons'

¹ R.E. Prothero, Life and Letters of Dean Stanley, 2 vols. London 1893, I, p.201.

welfare, especially, as he had remarked 'if I were gone', and it is revealing of Thomas. As it turned out he found himself on his arrival in the university in rooms opposite to those of A.P. Stanley's, in the High Street, and he made an unconsciously revealing comment :

...it was my good fortune to have rooms on the second floor of the new building opposite to those of dear Arthur Stanley. Nothing could exceed his kindness; it was like that of a father.¹

But between those exciting days in January, when the first of Dr. Arnold's lectures was given, and Thomas's going up to University College, he and his family were astounded at the sudden death of Dr. Arnold, on June 12th 1842. The immediate cause was angina pectoris, which had killed his own father and was later to take his son, Matthew, but it was probably brought on by the accumulated strains of the year including the shock of the breaking-off of Jane Arnold's engagement to Mr. Cotton, one of the Rugby masters, only weeks before. Thomas was with him both during the hours of pain in the early morning of Sunday June 12th and at the moment of his death. In Passages in a Wandering Life Thomas avoided all mention of the undoubtedly painful memory, except to refer the reader to Stanley's Life of Dr. Arnold, but to be present while his father struggled against the growing pains in his chest, probably realising what was happening to him, and then to hear the paroxysm which brought all to an end was a shattering experience which remained with him for the rest of his life. Only one

¹ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.57.

observation is worth adding for it reveals the enormity of the loss Matthew and Thomas felt at their father's death, and it appears in a letter from A.P. Stanley, who was with them at the time :

Matthew spoke of one thing which seemed to me very natural and affecting; that the first thing which struck him when he saw the body was the thought that their sole source of information was gone, that all that they had ever known was contained in that lifeless head. They had consulted him so entirely on everything, and the strange feeling of their being cut off for ever one can well imagine.

The dreadful sense of separation was intensified by the funeral, the ensuing removal from Rugby to Fox How and then, a few months later, Thomas's further removal to Oxford. His father's concern still was with him, in the presence of that foster-father A.P. Stanley, but it made for a very disturbed beginning to his undergraduate life in the confused world of a university still reeling from the effects of the Tractarian debate. The loss of his father could never have been good for Thomas; coming at that particular time it could not have been worse.

¹ Quoted in H.F. Lowry, The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, London 1968, p.5.

CHAPTER TWO

"O where is the battle !" ¹

When I went up to University in the October of 1842 it was my good fortune to have rooms on the second floor of the new building opposite to those of dear Arthur Stanley. Nothing could exceed his kindness; it was like that of a father. In the course of my Oxford time he introduced me to several persons of note who came to call on him, e.g. Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, and Charles Buller. I heard the sermon at Christ Church for which Pusey was "six-doctored", and tramped up and down in the mud of Broad Street on that day of pouring rain on which Ward was degraded. In 1845 I took my degree, after being placed in the first class in Literae Humaniores. ²

With these few words Thomas dismissed his life in Oxford as if it had all been uncomplicated and conventional; the fact is that those three years were the most unsettling and tempestuous years of his life, creating the unstable set of opinions and principles on which the rest of his life turned. He pored afresh over questions of religion, politics and philosophy, with no strong mentor to guide him through the mazes he strayed into, and out of his confusion and his seriousness emerged a stream of passionately held, though often ephemeral convictions which quickly earned him the reputation amongst his friends of being a radical and an idealist. The immediate consequence was that at the end of his undergraduate life he threw up Oxford and England to flee to New Zealand in the forlorn hope of finding a truly just and equitable society.

The bare facts of his three years in Oxford are simple enough, though not detailed for there are no letters now remaining to provide

¹ A.H.Clough, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, book ix, 1.62.

² Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.57.

the missing details. In any case it was not the physical but the emotional and intellectual climate which acted upon him, and many others, so forcibly. Oxford was in a state of ferment as the Tractarian controversy built up to its height in the early 1840's and almost inevitably induced a similar emotional state in its undergraduates. No-one could have accurately predicted, however, how long this condition could last in the mind of any single undergraduate once he had taken his degree and left the university, and no-one could have foreseen that Thomas's undergraduate opinions, so wild and idealistic that they quickly earned him the reputation of being a radical, would actually harden into philosophical convictions which would last long enough to deflect the course of his immediate future so completely. He was not the only one, of course, for James Froude and Arthur Clough were similarly affected, though not so drastically. Coming from a so recently disturbed and shattered home to an equally disturbed and shattered university was Thomas's misfortune; during his undergraduate years the controversy over the Tracts for the Times was reaching its height, Newman resigned from St. Mary's and retreated to Littlemore in the year in which Thomas first took up residence, and defected to Catholicism in 1845, the year in which Thomas took his degree. Between these two dates came the events that Thomas mentioned in his book - the "six-doctoring" of Pusey and the degradation of W.G. Ward - and it is significant that these are the things he most immediately remembered all those years later, while he seemed to have forgotten the more personal, though not intimate, events of his own undergraduate career. Pusey was suspended from university lectures for two years because a

panel of six Doctors of the university, representing the anti-Tractarian party, detected traces of Romanism in his university sermon - a sermon which Thomas heard but did not comment upon. But the secret meetings at which the decision was reached smacked more of a political court than the proceedings of a university committee. The degrading of W.G. Ward - Clough's tutor and Newman's friend - in the same year was an even more disturbing event, and the hint Thomas has left gives a picture of undergraduates and others marching up and down in the pouring rain in protest against the absurd decision to reduce Ward, Fellow and Tutor of Balliol, to the status of an undergraduate because the Heads of Houses in Oxford objected to observations Ward had made on the Anglican and the Roman churches in his recently published book The Ideal of a Christian Church Considered in Comparison with the Existing Practice. The root of the matter was that Ward had asserted the superiority of the Roman Church in certain matters: a view which the defenders of the Anglican position could not ignore given the climate of opinion prevailing at the time. Then came the shock of the realisation that Newman would finally go over to Rome, which he did in 1845, to be followed by others looking to his lead. As Clough remarked to his friend Burbidge at the time :

Mr. fabricator Faber men say will go but the Ultra P(useyites) in general seem inclined not to take headers a la Ward, (who had already gone over to the Roman Church) but to sneak in, and duck their heads till they are out of their depth.

¹ Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. Mulhauser, 2 vols. London 1957, I, p.158.

and a few days later :

Oakeley has resigned his Fellowship and at last gone over to the R.C.C. This will cause another vacancy at Balliol; perhaps Tom Arnold will have the benefit of it...

In total it created an atmosphere of suspicion and acrimony, in which religious beliefs became political persuasions and poisoned academic life. Geoffrey Faber has graphically described the consequences of this polarisation of Oxford life, and though his Catholic sympathies are evident in the manner of his writing - his great-uncle was the "Mr. fabricator Faber" mentioned by Clough, and who subsequently founded the Brompton Oratory - the picture is nonetheless valid :

The counter-revolution was having things all its own way. The Provost of Oriel (Dr. Hawkins) was refusing testimonials to young men of his college, candidates for Holy Orders, who were known sympathizers with the Romanizing Party. High Churchmen stood no chance of obtaining Fellowships. Colleges changed their dinner-hour on Sundays to prevent undergraduates from attending the sermon at St. Mary's. Espionage, agents provocateurs, ruthless interrogations - all the symptoms of political terrorization ... were appearing on the small ecclesiastical stage of Oxford in the early forties.²

But there were other, more direct and personal reasons why the young men of Thomas's circle should rebel against the principles and doctrines for which the university stood; and rebel they did, though first they made sure that they took their degrees. One by one they later left Oxford; only Stanley remained to make it his career, though it had been open to each of them. Matthew Arnold made a high-spirited, flamboyant token of his rebelliousness

¹ Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. Mulhauser, 2 vols. London 1957, I, p.159.

² Geoffrey Faber, Oxford Apostles, London 1954, p.403.

by deliberately revolting against the time-honoured concept of the Oxford 'clerk' - the serious undergraduate intending to take orders who was required to wear sober clothes, carry no kind of cane or stick, have short hair, and conduct himself modestly as befits a man destined for the clerical office. Matthew did the reverse, as Clough gaily reported :

Matt is full of Parisianism; Theatres in general, and Rachel in special: he enters the room with a chanson of Beranger's on his lips - for the sake of French words almost conscious of tune (he was virtually tone-deaf): his carriage shows him in fancy parading the Rue de Rivoli; and his hair is guiltless of English scissors: he breakfasts at 12, and never dines in Hall, and in the week or 8 days rather (for 2 Sundays must be included) he has been to Chapel once.

Unlike his brother, serious-minded Thomas put on no act, external behaviour was the mirror to the man within. But both brothers were examining their personal beliefs, examining the fundamental grounds on which their private creeds were based, for after Rugby, where there had seemed to be so much certainty, so much that was logical and true and good, and all personified, at least for them, in their father, Oxford was a shock from which they had to recover. Even if they could shut out the Tractarian controversy, as W.T. Arnold suggests Thomas managed to do,² the relative poverty of Oxford teaching, and the weakness of the courses, would have provoked its own reaction, as indeed it did. J.J. Hogan has described the university courses and structure thus :

He (an enquirer) asks whether he may attend the public lectures of this great university, and learns that the professors are few

¹ Quoted in H.F. Lowry, The letters of M. Arnold to A. Clough, London 1968, p.25.

² In his article, "Thomas Arnold the Younger" Century Magazine, New York 1901.

and lecture but rarely; there are of course college lectures, but these are private, informal affairs, chiefly for the undergraduate. What is the undergraduate taught? There is a course of Ancient Literature and Philosophy, derived from the traditions of mediaeval Scholasticism and Renaissance Humanism; this is the principal study, though a few take a course of Mathematics and Physics. Beyond the B.A. degree there are shadowy faculties of Law and Medicine, but in these there is no serious teaching. The M.A. degree itself is a formality. All students are instructed in the religious rudiments, but there is little teaching of an advanced kind in Theology, though Oxford is the great seminary of the Anglican Church...

Perhaps the only part of the structure which worked for the lifting of academic standards was the Honours List, instituted in 1802, and beginning to encourage serious teaching in the better colleges. Thomas was clearly pleased to be placed in the first class, though Matthew Arnold's and Clough's sense of failure at taking only a second was caused by their feeling of having let down Dr. Arnold, rather than themselves.

James Anthony Froude, for example, coming up to Oxford from Winchester in 1836 commented :

Little was expected of me. It was thought that I might perhaps do something in mathematics. My classics were hopeless... The men I lived with were gentlemanlike, many of them clever and well-informed, but they neither intended nor tried to do more than pass without discredit. As they did, I did. I rode and boated and played tennis. I went to wine-parties and supper-parties. I was not wholly frivolous... (After commenting on the classical authors he did work on out of interest - Aristotle, Plato, Homer, Thucydides, Herodotus, Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Gibbon, he added) My studies, such as they were, had no scholastic value. I read merely because I liked it, slipped over the difficulties, and paid small attention to the niceties of scholarship... In this dilatory^{manier} ¹ I should have gone on (and) taken my degree without more effort.²

¹ J.J. Hogan, A tribute to Newman, Dublin 1945, pp.29-30.

² Quoted by W.H. Dunn, James Anthony Froude, 2 vols. London 1961, I, p.47.

But for Rugby men such an attitude was more difficult to slip into, especially if, as Thomas did, they joined a circle of Rugby men. The earnestness of Rugby men had been noted by many Oxford tutors, and they were better prepared than many who came up from other schools. Stanley, for example, had been alarmed at the fact that his university studies seemed merely to repeat work he had already completed at school, and without reference to the latest scholarship, which Dr. Arnold had shown to him. Angry that he was told to refer to a dissertation by Hook he retorted : "I suppose that he has never heard of Niebuhr. However, I won't quarrel with them yet, till I see more..."¹ That was in 1834. Four years later it was still the same, when Clough went up to Balliol :

No words... can express the amount of the change I experienced on entering the lecture-rooms of my college - though confessedly one of the very best in Oxford - and embarking upon the course of University study. Had I not read pretty well all the books? Was I to go on, keeping up my Latin prose writers for three years more? Logic and Ethics had some little novelty; there was a little extra scholarship to be obtained in some of the college lectures. But that was the utmost ... surely there was more in the domain of knowledge than that Latin and Greek which I had been wandering in for the last ten years... An infinite lassitude and impatience, which I saw reflected in the faces of others, quickly began to infect me.²

The best men knew that they could take their degree fairly comfortably, which in some cases led to near-disaster, as it did with Matthew Arnold who was engrossed in his own reading, and his man-about-town image, until Clough became alarmed and took him in

¹ Quoted by R.E. Prothero, Life and Letters of Dean Stanley, 2 vols. London 1893, I, p.126.

² Quoted by K. Chorley, Poems and Prose of A.H. Clough, London 1962, p.74.

hand. Even so, one long-vacation working hard with Clough was enough to transform Matthew's likely Third into a Second class degree, which was good enough to make him eligible for a Fellowship at Oriel in 1845. More serious was the fact that the course of classical studies was not only relatively undemanding to the best minds, it was actually irrelevant to the needs of the young men, except as a very general education and a social passport to some of the professions. It had nothing whatever to do with the ideas, knowledge and value judgements of the age, in fact in one respect the arguments over the Tractarian position were more relevant to the needs of the young undergraduates than the courses of study provided in the university. As H.F. Lowry has commented :

At Rugby one had served God by getting one's lessons and maintaining a certain purity of mind. But in the all-consuming days of the Tracts any routine of study seemed tame business... The humanities took minor place. The city was a narrow one of puzzled heads and wagging tongues; and young men of promise, who should have been pegging away at mathematics and their Greek and Latin verses gave themselves entirely to discussions of fore-knowledge, will and fate. "If it had not been for the Class List" Goldwin Smith tells us, which kept a certain number of us working at classics and mathematics, the University would have become a mere battle-ground of theologians."¹

Such a situation meant that more than ever an undergraduate's success or failure was dictated by the company he kept, and Rugby men tended to keep together. In Thomas's case it meant that a band of able and earnest men were his constant companions, which served only to reinforce his firm intention to do well. And it was entirely

¹H.F. Lowry, op. cit. pp.15-16.

in character: he had been sent to Oxford because it would safeguard his future and in his serious-minded way he was determined to carry his own part of the responsibility. His attitude is spelt out in the Preface to his book, where there is just a hint that it was not by his own wish that he went up to Oxford, but his father's. Perhaps the earlier indecision about Cambridge had been the result of Thomas's own unwillingness to take the accustomed route to financial security, by way of Oxford; but Dr. Arnold's will prevailed and Thomas accepted it :

Through Oxford I passed according to my father's wish and disposal; and what is in the narrative as to the early unsettlement of opinions must not be taken for an admission that I had lost all power of self-control. I held on to the Oxford life, though it had become distasteful to me, till I had taken my degree; knowing that an Oxford degree, and a good place in the class-list, were an insurance against future embarrassment and want, which whoever had the power to provide himself with was inexcusable if he did not do so.

It was a lesson he learned well for though many of his later decisions derived from the most delicate regard for honesty and truth - even to the point of being idealistic beyond reason - he was not unworldly; at each of the major decisions made in his later life he was careful to look to the practical consequences of his actions. At Oxford he and Matthew made a curiously contrasting pair: the elder brother being debonair and casual almost to the point of wrecking his academic future, but never being really unsettled by the atmosphere of Oxford; the younger brother, apparently so single-minded, intent and concentrated yet,

¹ Thomas Arnold, *op. cit.* Preface p. ii.

in the end, completely overturned by his experience of Oxford life. Perhaps it was that very intensity which caused the mischief, for though Thomas seemed to be relatively untouched by the university controversies going on around him the fact is that he was affected; he could not help but be affected. He admitted to having heard Pusey's 'six-doctor' sermon, to walking up and down in the rain as a protest against Ward's degradation, to hearing Newman in St. Mary's, and that long before 1845 he found Oxford "distasteful". He could not shun the opinions of his close friends, and they too were having difficulties, over the Thirty Nine Articles for instance; no-one was more anxious than Arthur Clough, and James Froude, and Matthew Arnold, all of whom were glad to leave Oxford fairly soon after they had accepted Fellowships. They were a close band of colleagues, walking, breakfasting, reading together or skiffing up the Cherwell, arguing furiously with each other over the latest news in the Spectator. One of their favourite meeting places was Clough's rooms, where they read their paper and argued over its contents: Sir Robert Peel, Ireland, the Maynooth Bill, Ashley's Ten Hours Bill, and every other piece of current legislation which they thought worth examination. It was all redolent of the kind of arguments and discussions Thomas and Matthew had heard so often by their father's hearth in Rugby, of The Englishman's Register and the letters to The Sheffield Courant; and unlike their degree studies it was real, it was immediate, it was relevant. These tentative judgements were given more formal organisation and expression in their debating society, called The

Decade, at which they tested their hypotheses out on each other. "Among its members were Jowett, Arthur Stanley, Coleridge, my brother (Matthew), Chichester Fortescue, John Campbell Shairp, the present writer (Thomas), and several others."¹ It was a powerful company: Jowett later became Master of Balliol, Stanley became Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, and J.C. Shairp became Principal of St. Andrew's and Professor of Poetry at Oxford.

Naturally enough they found their prophets among the living writers of the day: Emerson, Carlyle, George Sand, though this was not regarded favourably by university authorities. Kathleen Chorley suggests that some modern authors could be allowed in the degree course provided that their work illuminated some aspect of a classical author's work, but it was a prohibitive attitude, and literary studies as such still formed no part of the university curriculum. But no such 'Index' could be enforced, as she remarked :

Stanley and Jowett, for example, set themselves to master the Critique (Kant) in German on their tour of Germany in 1844, but this was some three years after the young Scot, J.C. Shairp, ² was rumoured not only to possess Kant but to have read him...

Stanley, Jowett and Shairp were amongst Thomas's closest friends, against whom he tested his intellectual claws and from whom he took new concepts and new authors. Mrs. H. Ward reports on their

¹ Thomas Arnold, op. cit. p.59.

² K. Chorley, Arthur Hugh Clough, London 1962, p.73.

"passion for George Sand. Consuelo in particular... Wilhelm Meister, read in Carlyle's translation at the same time exercised a similar liberating and enchanting power..."¹ Thomas himself referred to George Sand's novel Jacques, in his 'Equator' letters to J.C. Shairp, and took to New Zealand with him works by Rousseau, Spinoza, Hegel and Emerson, which fairly indicates the kind of reading he engaged in.

Matthew's lecture on Emerson, delivered many times during his American lecture tour forty years later, in 1883, is a testament to the impact their private reading had on them, and since Thomas took a volume of Emerson's work with him to New Zealand it is highly probable that he responded as eagerly to that American prophet as Matthew did. Particularly relevant is Emerson's essay on Self-Reliance, to which Matthew referred more than once in his American lecture and which had such significance for Thomas who spent a large part of his life trying to live up to its call. Matthew said Emerson was :

a clear and pure voice, which for my ear, at any rate, brought a strain as new, moving, and unforgettable, as the strain of Newman, or Carlyle, or Goethe... He was your Newman, your man of soul and genius visible to you in the flesh, speaking to your bodily ears, a present object for your heart and imagination. That is surely the most potent of all influences! nothing can come up to it. To us at Oxford Emerson was but a voice speaking from 3,000 miles away. But so well he spoke... "Trust thyself! every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place Divine Providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connexion of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of the age..."²

¹ Mrs. H. Ward, op.cit. p.12.

² Matthew Arnold, "Emerson", Matthew Arnold, Poetry and Prose, ed. John Bryson, London 1954, p.658.

What a tribute to Newman lies embedded there, and, rising up more shadowy still in the background, a greater tribute to the lost presence of Dr. Arnold who had clearly once been Matthew's "man of soul and genius ... visible ... in the flesh."

Though the call to self-dependence was one to which Thomas responded wholeheartedly the plea to 'accept the place Divine Providence had found for you' was alien to his principles. Even during his undergraduate days he began to reject the social condition of England as being morally wrong and politically unacceptable. Increasingly he found his position of privilege an embarrassment and a constant denial of the radical opinions he and his friends purported to hold. A pretended allegiance to the principles of equality and social justice was not enough; to address each other as "Citizen", as they sometimes did in high-spirited moments, was a mere charade. Slowly, serious-minded Thomas worked his way towards a commitment to social justice :

Discontent with the social institutions of the country seized upon me, and the science of English political economists, engaged with the sole problem of increasing the national wealth, and, to that end, emancipating its industry, seemed to me inadequate to the solution of the formidable questions which threatened to set capital and labour so fatally at variance. English Socialism, which in those days was represented by Robert Owen and the Chartists, was unattractive, because it lacked culture. French Communism appeared to me to have a far more plausible claim to contain the secret of the future. Some kind of Pantisocracy, with beautiful details and imaginary local establishments . . . seemed to my groping mind to be the thing that was wanted.

The underlying difficulty was that though he recognised the necessity for social reform he could not erase the effects of his own upbringing

¹ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.64.

and revert to simple socialism: it jarred his educated sensibilities; he was caught between the practical but uncultured efforts of Owen, and the Chartists, on one hand, and an idealised but vague and impractical Pantisocracy on the other. In short the very life and education which he had begun to find an embarrassment had insulated him and protected him from the real social problems of his day; at Oxford he could never hope to be more than a theorist. And that was true of the whole circle. The real test was yet to come, when they had to decide the course of their lives after graduation.

Thomas took his degree in 1845 and was subsequently elected to a Foundation Scholarship at University College. This, he knew, would lead automatically to a Fellowship, so that his future in Oxford was secure. At this point his theories and principles had either to be put on one side, or acted upon. For a few months he pondered on what he should do. He knew he did not want to stay on, teaching the routine classical studies which had meant so little to him as an undergraduate, and he could not face teaching the elements of religion of the Thirty Nine Articles, to which he would have to openly subscribe if he were to take the Fellowship. His undecided state was almost exactly that experienced at the same stage by Clough and by J.A. Froude, who described his own situation in these words :

I had learnt from Carlyle the absolute obligation of being true in these high matters (of religion and conscience). No one ought to undertake to teach any form of religion who was not convinced in his own mind of the complete truth of it, and to

trifle with our conscience was sin against the Holy Ghost. I had learnt from him that life was for action not speculation, and that in action alone lay the cure for and solution of the questions which were distracting me... I began to think of emigrating and beginning life again under other conditions. This, however, was not easy either, and I waited on till some opening might be made for me.

I offered myself without effect for a professorship in one of the Irish colleges, but there was no opening that way... My best consolation was that I was not alone in my miseries... especially in Clough, I found strong sympathy in my general uneasiness... Being the most conscientious of men, he began to think that in an article-signing university he ought not to retain an office with its emoluments which were held under conditions of orthodoxy...

Clough, too, tried an application to the Irish colleges (to be set up by Peel, in Belfast, Cork and Galway, of which the last was to be wholly Roman Catholic), but without success.

Thomas, however, began to consider emigration as an answer. It was an idea he had entertained for some time, though but idly, ever since he had heard his father discuss the subject - as he often did - in Rugby. On the strength of his interest in emigration Arnold had bought 200 acres of land in the Makara Valley, near Washington, North Island, New Zealand. Under Arnold's influence J.P. Gell had gone out to Tasmania in the late 1830's, after graduating from Cambridge, and from 1842 onwards Thomas seems to have been attracted to the idea of emigrating. New Zealand, with the Arnold land waiting to be exploited, was an ideal place on which he could project all his idealisms: the climate was attractive, the islands were, from 1840, coming under Government control, there was no convict population, as in

¹ Quoted in W.H. Dunn, James Anthony Froude, 2 vols. London 1961, I, pp.94-95.

Australia and Tasmania, free settlement was being encouraged and some attempt was being made to create a new England. As Douglas Woodruffe has commented :

There was from the first a special affection for New Zealand among English men. There was really virgin land, not marred by any political experiments of earlier generations... The Canterbury settlement was an attempt to transplant a complete section of English Society, with a nobleman and a bishop at the top, and the associations of place names were freely used: the streets of Christchurch were named after English dioceses, and a cathedral and a school were built to suggest an English Cathedral town. Further south, a purely Scotch settlement was made at Dunedin and Invercargill, with a nephew of Robert Burns prominent among the settlers.

All this was just beginning in the 1840's when Thomas was considering what to do. There was, however, an additional and personal factor in it as far as he was concerned, for his father had represented emigration as comparable to missionary work, endowing it with a moral - though not necessarily religious - purpose which could not help but appeal to his conscientious nature :

Every good man going to New Zealand or Van Dieman's Land not for the sake of making money, is an invaluable element in those societies, and remember that they, after all, must be by and by the great missionaries to the heathen world, either for God or for the devil.²

Though there is no evidence that Thomas heard those actual words, he had heard, round the fireside at Rugby, his father's constant discussions and observations, of which emigration was one of the chief topics in the middle 1830's about the time the Makara Valley land was bought, and his enthusiasm for emigration in the mid 1840's suggests that he was thoroughly imbued with his father's attitudes.

¹ Douglas Woodruffe, "Expansion and Emigration," in Early Victorian England, ed. G.M. Young, 2 vols. London 1963, II, p.385.

² Quoted by Woodruffe, op. cit. p.385.

Exactly what happened in the Spring of 1846 is not entirely clear; he decided to give up his Foundation Scholarship at University College and he went first to Lincoln's Inn, as a law student, but this lasted for only a month or two, before he took up a post as a precis copy-writer in the Colonial Office. According to Mrs. H. Ward he had been offered such a post immediately on leaving the university; why he went first to Lincoln's Inn is not now clear, but it seems probable that both moves were compromises between his desire to emigrate and his family's wish that he would stay in England, preferably in Oxford. It gave him a little more time in which to reflect on his plans for the future.

Two sources of information remain to provide further clues to his state of mind: the self-portrait of the "Equator Letters", so called because they were written by Thomas to J.C. Shairp during the long sea-voyage to New Zealand, and Clough's poem The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, which was written as a result of a long-vacation reading party Clough organised in the autumn of 1847, only three or four months before Thomas left England.

There were six or seven young men in Clough's party, including Theodore Walrond, Charles Lloyd, son of a former Bishop of Oxford, and a number of other undergraduates. At the same time Thomas and J.C. Shairp were making a tour of the Highlands in Scotland, in the same vicinity as Clough's party, and arranged to join them for part of the vacation. The intimacy of this holiday together probably provoked Thomas into writing the "Equator Letters" to

Shairp a few months later. The young men settled into a large farmhouse called Drumnadrochit, on the north shore of Loch Ness, and Clough's poem provides a vivid account of the conduct of an Oxford long-vacation reading-party of the period. The mornings were devoted to reading, in preparation for the term to come, but often broken up by swimming in the nearby rivers, while the afternoons and evenings seemed to have been spent in the homes of local men of note or distinction, where they dined, argued, or flirted with the young ladies. Basically then, the poem is rooted in an actual reading party and its characters are based on the young men who made it up. Thomas appears in it as :

Philip Hewson a poet,
 Hewson a radical hot, hating lords and scorning ladies,
 Silent mostly, but often reviling in fire and fury
 Feudal tenures, mercantile lords, competition and bishops,
 Liveries, armorial bearings, amongst other matters the Game Laws.¹

On this portrait R. Biswas has commented : "Obviously this impetuous young man has read his Carlyle; obviously, too, he has much in common with his creator."² Both are important points, but the second is more important than the first for the portrait is not entirely factual, there is a good deal of Clough in Philip, as Thomas himself thought. It is a composite picture of Thomas, Clough - hence the comment on "Hewson a poet", which Thomas was not - and the convictions they both shared, though not necessarily in equal strength. The verse portrait provides a sidelight on Thomas, but with this single qualification in mind it is nonetheless possible to

¹A.H. Clough, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Book 1, lines 124-128.

²R. Biswas, Arthur Hugh Clough, London 1972, p.272.

abstract a picture of him idealistic, impassioned, almost reckless, eager to correct the inequalities in the world, and projecting his egalitarian politics even on to relationships between men and women, the latter of whom were naturally occupying the minds of the young men at the time. He had obviously been drawn to the theory of utility and deduced from it a relationship between form and function which, when applied to women, inevitably favoured the working class girl who, unlike her aristocratic counterpart, combined the dignities of womanhood and of labour :

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.

Philip's outburst in the poem was provoked by a creature who beautifully embodied the necessary virtues :

... a capless, bonnetless maiden,
Bending with three-pronged fork in a garden uprooting potatoes...²

Dangerously near bathos though this is Philip's sincerity sweeps him on to make the reverse observation, on the ritualised relationships of the Victorian middle-class which seemed to him like a charade in which real dignity was absent :

Still, as before (and as now), balls, dances, and evening parties,
Shooting with bows, going shopping together, and hearing them
singing,
Dangling beside them, and turning the leaves on the dreary piano,
Offering unneeded arms, performing dull farces of escort,
Seemed like a sort of unnatural up-in-the-air balloon-work.³

¹ A.H. Clough, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Book 2, 11.25-29.

² Ibid. 11.42-43.

³ Ibid. 11.55-59.

This is more than just a comment on courting manners, it is a criticism of the whole tenour of Victorian social relationships: stratified, codified, formalised and sterilised. At least, that is how it appeared to Philip, and to Thomas. Oxford life, with its security, insulated from the evolving industrial world outside, inwardly turned to its own political problems and its arid classical studies, was just as dead. What Philip was really rejecting was the "utter removal from work, mother earth, and the objects of living."¹

Later in the poem Philip leaves the main party, falls in love first with Katie and then, completely, with Elspie McKaye who becomes his wife whom he takes off to New Zealand. Naturally, she combines the virtues he has already admired: she is a practical girl of humble origin, capable of living in relatively primitive circumstances but still graceful and gentle. In reality Thomas's "Elspie" was in Ireland, and her refusal to marry and to go with him to New Zealand was a cause of much pain to him by the end of the year. During the weeks of separation from the reading party Philip writes to the tutor, to explain his absence, and these exchanges reveal more of the underlying theories which shape his attitudes. At the root of his arguments is the culture/practicality contradiction, still unresolved in 1847. He still had not come to accept the practical virtues of the Robert Owen brand of socialism, nor had he filled in the missing details to his beautiful Pantisocracy. The working women who symbolise the union of beauty

¹A.H. Clough, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Book 2, line 61.

and practicality are romantic fictions, and Philip's attitude to them is confused for he immediately wants to save them from the very work which - in his eyes - dignifies them; the moment he saw the girl digging potatoes:

... a new thing was in me; and longing deliciousness possessed me,
 Longing to take her and lift her, and put her away from her
 slaving.¹

His companions find the inconsistencies amusing, especially Hobbes, who ironically labels Philip a "Pugin of women" who wants to teach them

How even a churning, and washing, the dairy, the scullery duties,
 Wait but a touch to redeem and convert them to charms and
 attractions,
 Scrubbing requires for true grace but frank and artistic handling
 And the removal of slops to be ornamentally treated.²

The tutor similarly counters Philip's claim that all men should be equal with a commonplace of the later Victorian period: that inequality seems to be the underlying law of the natural world:

However noble the dream of equality, mark you, Philip,
 Nowhere equality reigns in all the world of creation.

but Philip immediately retorts

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, Eat, drink, and never mind the others.⁴

It is the antithesis of Emerson's "Accept the place Divine Providence has found for you", regarding that doctrine - and the Church and State which propound it - as a cruel means of perpetuating inequality, which he thus equated with injustice. And so Thomas stood in the

¹ A.H. Clough, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Book 2, 11. 46-47.

² Ibid. Book 2, 11. 137-141.

³ Ibid. Book 2, 11. 182-183.

⁴ Ibid. Book 2, 11. 203-205.

autumn of 1847, still not sure how his burning ideologies could be turned to practical account, still not really aware of the fact that his education and upbringing could not be easily put on one side and new values put in their place, but nonetheless sure that, at the age of 24, he could not face a future in a country whose social structure he could not support.

The Equator letters add some important details, and in Thomas's own words. In them a powerful new element, only hinted at in The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, becomes a major factor: religion, though there is some reason for believing that the despairing agnosticism he proclaimed to Shairp was a composite reaction to his many problems, of which a frustrated love-affair with Henrietta Whateley provided much of the immediate emotional pressure. She was the daughter of Richard Whateley, Archbishop of Dublin and friend of the Arnold family. During his time in London Thomas struck up a friendship with Edward Whateley, Henrietta's brother, who was working in the capital, and through him, it seems, Thomas and Henrietta came together. Why their romance came to nothing is not known, though it is likely that a young man professing radical opinions, and thinking seriously of emigrating to the colonies, would not appeal to the Archbishop as a prospective son-in-law, Arnold or no. Similarly, Henrietta belonged to that very class of ladies Philip Hewson reviled in The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich. If in that particular Philip was truly representing Thomas, then Henrietta would not have made him a suitable wife, and certainly not for the kind of life he seemed to be planning for himself. Jane Arnold clearly thought the match unsuitable, as her later remarks show. The affair

was brief, happening in the summer of 1847, so that Clough's description of Philip Hewson in love, "smitten" but eventually "...getting on too by this time. Though he was shy, so exceedingly shy",¹ fits exactly with Thomas's state of mind during that Autumn reading-party. He was desperately troubled by the affair, as his letters show. From on board ship, where company could not be avoided, he wrote to his mother :

...my heart aches and pines the while, and I long to be alone with my recollections and musings. You will easily understand that what has brought this premature old age on my spirits is the sad fate of a love which had woven itself into the very fibre of my existence. Now that earthly hope is gone for me, what comfort can I find in civil speeches or idle laughter and jokes, what peace except in solitary communion with my own heart?²

and in June he added :

Since I lost my Etty, my heart is much deadened both to pain and pleasure and nothing can now affect me so vividly as it could in times past.²

Out of this welter of confused and miserable feelings Thomas made his final decision to emigrate, so that he was both running to a new life, full, he thought, of social promise, and running away from the disappointments of the old life.

Residence in London, in 1846 and 1847, shocked him, and this shock, too, contributed to the views he expressed in the "Equator Letters." For the first time he actually met the reality of working-class conditions in the appalling slum areas of the city, and he realised that he alone could do nothing to ease social problems of such magnitude. He felt a crushing weight of despair,

¹A.H. Clough, *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, Book 3, 1.221.

²March 16th 1848, *New Zealand letters of Thomas Arnold*, ed. J. Bertram, London 1966, p.30.

³Ibid. p.54.

and wrote in misery to Clough :

Those are indeed happy who can still hope for England, who can find, in identifying themselves with our political or social institutions, a congenial atmosphere, and a suitable machinery for accomplishing at last all that they dream of. Of such sanguine spirits, alas! I am not one. To imagine oneself called upon 'to do good', in the age in which we live, is an illusion to which I was long subject myself, but of the utter fallaciousness of which I am now convinced. Our lot is cast in an evil time; we cannot accept the present, and we shall not live to see the future. It is an age of transition; in which the mass are carried hither and thither by chimeras of different kinds, while to the few...is left nothing but sadness and isolation.

That was in April, and in the same letter he confirmed his intention of emigrating. By the end of September, when his plans were complete and he was within two months of leaving England, he felt relieved as the impending action lifted the weight of his frustration.

"There is such an indescribable blessedness" he wrote to his sister, Jane, "in looking forward to a manner of life which the heart and conscience approve, and which at the same time satisfies the instinct of the Heroic and Beautiful".² He had not only read but absorbed Carlyle, and New Zealand seemed to offer the perfect opportunity to bring theory and practice together, as he went on to explain :

Yet there seems little enough in a homely life in a New Zealand forest; and indeed there is nothing in the thing itself, except in so far as it flows from a principle - from a faith. But the poor - the toiling poor - whom Lord Ashley's pets, and the Free Traders cajole, - these multitudes of human souls, whom we coolly talk of as 'the masses' or 'the lower classes' - what a joy it will be to come amongst them as their brother, their equal, their friend; to share their burdens, and to show them purer objects of ambition than wealth...³

In October he took some of the money left to him by his father - at

¹ March 16th 1847, New Zealand letters of Thomas Arnold, ed. J. Bertram, London 1966, p.1.

² Ibid. p.6.

³ Ibid. pp.6-7.

that time it was apparently still in trust - bought agricultural implements, gathered his other belongings together and prepared to sail late in November. While he was on board, in November, December and January, he wrote to J.C. Shairp partly to defend his emigration - which Shairp had always opposed - and partly to ease his own heart. The resulting letters attempted to survey, and understand his whole life up to that point, and naturally rationalised the sequences, but in them, better than anywhere else is revealed his passionate though confused personality. They stand as a mixture of self-analysis and self-dramatisation, symbolising the kind of man he was. Just as J.A. Froude wrote an incomplete autobiography in which he disguised himself as Edward Fowler, so Thomas, in these letters, hid behind the guise of a third-person narrative perhaps for the sake of objectivity in the face of his appalling shyness. In a vigorous, if melodramatic manner he relates how at Oxford :

...he read ... one or two works by materialists; in one of which especially a fatalistic view of nature and of man was sustained with wonderful ability and power of expression. However it was, he fell into a state of dejection... Outward nature seemed to harmonize with the gloom of his mind. The spring of that year (1845) was unusually cold, and the blasts of the N.E. wind shook the large Oriel window of his room, and made him shiver as he crouched over the fire. A universal doubt shook every prop and pillar on which his moral Being had hitherto reposed. Something was continually whispering 'What if all thy Religion, all thy aspiring hope, all thy trust in God, be a mere delusion? ... What art thou more than a material arrangement, the elements of which might at any moment, by any accident, be dispersed, and thou, without any to pity or care for thee throughout the wide universe, sink into universal night. Prate not any more of thy God and thy Providence; thou art here alone, placed at the mercy of impersonal and unbending laws, which, whether they preserve or crush thee, the universe with supremest indifference will roll onwards on its way.'

¹James Bertram, op.cit. pp.210-12.

If his chronology is accurate he seems to have lost that caring, ever-present personal God of his father before the end of his undergraduate career. No comfort in the storm was then possible for him, as it had been in the Rugby days. The apprehension of an impersonal universe, governed only by scientific laws, came as a severe shock, and caused him to re-think his understanding of social relations between men, and the institutions which created or sustained them. As the first impact of this new concept softened he began to see social work as a practical substitute for religion :

Religion is a labyrinth without a clue, and we know not what to preach to the people; why then, in Heaven's name, let us leave all that, and let us work at things which we know. Let us shorten the hours of labour for the poor; let us purify our cities; let us unfetter our trade - surely we can unite for such objects. As for religion, we must agree to differ; that problem is incapable of solution...

This phase was temporarily arrested at the end of 1846 when he came across Southey's Life of Wesley, which convinced him that practical, social work in itself was inadequate, that "to know God and to be known of Him must henceforth be the only object of his ambition."² But this conviction lasted only a few months. He sensed that "everywhere religious feeling and faith were decaying."³ and that this popular drift was supported in large measure by the intellectuals, the scholars, who had "exposed the nonsense of the old theories about the Inspiration of Scripture."⁴ The crux of the matter was the problem of the nature of Christ as traditionally

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.212.

² Ibid. p.213.

³ Ibid. p.214.

⁴ Ibid. p.213.

propounded by the Christian Church; as Geoffrey Faber has condensed it :

The Council of Chalcydon (AD451) finally determined Catholic and Greek Orthodox doctrines on the nature of Christ, and the doctrine so determined remained the doctrine of the reformed Church of England. It is expressed in the second of the Thirty Nine Articles, in the words, "so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man"

Thomas could not accept it :

Could a great man ever more believe in Articles of Religion, or express his 'theory of the Universe' in terms of the ancient formularies? No, he felt it was impossible...²

The only conclusion he could reach was that Christ had been wholly human, and all good men since, who had worked for the common good against 'the tyranny of sense' had been fellow-workers with Christ. There was no split, or forced union, between the human and the divine, and therefore :

there was no fact, no institution, no doctrine, of which it could truly be said: "This is not governed by the ordinary laws of the world, and therefore the ordinary laws of the world do not apply to it."³

This was the point at which he rejected Emerson's call to accept the place Divine Providence had ordained for him; there was no such Divine plan against which it was wrong to struggle. Everything was established by mankind itself: "I found that it was not God who had destined the greater part of man-kind to a life of ignorance and wretchedness, but that man had done it..."⁴ It was then that he

¹ G. Faber, Oxford Apostles, London 1954, p.386.

² James Bertram, op.cit. p.213.

³ Ibid. p.214.

⁴ Ibid. p.217.

read George Sand, reading Mauprat, Horace, and then Indiana, at the request of his brother Matthew, who had long been an admirer of Madame Sand. He was not impressed. Then he turned to Jacques and for personal rather than philosophical reasons he was overwhelmed: "There was something in the divine stoicism of Jacques which was perhaps congenial to my nature, and the fate of his love impressed me with sad forebodings, which were but too soon destined to be realised."¹ On his own testimony, it was not George Sand's political or social 'message' which caught his imagination but the character of Jacques, with which he identified, and the affinity between Jacques' disappointed love and his own frustrated affair with Henrietta Whateley. With such powerful associations to bind him to the novel he could not help but believe that the underlying plea of the book, for 'Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood', had suddenly opened his eyes to the social injustice around him, when in fact he had already worked his way to that conclusion independently. The novel gave it a romantic gloss, an extra illumination which suited the mood of the moment.

His own position of privilege and ease became an embarrassment:

I am one of the rich class. I have servants to wait upon me; I am fed and clothed by the labour of the poor, and do nothing for them in return... I will leave it... I shall enter before I die into new and pure relations with Man.²

But faced with the problem of how to achieve this salvation he argued :

What shall I do then? Shall I herd amongst those suffering

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.217.

² Ibid. p.218.

wretches, whose condition is, on my own showing, contrary to the will of God and the desires of Nature? Shall I clothe myself in rags, forget all that I have read and dreamed of the beautiful and true, and become, like them, ignorant and brutish? God forbid! that error were almost worse than the first. Resolved at all costs to descend amongst those who labour, and labour with them, I yet found upon consideration that if I remained in England there would be insuperable obstacles to my leading the life that I contemplated. England is now a land for the rich, not for the poor... In brief I saw no way of so effectually obeying the call of duty, and translating faith into actions as by emigrating¹ to some colony where these difficulties would not exist.

It was a wholly logical position, offering a solution to the central problem: emigration to New Zealand, a free colony, a new society, would enable him to contribute in a practical way to the evolution of a new culture, with all the hope of creating a Pantisocracy with beautiful details but not requiring the practical ugliness of the kind of reform needed in England. In one sense it was an evasion. But it was brave; it was an attempt to live up to his ideals.² Confused though his motives were, and compounded of so many different strands, he was acting in a manner of which his father would have completely approved - obeying his conscience. His family were opposed to his emigration, Shairp had tried to dissuade him, Matthew seems to have been wryly amused that his young brother should take his moral responsibilities so seriously. Yet their affection for each other was not impaired. Had Thomas shared

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.218.

² Others of Thomas's Oxford circle came to the same conclusions, but did not act upon them, as Froude has commented: 'Arthur Clough and I had come to the conclusion that we had no business to be "gentlemen", that we ought to work with our hands etc. and so we proposed to come to New Zealand and turn farmers. Clough wrote his *Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, constructed a hero who should be the double of himself, married to a highland lassie, and sent them off instead...' W.H. Dunn, James Anthony Froude, 2 vols. London 1963, II, p.527.

Matthew's ironic sense of humour which would have tempered his 'premature ripeness' he might well have achieved a detachment enabling him to ride out the storm, perhaps even enough to remain in the Colonial Office. But laughter seems not to have come easily to him; he was, however, always ready to take life very seriously. A simple indication of this is his reaction to Jenny Lind, the "Swedish nightingale", who was in England during the fateful summer of 1847. Thomas heard her in London and at once took her into his imagination and transformed her into something rather more than an opera singer. He was not alone in his admiration, she was celebrated wherever she went on that tour, but his rapture was of a kind that speaks for itself :

Jenny Lind is such a singer as appears once in a century, and who, once heard and seen, can never be forgotten. The mere sight of her is enough to drive from one's mind forever all ideals but that of the pure guileless Northern maiden, in whom stormy passion is replaced by infinite supersensual love, and intellectual power by the direct contemplation of and communication with the Divine. It has truly been said, that no one ever leaves the theatre with any other impression than that she is beautiful. If ever human face wore a superhuman expression, Jenny Lind's did when I saw her in the *Sonnambula* last Saturday...

It is a reaction so typical of Thomas at this time, compounding all the externals of the performance into a mystical experience: her beautiful expression becoming a direct means of communicating with the Divine, her very sexuality inspiring 'supersensual' responses which are themselves rooted in the 'stormy passion' she apparently denied by her saintly appearance, and superseding intellectual power by spiritual power. By contrast Matthew greatly admired Rachel, a French actress who specialised in plays by Racine, and admired her

¹ 19 May 1847, James Bertram, op.cit. p.2.

for her intellectual strength, remarking to Clough :

Have you read *Andromaque*, and what do you think of Rachel - greater than what she is in her creativity, eh? exactly the converse of Jenny Lind. By the way what an enormous obverse that young woman and excellent singer has.

But Matthew also had the eye of the poet, discerning the relationship between form and meaning and style. With Rachel, and Jenny Lind, and Newman too, he admired the performance because he knew and understood how it was he was being affected. In the case of Rachel, and of Newman, he made a deliberate surrender to their style in a manner that his more impetuous brother could not follow. Matthew's enjoyment of Newman's sermons, for example, illustrate the point :

Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's rising into the pulpit, and then, in the most entrancing of voices, breaking₂ the silence with words and thoughts which were religious music...

The coolness of that appraisal is a mark of the detachment with which he surrendered to Newman's spell. It contrasts sharply with Thomas's heady response to Jenny Lind, even allowing for the difference of time, place and sexuality of the actors.

In mid-November he left London for Gravesend to join his ship, the John Wycliffe - a strangely prophetic name - accompanied by his brothers Edward, Matthew, and Clough, who made one last effort to dissuade him from leaving :

It was very cold, yet it was a brilliant sunset, and the river with all its shipping, is always very beautiful. I asked him if he felt the least inclined to change his mind, were it possible. He said not the least, that when he had made up his mind fully,

¹The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. H.F. Lowry, London 1968, p.81.

²Matthew Arnold, "Emerson", Matthew Arnold, Poetry and Prose, London 1957, p.657.

he looked upon the thing as inevitable; besides that, his wish to go was as strong as ever. What he felt most, I think, was the parting with Matt. I saw tears in his eyes when it came to that.

The final hours on board ship gave him a kind of relief; the decision-making was all over, the restless self-questioning was momentarily ended. At mid-day on November 24th, 1847, the John Wycliffe set sail.

¹Edward Arnold, quoted by W.T. Arnold, "Thomas Arnold the Younger", Century Magazine, New York 1900, p.120.

CHAPTER THREE.

New Zealand 1.

Thomas's cabin-mate for the voyage was "an excellent young Londoner named Cutten, who meant to go into business as an auctioneer at Otago,"¹ but, excellent or not, he clearly did not have the Arnold penchant for organisation for his belongings were piled in an overflowing heap in the centre of the cabin, as if an auction was about to start there and then. Such a condition was intolerable to an Arnold and after he had spent a restless night in the humid cabin Thomas spent a good part of the next day helping the unfortunate Cutten to stow away his belongings in some kind of order. Two weeks' delay off the coast at Portsmouth gave him the chance to spend a day on the Isle of Wight, with Cutten, and together they explored the old family house of Slatwoods, where Thomas's grand-father once lived, before returning to their ship. A week later they were sixty miles west of Lisbon.

The John Wycliffe turned out to be a fast ship before the wind and as December progressed the passengers began to amuse themselves by planning a Christmas Feast. Thomas's contribution was a pot of marmalade, probably made by Matthew, and so great was its success that he contributed a second pot in honour of Matt's birthday on December 24th. Meanwhile, Teneriffe and the Canary Islands slid away astern, droves of flying fish skimmed across the sea, the temperature rose, and sea-sickness began to spread among the passengers. Thomas was severely affected, lying in his bunk

¹Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.68.

listening to the creaking of the rigging and lurching every time the ship moved on the swell. At last he stumbled up on to the deck where one of his fellow passengers, John Cargill, suggested that a glass of Bass would improve matters. This unlikely advice proved to be sound for the sickness subsided and Thomas's spirits rapidly improved.

Not surprisingly, the John Wycliffe's passengers could do little to counter the frustration and boredom of a long voyage and Thomas quickly came to the conclusion that he did not care for his fellow passengers very greatly; for one thing they were much too closely cramped together in the ship. Despite his initial approval of Cutten, they were thrown together too closely in one cabin for Thomas's liking and he began to find that John Cargill was his most amenable companion. As their friendship strengthened during the first few weeks of the voyage they began to plan an excursion into the country around Otago harbour, in South Island. They knew that the ship would anchor there for some time before sailing to Wellington. So Thomas made his plans for the projected scheme, collecting together a compass, a tinder-box, a kettle, some flour, some tea and his guns. In eager anticipation he wrote home to his mother :

The thought of the expedition makes me half wild with delight. Two other Wellington passengers talk of coming, but I shan't be at all sorry if they don't, and I think it is not at all unlikely that they'll change their minds when it comes to the point.

But if he found Cargill a pleasant companion he certainly disapproved

¹ James Bertram, The New Zealand Letters of Thomas Arnold, London 1966, p.22.

of the rest of the passengers, particularly the Cargill girls, who shocked him with their free and flirtatious behaviour :

They appear to think that because they are going to a rude and young society, they may throw off the restraints of manners, and do all sorts of things which in England, in the absence of a refinement of nature, the dread of opinion would prevent them from doing. They allow the young men to kiss them when they are found asleep on the deck, eat sweet-meat with the same spoon with the mate, and exhibit the utmost greediness without shame or reserve. I do not consider myself very scrupulous either, but I must say that their conduct fills me with disgust... and it is difficult to say which of all these persons grate most unpleasingly on the moral or artistic sense.

It was the first but not the last time he was to comment on the greater freedom of behaviour afforded in the less restrained social atmosphere of the colonies. More important than this, however, is his final comment: by 'artistic' he meant 'aesthetic', and this was to play a major part in his subsequent vacillation between faith and unbelief, between the rationality of scientific revelation and the aesthetic satisfaction to be found in church liturgy and ritual. It was this same aesthetic need which had already caused him to reject English socialism "because it lacked culture", leaving as the only alternative a vaguely conceived Pantisocracy "with beautiful details." In 1847 and 1848, on board the John Wycliffe, he saw this conflict acted out in the behaviour of the other passengers and their coarseness offended him. His decision to emigrate in the first place had been prompted by the enormity of the social problem in London, hence his hopes for a new, virgin community in the colonies. But it was more probably the nature of the problem, not its size, which appalled him. His lonely attempts at importing culture into the

¹ James Bertram, The New Zealand Letters of Thomas Arnold, London 1966, p.24.

colonies by way of his books, a picture of Jenny Lind, and a violin, which he occasionally played in his spare moments, were part of a despairing attempt to stave off the ugliness and the emptiness of colonial life in its pioneering stages. In the early months of 1848 he was just beginning to recognise the aesthetic and intellectual poverty of his companions and the degree to which his own life demanded aesthetic satisfaction. He could not shrug off his upbringing and education as easily as he had once imagined; he could not "descend amongst those who labour, and labour with them," they were not his kind and this realisation started him off on a process of self-identification. Two months later, in March 1848, he again commented on the Cargill girls who

... never lose any good thing for want of grabbing at it or asking for it. When I look at their coarse features and see their gross manners, I often think of my sweet K and indeed of all my sisters, and tears come into my eyes when I think of them.

It is not surprising that after little more than three months living in the cramped conditions on board ship he found his companions barely tolerable and began to isolate himself from them as far as possible. "In the absence of real true friends" he wrote "I find myself shrinking more and more from common acquaintances, and I now find no peace or happiness except when alone."² It was a rationalisation, and not entirely just, for his loneliness was not caused solely by his intellectual and cultural isolation; he was still suffering the pangs of his broken love-affair with Henrietta Whateley. It would

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.29.

² Ibid.

have been a remarkable social group indeed which could have completely recompensed him for that loss :

I laugh at their idle jokes out of complaisance, but my heart aches and pines the while, and I long to be alone with my recollections and musings. You will easily understand that what has brought this premature old age on my spirits is the sad fate of a love which had woven itself into every fibre of my existence.

In this mood he resolved to attempt the Otago expedition alone, and as it turned out it was a salutary lesson which quickly killed off his belief in the virtues of solitariness.

On the evening of March 19th, 1848, he sighted South Island for the first time and it looked reassuringly familiar, not unlike parts of his beloved Lake District :

Beautiful it was to see mountain after mountain, and point after point emerge from the cloudy screen. Though a moist haze still hung over the land, we could distinguish the trees that clothed the hills and the green grass on the tops of the cliffs. The appearance of the land is beautiful.²

Ironically, even as Thomas was taking his first look at his new country, in which he hoped to help build a new and better society, Europe was in turmoil, for reasons which he would have approved.

Jane wrote to him :

... the mob are paramount in Paris, and with 'liberty' and 'fraternity' in their mouths ... all Germany is moved; the Austrians have forced Metternich to fly. At Berlin, after a bloody conflict the King had (sic) been compelled to place himself at the head of all the advance movement and to veil the defeated monarch in the character of Champion of the German Empire. In all corners of Europe Kings cannot give constitutions, Ministers cannot resign, armies cannot vanish into air fast enough for the times.³

¹ James Bertram, op. cit. p.30.

² Ibid. pp.31-32.

³ Ibid. pp.36-37.

But Thomas was four months behind the times as he contemplated his expedition and scanned the Otago landscape. Jane and the other members of the family in England were justifiably anxious about the expedition; they had heard from Thomas about his plans in a letter received in March. They knew him well: "How anxious we are to hear what you did at Otago. It frightens us a little to think of your making an exploring expedition alone; take good care of yourself, my own dear Tom..."¹ On the first opportunity ashore he set off on foot :

On the evening of the first day I reached a narrow mountain valley, partly clothed with wood, partly with high fern and rushes, I camped by the side of a clear stream, and made my fire out of the drift-wood that lay on its banks and had probably never been before disturbed by the hand of man. I boiled my tea, baked a cake of flour in the ashes, and after a meal spread my plaid on the soft long grass by the waterside, and tried to go to sleep. I had nearly succeeded, when I felt the splash of rain drops on my face. I got up and stamped about in a little circle, to keep up the circulation. The rain at last ceased, and I lay down again, but could not sleep for the cold. The morning came, and the sun rose gloriously, but I was chilled through, and faint from hunger. I saw, too, that my provisions would not hold out for more than another day, and I resolved to return. I could not light a fire, - everything was too wet, - and I could not eat flour; so I started without any breakfast. As I struggled back over the mountains, almost sick with hunger, I could not help remarking to myself a longing to get back to the settlement and the haunts of man equal to the desire which I had felt a day or two before to penetrate deep into the silence and solitude of the bush. 'No', I said to myself, as I leaned on a great boulder at a spot whence the eye commanded a far-stretching plain, on which not the faintest curling smoke told of the presence of man, 'thou wast not made to be alone!' A sort of horror fell upon me, the might of Nature seemed to rise up, - irresistible, all-pervading, - and to press down upon my single life. From the hour that I reached the settlement I became, I think, a wiser man.²

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.39.

² Quoted by W.T. Arnold, "Thomas Arnold the Younger", Century Magazine, New York 1900, pp.126-27.

The lesson was not lost on him, and the honesty with which he accepted it is typical of his general conduct for he was forever examining his daily behaviour with that very wakeful conscience and questioning every decision he had to take. This incident impressed upon him his innate inability to cope with loneliness, it underlined his dependence upon civilised surroundings and emphasised that he was the product of a highly organised and cultivated society. His strength lay not in original thinking but in analysis and re-organisation. He was not the stuff of which pioneers are made, but he did have the analytical powers of the scholar. In this instance his preparation was minimal and he was defeated by the first shower of rain, but after the event he was at once able to understand its significance in terms of his own life and future; a less reflective man would most likely have passed the whole matter off as a mere joke and learned nothing from it. There is, too, a tone strongly reminiscent of Wordsworth in his reaction to the "might of Nature", and even after the events of the night, and the shivering misery of early dawn, he could not but remark on the beauty of the sunrise. Obviously, he was glad to see it because it meant the end of his exploit, but even at a time of lowest spirits he noted that the sun rose 'gloriously'.

Since he was due to disembark at Wellington he found the long delay at Otago frustrating, especially when he suspected that the cause of it was the Captain's regard for one of the Cargill sisters, who were due to leave the ship at Otago: the Captain was loath to put to sea before he must. So Thomas lived ashore for a large part

of the seven weeks they were there. Part of the time he lived in a tent, but eventually he was invited to share the wooden cottage of a Mr. Garrick and his wife, who had recently emigrated from England, and from this base, albeit primitive, he surveyed the rest of the Dunedin settlement. He was not impressed. The surrounding country consisted of hills rising from the narrow harbour, and on the cramped stretches of shore-land the settlers were beginning to establish their town. The rains of early winter soon turned the clay beneath into sticky mud which added to the generally dreary impression it all made to Thomas's eye. Three weeks after the John Wycliffe anchored a second ship, the Philip Laing, dropped anchor in the harbour and a fresh set of immigrants straggled ashore; there were nearly two hundred and fifty on board. Thomas enquired about them and it was reported to him by a nephew of the poet Robert Burns that they were :

a bad and disorderly set, indeed this Free Church Colony, which had the impudence to announce itself as walking in the footsteps of the Pilgrim Fathers, and the founders of which were so eminently religious and moral, seem to be mainly formed of as pretty a set of knaves and idle vagabonds as ever was seen. Out of all the single women on board the Philip Laing, Mrs. Burns could only recommend one as a maid servant. Two of the cabin passengers, who when they came on board represented themselves as man and wife, were married in the course of the voyage. The fact is, it was a clever dodge, in order to make the lands sell, to represent this Colony as connected with the Free Church movement, and to establish a Church and School fund, etc.; but if anyone were so deluded as to come out here under the expectation of finding a religious community, in the true sense of the word, he would find himself, I think, very much mistaken.

So much for the reality of an embryonic colonial settlement. After a mere three weeks in New Zealand which in many ways was a good

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.41.

settlement - it had no convicts for example - the gradual process by which Thomas returned to the faiths, values and attitudes he had so peremptorily cast aside was under way. It was the beginning of a steady process of self-realisation. In the meantime he kept his thoughts to himself as he mingled with the settlers but privately loathed the place, longing for the day when the ship would set sail for Wellington, or New Plymouth, or Nelson, or "all rather than Otago."

But he had one stroke of good fortune. By chance he met James Bell, a farmer from Wellington who had made a success of being a settler and knew North Island well. Having assessed Bell as an honest man Thomas proposed that they should become partners in a farm so that he could take advantage of Bell's experience, in return for which he would offer a share in the profits of the farm. Not unreasonably Bell declined the offer but gave Thomas a letter of introduction to another James Bell who, he thought, might listen to the suggestion when Thomas reached Wellington.

April gave way to May, and the rain continued to churn up the mud of the settlement, but at last, on May 18th. the John Wycliffe cleared the harbour and made her way north towards Wellington, where they landed five days later.

The change could hardly have been greater; even the approach to the harbour was cheering to Thomas's depressed spirits: "The harbour is a beautiful sheet of water," he wrote, "and the lights of Wellington lining the beach are pleasant in our eyes after the dreary solitudes of Otago."¹ And Wellington promised one additional boon - letters

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.45.

and parcels from home waiting, he hoped, at the Post Office. His first move was to make for the house of the Rev. Robert Cole to call upon the Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, who was staying there. Immediately upon making Thomas's acquaintance the Bishop insisted on taking him to be introduced to the Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Eyre, who received Thomas even though there was a levée at Government House in honour of the Queen's birthday. Thomas was not a little embarrassed at being 'undressed' for the occasion, but this did not stop him from noticing, and being amused by, 'the ungracefulness and gaucherie' with which most of the assembled company made their bows. After the event he dined with Godfrey Thomas, the Auditor General, and his remarks on the occasion reveal both how quickly he had made himself known to the Governor's party, and how much he needed the civilised refinements of Oxford and Rugby, despite his political opinions before he emigrated. Godfrey Thomas took him to his

little bit of a wooden house consisting of just two rooms and a kitchen, but very snug. We did not dress, but there were silver forks etc, and everything went off so exactly the same as in England that I could have fancied myself at an undergraduate party at Oxford. That night I slept at an inn, and the next morning breakfasted with Domett the Colonial Secretary.

Within a few hours of landing in Wellington he had put aside his unpleasant memories of Otago, found himself in reassuringly civilised company and recovered his spirits enough to begin to plan ahead with anticipation. The following morning, Friday 26th, he unloaded his belongings from the John Wycliffe, stored them until needed, and made

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.46.

arrangements to lodge with Mr. Cole, in whose house he had first met the Bishop, until he had found somewhere of his own to live. Three days later, on May 29th, he received his first letter from home, from his sister Jane, and this completed his general satisfaction, for even the weather was bright and sunny. 'Wellington is a most beautiful place,' he wrote home, and in this tide of feeling prepared to make his life in his new country.

CHAPTER FOUR.

New Zealand 2.

One of his first thoughts on settling into his new surroundings was to send clear instructions home how his family might best send his letters. On average they took four months to travel from England to New Zealand but Thomas quickly realised that the best route was via Sydney, while the worst was via Auckland, where mail could be laid up for months at a time. On the far side of the world from his family and friends, he depended very heavily upon their correspondence - which continued in a ceaseless flow throughout his exile in Australasia - and he felt very keenly that he was excluded from events at home. His loneliness was inevitable and immeasurable, so that he wrote to Jane almost immediately upon his arrival and begged her to remember that :

... not the minutest particulars about persons or things at home can ever be dull or uninteresting to me here. It is those very details, trifling as they seem, which enable one to realize home life vividly; and there is no pleasure like that to a lonely man, who has no friend to whom he can turn and pour forth his heart.

Elsewhere he added, 'I hope my friends will remember that I am still in the land of the living, and that such loneliness as mine is hard to bear.' Amongst his comments on this theme is one which is, perhaps, an unwitting epitaph on his life as a whole: 'But wishes and complaining are in vain; I have done my duty, and it was never promised me that I should be the happier for doing it, but only the better and purer.'² All his major decisions were made for such reasons - the call of duty or responsibility or humanity or religion -

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.49.

² Ibid.

but never for the tangible, earthly happiness sought by most ordinary human beings.

As far as his land was concerned he quickly displayed more practical sense than his advisers in London for he was not slow to observe the utmost importance of communications between the new settlements and the wild country around them. Roads in particular were vital, and the Arnold land was in two plots, one in wooded and relatively inaccessible parts of the Makara Valley, the other on steeply rising ground near to Government House. This he realised would eventually become quite valuable. The country section offered more difficulties for it was reached by a cart road to the Karori district, thence by a bridle path for about two miles down into the valley, and last over rough and wooded country for about half a mile. Clearly, it would need some considerable clearing and path-making before the section could become a reasonable proposition, although it did have the virtue of being fairly level and it was not heavily timbered. But despite his hopes he could not conceal from his family that the task was considerable :

The greatest drawback is that horrid Karori road, which is the only approach to Makara from Wellington. Oh for another General Wade! I think those lazy lobsters the soldiers, of whom there are 500 here, ought to be employed in road making, for they are of no earthly use else.

Curiously, Thomas made no further reference to James Bell, with whom he had contemplated a partnership. Perhaps he had been unable to contact him, or perhaps, growing in confidence once he could see the actual difficulties facing him, he had decided to survey his land and carry on alone. Whatever the reason, Thomas made his own plans,

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.48.

and quickly decided that if he could exchange the Makara plots for land nearer to a good road into Wellington, and therefore more easily accessible, he would save himself a great deal of work, and possibly make a better deal into the bargain. To this effect he decided to seek advice in Wellington, and it was suggested to him by Col. Wakefield that he should seek an exchange for some land off the Porirua Road, the best road, out of Wellington. Without ado he set off to survey this new area in the company of Captain Collinson, of the Engineers, and when he found that it was indeed level, accessible and only lightly timbered he decided to make the exchange at once. Confirmation from the Trustees in London would, in any case, have taken almost a year to conclude, so he assumed their acceptance and began to have the land cleared as soon as he could find workmen to do it. As events turned out, the Trustees rejected his proposal, and so wasted his work, but by that time he was already on the point of leaving for Australia. Even at this early stage, however, he was thinking of teaching as a means of earning his living; he was not a farmer, and certainly not a pioneer in the practical sense, so that it was inevitable that he should begin to consider how best to employ his obvious talents. He wrote to his mother in June :

I have often been revolving in my mind how I might turn to use, if possible, whatever of natural faculty or acquired knowledge I may have, and make these minister to the good of those amongst whom I am now to live. For I am well enough aware that I have no particular genius for farming, and that I am better fitted to teach little boys English History than to invent improved methods of cultivation or breed fat cattle. So I had been forming various schemes of getting together the neighbours'

children when I go to live in the bush, and teaching them, in short of making myself a sort of village pedagogue...

The Otago lesson had been well learned.

Fate intervened, in the form of Alfred Domett, the Colonial Secretary whom Thomas had already met. Domett told Thomas of a plan to build a college at Nelson, in accordance with an agreement made originally between the New Zealand Company and the Nelson settlers. One of the first requirements was to appoint a Principal, and Domett made it clear he thought Thomas the obvious choice, indeed, he almost offered the post. In addition, the college was to be secular in foundation, so that the Principal would have a completely free hand in planning it in whatever way he wished. Nothing could have been more welcome to Thomas's ears, or more appropriate to his needs, and nothing, it seemed, stood in his way except the mere formalities of ensuring the Company's agreement and the release of the eight thousand pounds agreed upon in the original undertaking. Instead of becoming a 'village pedagogue' he was being offered the post as Principal of a new College, which he could mould in whatever way he saw fit.

Surprised by joy at this dramatic change in his prospects he wrote home at once, in June 1848 :

What am I to say about this sudden change in my prospects? I only know that it is of little moment to me in what sort of employment I am engaged for the rest of my life, so only that I can feel that I am doing or trying to do the work of God... I can look forward with thankfulness and joy to the prospect of being enabled to train up young and opening souls in what I believe to be the ways of truth and peace. Almost my first thought, after Domett's proposal, was that if I got

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.54.

the appointment, perhaps that dear old Clough would come out and join in the work.

It is in the Evangelical note of this letter that the real Thomas Arnold is to be found, for although his 'Equator' letters appear to indicate a kind of agnosticism, what they in truth indicate is that despite his loss of belief in particular institutions as agents of good, he had not lost the habits of mind inculcated in him by his father. Thus he could relish the prospect of becoming the Principal of a secular College, in which he could 'do the work of God' while at the same time enjoying a sense of competition with the Bishop's High Church College at Auckland, for as he wrote to Clough, '... it is my fixed belief that until Education is taken out of the hands of the priests little will be done,'² and his remarks about the College at Auckland were utterly uncompromising: '... it would be no small satisfaction to me to counteract, as far as I could, the mischief which is being done by the Bishop's High Church and exclusive College at Auckland.'³

With this lift in his fortunes his confidence rose and he wrote to Clough in a tone of stability and ease not so evident in his earlier letters :

I have thought often of your jolly old countenance, and longed for a sight of it, especially when walking alone in the forests or among the hills of this beautiful country, where everything is so novel, and yet so immediately recalls everything beautiful one has seen in former times and in other countries. It is wonderful how soon the country winds itself about one's heart, and steals one's affections, partly from its own beauty and partly, perhaps, from the delightful sensations which living in such a

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.55.

² Ibid. p.58.

³ Ibid. p.55.

heavenly climate inspires. I have been here for more than a month...

Later in the month he moved out of Wellington to be nearer his section and begin the clearing work - work which he now thought he would never have to complete - and he lived temporarily at the home of William Swainson. During July and August he cleared land, felled trees and even leased ten acres of his section to a settler named Angel, with a clause allowing Angel to buy the land eventually at a fixed price of £2. per acre. Thomas envisaged continuing this process so as to have 'five or six families settled on my section alone...' Then he left the Swainsons, moved in with the Barrow family, bought a cow in calf, and made plans for planting his wheat and vegetables. Considering the problems of finding workmen to clear the land for him, and his lack of experience in such matters, he had made good progress, and clearly laid the basis for future action on the land should he leave it to become Principal of the new College. With all this already achieved he wrote home to his sister Frances: 'A sister to keep house for me is the only thing wanting..', but failing this, he decided he would take in a girl and boy to look after the house, while he looked after their education.

Then followed one of those curious co-incidences which make major events out of small incidents: one morning, shortly after Domett's proposal, he was working on his land when Godfrey Thomas, Capt. Grey and another officer approached him on horseback, dismounted and called to him. A few moments later an incredulous Thomas heard them offer him the post of Principal of a new College which

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.57.

Bishop Selwyn proposed to set up at Porirua, to run in tandem with the College at Auckland. He was flattered, amused, amazed by his good fortune, even though he had no inclination to accept Bishop Selwyn's offer. Whatever else the two propositions indicated they clearly showed the power of the Arnold name. As Thomas commented to his sister Frances : 'After this, Edward Whateley may well say that we Arnolds are born with silver spoons in our mouths.'¹ But the conjunction of the two offers pleased him greatly. There was never any doubt that he would reject the second offer for his hopes were still firmly based on the Nelson College where, with a completely free hand, he hoped 'to lay the foundations deep and wide of an institution which might one day spread the light of Religion and letters over the barbarous colonies and throughout the great archipeligo of the Pacific where hitherto only the white man's lust or his imbecile Theology have penetrated...'² Clearly, 'imbecile Theology' meant dogma, belief - the machinery of thought attached to the Anglican Church - and this he would have nothing to do with. When he wrote to his sister Frances, shortly after the second offer, he made his attitude quite clear :

... so I am in the ludicrous position of having two colleges thrown at my head at the same time! ... However, there can be no possible question on my part as to which I shall take. For to be obliged to teach Anglo-catholicism to unhappy juveniles, would infallibly make me sick, which would be highly indecorous in the Head of a College, would it not, my Skrat? Head of a College! to think that I, the Radical, the etc.etc. - should ever come to be classed in the same category with those dear old respectable Conservative pudding-headed worthies of the Hebdomadal Board! I₃ could laugh till I cried at the ludicrousness of the thought.³

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.62.

²Ibid. p.82.

³Ibid. p.62.

Perhaps it was too ludicrous, even for an Arnold, for as events turned out he did not become Principal of either College. He rejected Bishop Selwyn's offer (although the college was never founded), and never saw the establishment of the College at Nelson. His heady elation at being offered two colleges simultaneously was based on illusion.

Meanwhile the work of land clearing went on steadily. By the end of August a large part of the section was clear and he saw the first timbers of his house move into place. Two workmen felled his trees, and burnt the scrub, while he began to teach himself to play the violin, which had been sent out from England, and teach the Barrow children reading and arithmetic. In this latter process he showed a typical Arnold manner of proceeding, for he was not only astonished at their crude, superstitious beliefs, he also rejected the morality-based instruction they had previously been receiving. He began afresh, using literature not only as a means of instruction but also as a means of introducing beauty and nobility to their otherwise dull and harsh daily lives. He explained the problem in a letter to his sister and concluded by saying :

More than one of the ghost stories which they have told me in the most simple natural way, have something quite poetical and beautiful about them. For my part, I confess that it is rather a relief to me to find, that this faith in a particular Providence and in visitations and warnings from the unseen world, still holds its ground firmly. Real life wears such a harsh and forbidding aspect for the English poor, that one must rejoice if some belief or other, though it be but a superstitious one, remains to poetize and ennoble their daily life.

¹James Bertram, op.cit. pp.63-64.

Nevertheless, he persevered with them, and while he did so the preparations for the new college moved slowly, so slowly, in fact, that Governor Grey took action of his own: he proposed that the college should be set up almost immediately with money borrowed from local funds, on the sure trust that the Company would endorse the action in due course. For this purpose he suggested that Dillon Bell and Alfred Domett should travel to Nelson to make arrangements with the settlers, and find two houses in which a start could be made once the Principal had been elected. Thomas naturally gave his full support to the proposal, which seemed to bring the whole matter nearer to fruition. But it was not to be: three days later, before anything had been done in Nelson, Grey admitted to Thomas that his correspondence with the Company in London - which he should have consulted before he sent Domett and Bell to Nelson - made it clear that the prior consent of the Company was necessary before anything could be done. Since the fastest mail took four months in each direction no decision could be expected for almost a year. Thomas's hopes wilted. Grey, however, made a further suggestion: would Thomas become his Private Secretary? This created problems for he had a low opinion of colonial administrators in general and, on some issues, for Grey in particular,¹ but it was clear to him that by comparison with being a farmer in the bush the work of Private Secretary to the Governor would be civilised and more in keeping with his talents and training. The comforts of middle-class life were very dear to him and, in any case, the post

¹He opposed Grey's autocratic rule, which seemed not only overbearing but politically ill-advised. See James Bertram op.cit. pp. 72,98, 99.

would be merely a temporary position until the college was built at Nelson. So he gave the matter some consideration and even contemplated accepting the post, as he said to Clough :

I rather think I shall accept it, ... for it will enable me to see a great deal of New Zealand, and I would give it up the moment the college affair was settled, as Grey himself quite agreed with me that the college was the best and most useful employment I could have, both for myself and with a view to the good of the colony. It is unpleasant thus to see the time postponed, when one might be able to be of some use to Grey, whom I really like.

He made no immediate decision but kept the offer as a kind of insurance while he made a visit to Nelson to meet the settlers, view the location and generally see what he could do to help matters along. The college was still his first hope and wish and the least he hoped to do was to have a body of Trustees formed so as to be ready for action the moment the Company gave assent.

Accordingly he set off for Nelson less than a month later, on October 3rd, crossing Cook's Strait in a small boat belonging to Frederick Weld, with whom he stayed at his remote sheep-farm near to Cape Campbell and Flaxbourne. The isolation and desolation of the place overwhelmed him :

Here the day is rough and stormy; the wind is blowing great gusts from the South East, the surf is roaring upon the beach, rain falls, and the clouds are flitting along the sides of the bare desolate hills around this place... there is not a single human habitation of any kind within 15 miles distance...

His remembrance of Otago, a few miles further down the coast, was probably in his mind as his eyes swept the landscape. He was comforted by the prospect of becoming the Principal of a College,

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.83.

²Ibid. p.90.

in civilised surroundings, but the lonely, hostile country might well have been prophetic: almost as soon as he had settled into Weld's house the whole region was shaken by an earthquake:

For about a minute the bed was violently shaken from side to side; every plank in the house creaked and rattled, the bottles and glasses in the next room kept up a kind of infernal dance, and most of them fell. When the shock was past, there came a few spasmodic heavings, like long drawn breaths, and then all was still ...

By contrast, Nelson was everything he could have hoped: well-ordered, gracious and set in a beautiful region matched exactly by a marvellous climate:

The vine, the fig, the pomegranate, the melon, besides all our English fruits, ripen with luxuriance in the open air. This, of course, implies a hot sun; yet there is always a freshness in the air, which prevents that feeling of oppression and languor which heat so often causes in Europe. To a stranger (at least I found it so) the climate at first has a sort of intoxicating effect; you feel as if the burden of life and human cares were suddenly thrown off, and as if you had nothing now to do but to enjoy yourself ...²

Nelson was almost completely untouched by the earthquake, in fact Thomas's only cause for anxiety was the turn of events in England, under the shadow of revolutionary events in Europe during the summer of 1848. Still on the side of freedom fighters and political revolutionaries, he was particularly concerned over the deportation of an Irish nationalist, John Mitchell, who had been convicted of inciting his fellow Irishmen to rebellion. This led Thomas to denounce Lord John Russell's government, and Royalty, in a manner which suggests that his political views would be too radical

1 James Bertram, op. cit. p.91

2 Ibid. p.92

to be acceptable to the settlers of Nelson :

Each new account of the state of affairs in England makes me sadder and sadder. At the same time I feel deeply thankful that at the time when the crisis came, I had ceased to have any even the most trifling connexion with a government so contemptible and vile, as this has proved itself to be. How wicked is their prosecution of Mitchell, for expressions which right or wrong he had the perfect right to utter, and in which there are hundreds, myself among the number, who agree with him as to all the main points. What serious upright man does not think that Royalty is a delusion and a falsehood; and that as out of it no good can arise to the world any more, so it ought as speedily as possible to be swept from off the face of the earth? Does any one suppose that the Whigs care one farthing about Queen Victoria, or that their delicate feelings of loyalty are outraged by John Mitchell's language about her? No; but base hypocrites, knowing how unsafe their own position and that of their class is, who are rolling in wealth and luxury while millions are starving, try to prop up the whole rotten system by all means, fair or foul, and to keep things exactly as they are... Yet anarchy itself, which implies the agitations and movements of life, would be better than this Order, which is Death...

In this light Thomas's rejection of Grey's administration in New Zealand is hardly surprising for the nominal council, proposed by Grey, excluded every kind of democratic representation; in it Thomas saw the very worst elements of reactionary policies - of the very same kind as those in England, which aroused his keen opposition. His attitudes were quite clear : "Now it is well known," he wrote to his mother, "that the best and fittest men will not sit in a council as Grey's nominees, and the consequence is that the Legislative power of the country will be in the hands of the officials and a few tuft-hunting sycophants, who have not the confidence of the great body of the settlers."² If Thomas had ever seriously

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.96.

² Ibid. p.98.

contemplated accepting Grey's offer of the post of Private Secretary he now dismissed it. 'This conduct of Grey's alone,' he added, 'would hinder me from taking any employment under his Government.'¹ And much as he predicted, Grey did find some difficulty in finding men who were willing to sit on his council.

By the beginning of December, Thomas's hopes rested solely on the College at Nelson. But although he was interested in making a start the settlers were not; November gave way to December and nothing was done except for a decision, taken at a public meeting, that a further three months should elapse during which anyone with educational experience could write to the Governor to suggest ways and means of setting up the college. Three months virtual stagnation; Thomas's hopes dwindled. Two colleges had reduced to one, and instead of being very nearly Principal-elect he was nothing, indeed, he began to fear that in the event of an election amongst the settlers his radical views would militate against him.

Once again, however, the Arnold name proved its value, for several Nelson settlers approached him and asked him to undertake the education of their sons. For the first time he had a chance to take matters into his own hands: if a college was not, after all, to be set up in Nelson within a foreseeable time, he could at least set up his own school, in much the same way as his father before him. At once he began his plans: to borrow money from the bank, build a house, mortgage it to raise more capital, and then take in boarders.

¹James Bertram, *op.cit.* p.98.

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¹James Bertram, *op.cit.* p.98.

If the settlers would be willing to guarantee twenty boys, at five pounds a year each, and provide a rent-free house, he would be willing to leave Wellington and settle in Nelson. The prospect of fairly immediate action, within his own control, lifted his somewhat depressed spirits and he returned to Wellington in the New Year to await the outcome of his terms.

In January, 1849, he received a letter from the Nelson settlers offering him twenty boys at five pounds a year each, plus a free schoolroom. No mention was made of a house. The offer did, however, meet most of his requirements and he decided that if he could arrange for six boys from Wellington to come to him as boarders paying thirty five pounds a year he could manage to make his school financially viable, at least until such time as the College became established. So for the next two months he made preparations to leave Wellington and set up his school in Nelson, first by borrowing a sum of fifty pounds from his mother and then by loading all his books and goods on board the Ajax. Certainly, having once made up his mind to go he did not linger long in Wellington, and his friends Weld, Domett and Collinson gave him a relatively gay farewell, from the Anniversary Races to the Bachelor party, at which Thomas distinguished himself, in a manner of speaking :

There was a great deal of singing, and they made me take a considerable part in it; indeed I am, though rather against my will, one of the established nightingales of the place. This does not say much, you will think, for the state of musical knowledge in Wellington, and indeed it does not. However, there are one or two songs that I can sing with a kind of go, 'verve' as the French call it, that has certain effect.

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.105.

And it did: his song raised more than a few eyebrows among the officers present. A month later he unlocked the door of his new home in Nelson, appropriately called 'Wycliffe Cottage', unpacked his books, hung a picture of Jenny Lind on the wall, and rejoiced at having his own fireside for the first time. All he lacked, he concluded, was a wife :

All would go swimmingly here, if I had got a wife. But where is that necessity of life to be procured? ...However, I mean for the present to take your advice, dearest Mother, and be patient; it does not do to plunge into marriage with the eyes shut.

All of which sounds as if this kind of dialogue between mother and son was much more frequent than the remaining letters suggest. But a new contentment took possession of him and he settled down to read and prepare for the day when his first pupils would arrive. Just as his father had done before him, he took to teaching because he needed an income, and he did not disguise the fact either from himself or from his family. His father had talked of 'cutting blocks with a razor' which work 'put him in the receipt of an income,' and Thomas, too, remarked on the dullness of the work: it was dull 'but better than digging' and it was necessary 'for the sake of the victuals.' In other words, he quickly began to lose the temporary satisfaction he had felt initially as the practical difficulties mounted. The first was in the location of the school, for the building was a temporary structure and scheduled for demolition; even in good repair it would hardly have been appropriate for the purpose. However, the boys arrived on March 26th, bringing their

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.108.

first quarter's fees in advance, and the teaching began. In all there were nineteen pupils, eighteen day boys and one boarder, which would have provided Thomas with about thirty one pounds.

They were a very mixed set, as he commented :

The boarder's name is St. Hill; he is a boy of twelve, brother to the Sheriff of Wellington; a little forward, but good au fond and very intelligent. The day scholars are a very heterogeneous set; as might be expected, not one of them is decidedly clever, though several are anxious to learn and take pains. The most advanced of them is Richmond, son of Major Richmond, the Superintendent of this place, and he is very far from bright. Only two boys learn Latin at present, nor shall I ever lay much stress upon it, unless in the case of a boy who I think has a real talent for languages, or whom I think fit to be trained up to the life of a student; and such boys are everywhere rare aves. But in a colony, where life is so practical, to take the trouble of dinning Latin and Greek into the heads of ordinary boys, would still be more absurd than in England. French I mean to make my grand cheval de bataille, as being the most easy and direct road to an acquaintance with modern literature and modern thought...

As he had done with the Barrow children so he did with his new pupils, trying to relate his teaching to their real needs, in much the same way as his father had done at Laleham.

Gradually a second, and larger difficulty began to press upon him: whatever New Zealand might offer to a pioneering spirit it certainly lacked all those amenities which made English life so civilised to Thomas; always books were a problem, not only for the school but also for his own studies, until he began to consider whether he could stay away from Europe much longer: "... in attempting to study, I find the difficulty of procuring books here a serious evil, and it will increase as I go on. I think it very possible that this alone will force me to return to Europe before many years are over..."²

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.118.

²Ibid. p.116.

He had been in New Zealand for just less than a year.

But books were not the only difficulty; money troubles began to press upon him more urgently. It was clear that only a larger school could provide him with a larger income, so he took out a five-year lease on a large house in Nelson, to make it both home and school, with a much larger number of boarders. And still he lacked the kind of close companionship which he believed only a wife could give. 'The country is a pleasant country,' he wrote to Clough, 'a beautiful country, but fitter for married people with families than for young single men.'¹ In this matter he was probably right for a new, somewhat raw society could hardly offer young men of Thomas's tastes and interests any satisfaction: the family was an essential building unit. There was no counterpart for Rugby, Oxford, London in Wellington and Nelson and when Thomas heard that the Trustees for the Arnold land, in London, had turned down his exchange of land, and so nullified all that he had done, his interest in pioneering work evaporated. His farming efforts had achieved nothing, his school was barely giving him an income, and the Nelson College seemed farther away than ever: New Zealand seemed determined to resist him. With the exception of an article or two written for the local paper, and a paper on Education, he had had no impact on the colony at all. Even though he moved into his new house - still unfinished - in August, his financial state remained the same: the fees were hard to extract from parents. Gradually he began to yearn for the security and stability he had once had at Oxford "... to have

¹James Bertram, *op.cit.* p.124.

opportunity for uninterrupted study, that is now almost my only wish; and I do not so much care where the place is."¹ That last remark highlights his whole feeling about New Zealand, and even about pioneering colonies in general: already he was weary of the endless practical struggle to make a living in the hard conditions of the colony. His weariness was compounded by a further problem: "I would infinitely prefer £150 a year paid regularly, to £300 a year, which I had the trouble of collecting."² It is not surprising then that when the New Zealand Company asked him to act on their behalf as an arbitrator in land disputes he accepted the offer, even though he felt totally unqualified for it; it was extra income after all, and there was no doubt that he would be paid.

It was during the depressed time of August that he happened to hear of a new school being built in Hobart Town, Tasmania. In despair he wrote off for information. Fortunately he had an indirect link with the colony through A.P. Stanley's younger brother, Charles, who was working with the Governor in Tasmania, and it was to him that Thomas sent his letter. The reply came back within ten days and brought not one but two invitations: the first, from Stanley, urged Thomas to leave New Zealand if only to visit Tasmania, but the second, from Governor Denison himself, not only added to Stanley's invitation and made Government House open to Thomas for his visit, but also offered him the post of Inspector of Schools, with a salary of £400 a year. Thomas could hardly credit his good fortune - here was an offer worth £100 a year more than he could have hoped.

¹James Bertram, *op.cit.* p.127.

²*Ibid.*

Clearly Governor Denison was keen to recruit Thomas and he, in his turn, required no further encouragement."Shakespeare says 'What's in a name?" he wrote, "but our father's name has been to us, not only a source of proud and gentle memories, but actually and literally better and more profitable than houses and land." ¹ Within a few days he had made his plans: he hoped to be away from Nelson by the end of the month. Less than two weeks later, at the beginning of September, he had arranged for a recent immigrant, Mr.Taylor, to take over the schoolhouse and the boys were sent away shortly afterwards. Having thus broken his ties with the colony he once again enjoyed the excitement of looking forward to a new beginning. Mrs.Taylor excited in his volatile imagination the same kind of response he had once reserved for Jenny Lind - she had a dark, compelling beauty Thomas could not resist: "She has the dark liquid eye of the Creole," he wrote home, "complexion dark, features good, and something in the countenance singularly sweet and attractive. She is one of those very few women who make you feel, the instant you see them, that you would go through fire and water for one smile from such eyes, and be well repaid." ² He could not know that within a few months he would feel the same about yet another woman, but one who was, for once, within reach.

In the waiting-time he received a box of letters and presents from his family, including a letter from A.H.Clough, and his reply

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.131.

² Ibid. p.134.

shows how clearly Thomas needed to serve, to follow rather than to lead, as if his father's influence had somehow prevented him from developing a very necessary kind of independence. After commenting briefly on Clough's poem The Bothie, he went on :

I do think that if I live, I shall some day be at work with you, or under you. I shall gravitate to you across the oceans that divide us. For I feel now as if I could put an entire trust not only in your genius but in your fortitude about which alone I had formerly any doubts. You will again, be my 'Hieland oracle' as you used to be at the Decade...

Clearly, Thomas was so fitted to be a disciple.

At the end of September, as he had promised, he allowed the Taylors to move into his schoolhouse. They offered to accommodate him for the remaining three weeks until his ship sailed, but when he discovered that to do this Mrs. Taylor had spent the night sleeping in the school-room itself he moved out and spent his last weeks with the Bells. Still he had not received all his dues from the parents of his pupils but with the sale of his furniture and his thirty guinea fee from the New Zealand Company he managed to settle all his debts. Dillon Bell arranged to finance Thomas's voyage to Tasmania, until such time as he could be repaid. He left Nelson on October 19th 1849, after a farewell dinner the night before, given in his honour by his friends and held at the Wakate Hotel. As usual on such occasions polite pleasantries were proposed on all sides but the final, impromptu toast made by Bell himself was to 'Education, and the memory of Dr. Arnold.'

From Nelson Thomas sailed across the Cook Strait for the last time, and eventually arrived in Wellington on November 2nd., where he

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.142.

stayed with Alfred Domett, before sailing on board the William Alfred, bound for Sydney, at the beginning of December. A little over a month later he arrived in Hobart Town.

In all, what had his twenty months' stay in New Zealand achieved? In strictly utilitarian terms - nothing: the original Arnold land sections were as undeveloped as when he had arrived; his school had been too short-lived to have had anything more than a fleeting impact on the minds of a few boys; the colleges, from which he had once hoped so much, had progressed not at all. He may have influenced future educational policy slightly with his articles on the subject, but generally the colony had hardly noticed his presence. He, however, had been affected by the colony. The Otago incident was a foretaste of what the next year and a half would be, for in his various sallies and retreats he grew to understand himself more clearly and to recognise that his talents were intellectual and reflective. The heat was taken out of his radical thinking without destroying his natural empiricism. In a sense Thomas was an intellectual radical, not an active revolutionary, for he loved and needed an ordered society, he respected the hierarchy of moral and intellectual excellence - hence his obeisance to Clough and later to Newman, and though he was able to analyse he could not so successfully synthesise: he began several projects but carried none far beyond the beginning; he began in hope and ended in disillusionment. New Zealand helped him to extend his course of self-discovery, begun during his undergraduate days in Oxford, so that while it was his farthest geographical point away from his beginnings in England, it was also the point of his physical and spiritual return.

CHAPTER FIVE.Tasmania, and Julia Sorell.

The William Alfred set sail from Wellington on January 2nd. 1850 bound for Sydney, and battled its way to the Australian coast against a fierce headwind. Apart from the pitching and rolling which made a miserable journey of it, Thomas found that his cabin companion was an unpleasant and "very ugly Hebrew" who turned out to be "an outrageous snob". This was in part offset by the presence of two young ladies by the name of Gryll, whom Thomas hoped might be distant relatives of his on the Cornish side of the family. One of them was, as he described her, "an exceedingly pretty, indeed a beautiful girl", but on enquiry he was disappointed to find that she was in no way related to the family. This episode nonetheless provided him with some pleasant speculations during the otherwise fearful journey, until he reached Sydney, where he transferred to the steamer "Shamrock" which, because of the same strong winds, ploughed steadily south along the coast, with nearly all the passengers except Thomas suffering from sea-sickness, so that it was not until the 9th of January that he caught his first sight of Port Phillip, at that time the port of Melbourne, which lies nine miles inland on the river Yarra. He was not impressed with the city, finding it :

dirty, dusty, and irregular ... Yet it is an extraordinary place in point of rapid growth; the settlement is but 14 or 15 years old, and the town contains 12,000 inhabitants. The emigration from home is very great; yesterday and the day before two English ships arrived, bringing more than 500 emigrants.

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.172.

Within an hour or so of his arrival in the town he had good reason to understand why it looked so dusty and dirty; he walked up to signal staff hill to see the panorama spread out around him, and while he was reflecting that no country looked as inviting and beautiful as England he was caught in a severe storm, which he soon realised was a dust storm :

Before I could reach the town, the storm broke over me; but like the Sarsar in the Curse of Kehama, from its womb there came forth, not rain, but dense clouds of dust. Seen from the signal staff, the town, enveloped in a dense cloud of brown dust, looked horrible. When I got into the streets, I could not see twenty, sometimes not five yards before me, and the sky was quite hidden. Choked, bewildered, and exceedingly dirty ... I took refuge in an inn and diluted the dust that I had swallowed with copious beer.

Three days later, on January 12th, he left Port Phillip, and sailed into Launceston on the northern coast of Van Dieman's Land the next day. Unlike the flat plains of Victoria the countryside around Launceston presented a comforting appearance, with many similarities with parts of Britain :

Mountains again! those dear old friends, the sight of which is always a comfort to me. To the right, the land stretched away in a bold, rough outline from Launceston heads to the North west cape; to the left clouds concealed its form. Soon the lighthouse came in sight, then the white beacons that mark the entrance of the Tamar. We entered the river, and soon were in a beautiful valley, one or two miles wide, bounded by wooded hills². The country reminded me much of parts of Monmouthshire...

In this more contented state of mind he took a room for one night at the Ship Inn, in Launceston, before catching the 4 o'clock mail coach on the morning of January 14th. He arrived at his destination, Hobart Town, at 7 o'clock in the evening. Once here he was amongst friends, for on the morning of January 15th he was met by his cousin,

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.173.

² Ibid. pp.173-174.

John Buckland, and moved into the Buckland's school house, in Hutchins School, until such time as he could find more permanent accommodation of his own. So he settled into life in Van Dieman's Land with greater ease than in New Zealand, for he was, no doubt, reminded of so many family ties as he delivered his luggage to the Buckland's home: Matthew had been taught by his uncle, John Buckland, at the small school in Laleham, and Thomas too had received instruction there. Not among strangers, but with relatives, and with a secure post waiting to be taken up, he had good reason to feel that his arrival in Van Dieman's Land marked a new phase in his life. One fact is certainly clear: he had firmly decided that his real role was that of teacher not as a radical pioneer, and believed that he was partly on the way back to England. As he wrote to his mother as early as November 1849 :

I look upon Hobart Town as one step on the road to England. Tho' when the other steps will be taken, one cannot exactly foresee. I count myself fortunate in that my education, and a studious turn, which in spite of my laziness, is, I think, natural to me, have provided me with a trade by which I can be pretty sure of getting a livelihood in any English country... a schoolmaster, like a carpenter, can generally find work wherever he goes.

But other comparisons between Van Dieman's Land and New Zealand need to be made, for there were factors at work in Van Dieman's Land which accelerated the resurgence of Thomas's middle-class values and completed the dissolution of his earlier, radical opinions. The first of these was the composition of the island's population, for it had long been a penal colony. By 1850 there were roughly equal numbers of free settlers and convicts. Governor Denison apparently

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.155-156.

defended the system of transportation, unlike other Governors, so that while Thomas lived on the island he too saw, and came to loathe, the hoisting of the red flag signalling the arrival of yet one more shipload of hapless convicts for whom Van Dieman's Land was merely an alternative form of prison. As Douglas Woodruff has described it the conditions in such colonies at the beginning of Victoria's reign were harsh :

When the Queen came to the throne there were some 30,000 convicts in Australia, the larger half in New South Wales, the rest in Van Dieman's Island. The free population was hardly more numerous than the convicts, and relied upon the labour of the convicts, who were assigned as labourers to individual masters ... The convicts were swept into the hulks at the rate of some 4,000 a year, and came from the ranks of the very poor, the victims of poverty and criminal offences ... During the years of servitude a man might find an easy master. There were many cases where wives or other relatives managed to get their husbands or kinsfolk assigned to them. But there was no security, the status was servile, and the general run of masters were harsh. They were themselves struggling under primitive conditions, and while they might try to attach their servants to themselves by good treatment few responded. It was easier for masters to send convicts before a magistrate, himself an owner of convict labour, and get them a lashing. The lash saved time and did not interrupt the work of the farm like imprisonment, but it bred a special vindictiveness ... for those who rebelled, by idle ways or insolent looks, from the monotonous grind of chained labour, there were Norfolk Island in the Pacific and Port Arthur in Van Dieman's Land.

Thomas, as Inspector of Schools in Van Dieman's Land was once again one of the rich class, with, in effect, a servant class providing the wealth of the property-owning classes; he was an educated man in a population that was relatively uneducated, so that his financial and intellectual superiority was even more marked than it had been three or four years earlier in Oxford. He did, however, by virtue

¹ Douglas Woodruff, "Expansion and Emigration", Early Victorian England 1830-1865, ed. G.M. Young, 2 vols. London 1934, II, pp.376-377.

of his office, have the opportunity to mitigate the problems caused by poverty and lack of education, so that his reforming zeal had a more practical outlet than it had ever had in New Zealand. In short, he was able to reform without having to sacrifice himself unnecessarily in order to do it.

The last factor was his meeting with Julia Sorell, which had little to do with Van Dieman's Land, but would not have come to anything if he had not been Inspector of Schools.

On January 15th Thomas moved his luggage to Hutchins School and at once went off to Government House with John Buckland to see Andrew Clarke, the Governor's Private Secretary. The meeting was short; he was then shown in to meet Governor Denison himself, and his first reaction was generally favourable, though it wavered a little in later months. He commented :

He is rather short but strongly built, and with a solid compact brow, and intelligent but unimaginative eye, which you see so often in men of science. He has a straight forward decisive manner of delivering himself, which I like. He spoke generally of the duties of my office, and said that he would talk over the subject with me at greater length on future occasions.

Despite this generally favourable response there are hints in the description which proved to be shrewd, particularly the reference to Denison's intelligence without imagination, and the strength of determination - both factors which played their part later in relations between the two men.

Immediately the interview was over Thomas was shown into the office of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Bicheno and then on to Mr. Nairn the acting Inspector of Schools. He found them both to be congenial

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.175.

men who promised to be pleasant colleagues to work with :

Bicheno is an immensely fat jolly looking old man, rather a bon vivant I believe, but with literary tastes. In a minute or two we got into conversation about things in general; and the old fellow talked very well. Then I went to Mr. Nairn, who has been acting Inspector in my absence; he expressed himself as being delighted at my arrival, for the work of two offices (he is Assistant Comptroller of Convicts) had been very burdensome to him. I found him an agreeable intelligent man, ready to give me all the information in his power...

These introductions over he returned home to Buckland's resolved to follow Nairn's advice that he should familiarise himself with the papers in his office as quickly as possible. This was clearly advice he took very seriously, as the evidence of his industry during the next few weeks shows.

On the Thursday of his first week, 17th January, he was called to meet Mrs. Stanley, whose husband Charles Stanley, had first received Thomas's enquiry about the school in Hobart. Thomas had, in fact, received the reply six days after Stanley's death; the slow communications between Van Dieman's Land and New Zealand being responsible for this bizarre event. Thomas's visit, then, was a sad occasion both for himself and for Mrs. Stanley for whom the arrival of an Arnold must have evoked many memories that were by then painful to recall. Thomas's description of the meeting is sufficiently vivid to deserve quoting in full :

She had been out for a drive, and was lying on a sofa, with her bonnet on. I went up and shook hands with her; Clarke went away; and I sat down on a low stool by her side. Tears are never far distant from the eyes of an exile; and had it not been for the fear of agitating her, I could have wept like a child to see that pale wan face, and to mark the twitch of agony that sometimes came over her features when speaking of her Charles or the Bishop,

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.176.

whom she had loved like a father.¹ We talked of them all, and she told me of many circumstances respecting the Bishop's death which I had not yet heard, having only seen it in the newspapers. She said that it was a pleasure to her to see me, and that she hoped I should come often to see her before she left for England, which you may be sure I shall do. What is there that a man would not do, to lighten such a sorrow as hers by a straw's weight? She is very thin, and very very weak, and could not speak above a whisper; so as soon as I thought she might be getting tired, I went away...²

That very evening Thomas attended a completely opposite kind of function: he and John Buckland dined with the Governor and Mrs. Denison at Government House which, considering that the Governor had been curtailing social engagements in view of his wife's impending confinement, was something of an honour. It indicated, at least, that Thomas was by name and by position at once accepted among the Governor's circle. The following evening, Friday 18th, Thomas enjoyed the much larger party given by Mr. Bicheno and at which he was introduced to many more of the island's social group :

Mr. Ecclestone was there; the Head of the High School, the same which poor Froude was to have had; Mr. Dobson, the Mathematical master, a bashful Johnian; Clarke; John Buckland; Nairn; a Mr. Fraser; Mr. Sorell, son of a former Governor; and Dr. Lillie, head of the Scotch Church here, a well informed and apparently liberal man...³

His first attendance at an official function came soon after, at the opening of the new High School by the Governor, and after that he settled in rapidly to his new responsibilities. In all by the end of January he had made the acquaintance of a great many of the Governor's circle, been accepted into their social round and begun to make up his mind about them, as he reported home to his mother :

I like the Governor; he is brave and truth telling. I like

¹ Edward Stanley, Bishop of Norwich, who died on Sept. 6th 1849, had been a good friend of Dr. Arnold and the whole family.

² James Bertram, op.cit. p.175.

³ Ibid. p.177.

Clarke; though with something of the vivacity and instability of an Irishman, he is really able, and I think much might be made of him. I like Bicheno. Of Mrs. Stanley I have spoken. I like Lady Denison, though I have seen little of her on account of her condition; today I was to have dined with them, but have just been put off on account of 'Lady Denison's indisposition', and I am expecting to hear of the advent of the little stranger every hour. I like Mr. Palmer; a good old hard working Protestant clergyman. Mrs. Palmer knows the Cookes at Plymouth. I have only just seen the Bishop, so I will say nothing about him, but I do not like many things I hear of him. I do not like the Revd. Mr. Bryan, an Anglo Catholic prig, with whom I have had to do officially. I do not much like the officers. I like Mrs. John Buckland; she is kind and gentle mannered, and not in the least unlady like.

So Thomas summarised his new acquaintances. All this he had felt and thought since he landed in Launceston; he had been in Van Dieman's Land little more than two weeks.

The educational tasks facing the new Inspector were largely those of taking the existing schools, with their various allegiances, creating some kind of uniform system, importing or training adequate teachers, and finding the money to pay them an acceptable wage; in short he had the task of building a viable education system. There were seventy five schools at that time receiving government aid, of which fifty nine were Anglican, four Catholic, eight undenominational run on the lines of the British and Foreign Schools Society, two schools for Infants, and the Queen's Orphan Schools, which were run by the Convict Department since the children's parents were either convicts or dead. Such schools received aid from the government on the penny-a-day system, which had some of the same iniquitous results as the Revised Code in England, falling most meanly on the very schools which needed the most financial support. Other than government help the schools had only spasmodic public contributions to rely upon, and these were usually of a local nature, with the same kind of limitations as the penny-a-day method.

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.177.

Beyond these were the imposition of school fees, with obvious consequences. In all it was a system which provided a kind of educational service but it did nothing to attract teachers of any quality, nor did it provide a service of any quality. It did, however, offer a challenge to Thomas for since he was directly responsible to the Governor he had considerable opportunity to devise an educational system for the whole island; much depended upon his ability to find allies in the Legislative Council to support his views. Another key factor was his personal relationship with Governor Denison. All the evidence shows that he plunged into his task with energy and determination; by the beginning of March 1850 he had made his first tour of the island's schools, moving from one to the other with great speed; on March 28th he wrote:

Yesterday I was visiting schools in the town most of the day. Tomorrow I am going to ride to Gravelly Beach, 12 miles down the Tamar, and back. On Monday I go to Longford; which most likely I shall not be able to leave before Thursday morning, as there is a good deal of work to be done in that neighbourhood. Thursday to Campbell town; Friday to Avoca, Saturday to Swan Port; Sunday or Monday back to Campbell town; this is the way in which I have laid it out. On Tuesday the 9th, to Oatlands; whence I had intended to have diverged to Bothwell and Hamilton, and so to Hobart Town by way of New Norfolk.

By the middle of the year he had visited all the schools receiving financial aid from public funds, except for a number in the north which were so inaccessible that they could only be reached by boat. At the end of the year he produced his first report which was right out of the Arnold mould for having made an assessment of the educational provision on the island he stated his observations upon

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.180

it with directness and candour. His first observation was that the buildings were inadequate: since there appeared to have been no common policy or central financing system classes were conducted in buildings which were, for various reasons, convenient rather than appropriate. As he had discovered, some were public property, some were privately owned premises, some were on Church land, and some were the churches themselves, such as in the village of Franklin where the classes were taken in the Anglican Chapel until 1850, and were then moved into a small room adjoining the chapel. Since the penny-a-day system applied only to teachers' salaries, whereby the government paid approximately one penny for each child taught each day, no aid was provided to pay rent on the school premises. The consequences were obvious, as Thomas reflected, and remarked in his report, that the largest part of government money spent on Education in England was devoted to the provision of suitable buildings. Clearly, until the problem of the buildings was satisfactorily resolved the standards of education must remain uneven throughout the island almost regardless of other developments. He therefore proposed that at least part of the local vote should be directed towards the erection of suitable buildings. Similarly he argued for greater central control over the appointment and dismissal of teachers. In general, the denominational schools, which formed the majority, were largely directed by the local clergymen who had the right to appoint and dismiss the masters and frame the syllabuses. Thomas proposed that appointments and dismissals should be the government's responsibility, which would also have the secondary effect of giving the Inspector and the Governor some degree of control over the quality

of the teaching done in the schools. The next observation in the report was a natural sequel to the two which had preceded it: the salaries paid to teachers were both too low and subject to fluctuation. This fluctuation was affected both by the number of children attending the school each day and by the size of the local subscription; either way the amounts were never very great, were always uncertain, and could never attract any teacher with good qualifications. It is not surprising therefore that he found most of the teachers competent only in reading, writing and arithmetic, all at a low level, while some were falsifying their registers in order to claim higher government payments. Five schools were in the charge of ex-convicts. The Launceston Examiner for January 5th, 1848, pointed out the dangers of employing ex-convicts as teachers: "Some of the teachers drawn from the chain gangs have of course resumed old habits: one indulges in liquor, another in offensive language, another is in the habit of instructing the pupils to play cards during school hours."¹ Last of all was his observation that more teaching aids were needed. In all the report was a strong indictment of the island's educational system when viewed through English eyes, but from the available evidence it seems that there were no immediate or dramatic results; little was done to implement the report's recommendations, except for the decision that no-one under sentence could become a schoolmaster. Thus Thomas's later reports, in 1850-51 and 1851-52, repeatedly drew attention to the low salaries of the teachers, the poor standard of the teaching and the inadequate buildings.

¹ Quoted by P.A. Howell, Thomas Arnold the Younger in Van Diemen's Land, Sydney 1964, p.12n.

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But reform was slow, indeed, between 1850 and 1852 the teachers' lot worsened as gold-rush fever induced rapid inflation which steadily devalued their salaries, while school populations increased.

But if Thomas was disheartened by the inertia of the Government in educational matters he was compensated in an altogether different way. Of all the passions which had combined to drive him away from England and Oxford the most immediately powerful had been his spiritual emptiness, which clearly had considerable emotional undertones. His reforming zeal had not survived his disappointments in New Zealand, for in the excitement of preparing for and taking up his new post as Inspector he had also quietly assumed the mantle of respectability and responsibility which such a position implied. He had not time to think of descending with the labouring classes and working with them, he saw a new class of labourers - the convicts - who were not simply innocent poor. Nor did he write gleefully to Clough in politically radical terms, but properly accepted his new role. But the main reason for his change of heart was his love for Julia Sorell. Exactly how he first met her is not entirely clear, but it seems most likely that it was a party given by one Mrs. Stevenson, in Hobart Town, sometime during March 1850, perhaps within a month of his arrival on the island. The attraction on his part was instant, and only his own words are adequate to indicate his feelings; in April, less than a month after their first meeting he wrote :

O my Julia I shall never forget how beautiful and captivating you were that night; nor what a rage I was in at finding you had gone home without me. After all, it was my fault, for leaving my place by your side, where I was as happy as a prince, in order to ask Mrs. Chapman to dawdle through an insufferable quadrille. But the truth is, I did not know then that you had broken off your engagement with Elliott and I therefore thought it hardly fair to you to remain by your side as much as my heart prompted me. My

prudence was of little use however; for I could not help looking at you every instant, and envying every one to whom you vouchsafed a word or smile; so much so that some young lady, Miss Swan I think, declared that she would never dance opposite Mr. Arnold again, for instead of looking towards his 'vis-a-vis' his eyes were always turned towards - you can guess whom.

In typical fashion Thomas hurled himself headlong into his love affair, without reflection, without prudence, without pause; and there were reasons to give him pause. Julia's father had been introduced to Thomas at the party given by Mr. Bicheno on the night of January 18th; his father, Julia's grandfather, had been ^{Lieutenant} Governor of the colony, but between 1816 and 1823 he had lived openly with his mistress at Government House, and the mistress herself had previously deserted her husband in order to elope with Governor Sorell. Julia's father was apparently an honest and sober man, but his wife had deserted him for an army officer and was never seen again. Julia, in other words, had both grandfather and mother as models of headstrong and impassioned behaviour, which in some degree she copied. Her name had been linked with one Governor, Sir John Eardley-Wilmot, and with another Governor's son, Captain A.C. Fitzroy and, as James Bertram was commented, she had had "two more or less public engagements to Chester Eardley-Wilmot and the mysterious Elliott, which Tom knew about."² Whether such a family history reveals anything of importance it is a comment on the strains of colonial life during the pioneer days. Perhaps this is why Thomas brushed it all on one side, for he certainly knew of Julia's previous love affairs, this was Van Dieman's Land, it was not Victorian England :

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.183.

² Ibid. p.233.

You know the Fitzroys, dearest, do you not? I remember hearing a story which rather amused me, - though I dare say it was not true, or perhaps only half true - that at the time of Capt. Fitzroy's last visit (April 1849) after he had gone away, you said, in fun of course, that you felt quite ashamed of yourself for having gone on with him in the way you did, and that you should go down into the country, and rusticate there for some months as punishment; which you accordingly did. But the good people of Hobart Town are such capital hands at improving and embellishing, that I dare say you will not recognize in the above much of what you actually said.

Poor Thomas! Trusting, innocent, often finding head and heart at variance, even here trying gently to exact some measure of truth, yet not really wanting to hear it. If he was amused by the story at all he must have had a very nervous laugh out of it, and all the time there lurked in his heart a doubt about the reaction at Fox How to news of this particular love, so that he quickly urged Julia to write to Fox How, by writing a letter that he could enclose in one of his own. But at all other times his heart continued to sing, revellingⁱⁿ his new-found happiness: "My own Julia, you cannot think how unspeakably happy your love makes me. The first thing in the morning, and the last at night, comes that sweet thought, my Julia is mine, and I am hers. I am prouder that if I was king of the world."² So he travelled about the island during March and April, noting the condition of school buildings, evaluating the quality of the teaching, and writing daily letters to Julia in Hobart Town. It is evident that they must have declared their engagement within days of meeting, for on March 30th Thomas remarked in one of his letters from the north of the island: "Yesterday I saw ... no less a person than Mr. Barrow.

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.179.

² Ibid. p.180.

I was rather curious to see whether he would say anything about our engagement; but he did not say a word about it."¹ Almost certainly Julia's breaking off at least two previous engagements added fire to Thomas's impatience. As he travelled round the island's schools on his first inspection he wrote to her daily, planning his route almost from post office to post office so as to be able to send and receive those vital letters. Julia, in Hobart Town, was basking in the first blush of her success in captivating the new Inspector of Schools so dramatically; she obviously had no intention of retiring modestly until he returned from his tour of duty, but carried on with her round of parties and dances, and tempted Thomas to minimise his work in order to be with her. To the conscientious but madly-in-love Thomas she posed almost insoluble problems, as he pointed out to her :

I shall come down to Lady Denison's ball, as I said, if I am invited; but perhaps Sir William may not choose that an invitation should be sent to me, as he may wish that I should finish all my work before I return. Yet I could visit Bothwell and Hamilton almost as conveniently from Hobart Town as on the way back. But you will see dearest, that it is necessary to keep on good terms with 'the powers that be', especially as I am only recently appointed.²

His desire to get back to Julia in Hobart was a powerful incentive to him to complete his school tour with all possible speed, but his conscientious nature would not allow him to compromise his work for his love, so that even simple adjustments of his work schedule, arranged so that he might spend a few extra hours with her, made him pause and excuse himself with the bashfulness of a schoolboy :

¹ T. Arnold to Julia, March 30th 1850, Moorman MS., TL.

² James Bertram, op.cit. p.181.

But I do hope and trust that the Great Mogul who rules the destinies of V.D.Land, will not be so bearish as to grudge me the pleasure of coming down and enjoying my Julia's society for a very little while, even before my work is all completed. I suppose he must have been in love himself, once; if so great a man could ever stoop to such frivolities.¹

There was no doubt that Thomas was passionately in love with Julia: all the time he was away from her he dreamed of the bliss her presence would confer on him, and having imagined that he was seated beside her, gazing at her "...till, like Niobe, I stiffened into stone. But that is a false simile; the more I looked at you the more of life and light should I draw from that radiant and beloved countenance."² Despite his passion it is also clear that he had some tender misgivings about his family's reaction to her and his subsequent letters, especially after their marriage, contained many passages designed to endear them to her by reporting her endearment to them. Nonetheless, his first purpose was to marry her - she had broken off engagements before - and in this his touch was both tactful and sure for he gave her complete freedom to follow her own inclinations about how she conducted herself while yet laying upon her the obligation to do nothing that could injure his feelings :

Do not stay away from parties, dearest, on my account, if it would give you pleasure to go to them. I know you would not outstep the limits which persons in our relative position ought to observe; therefore I can have no wish that you should deprive yourself of anything that would give you pleasure merely because I was not there to share it with you... But act in all these things according to your own sense of what is right and fit, and you may be sure I shall be well pleased with whatever you do.³

It was a technique reminiscent of Dr. Arnold's injunctions to his Rugby schoolboys, it made no specific demands but a host of implied

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.181.

² Letter to Julia, March 1850, Moorman MS., TL.

³ James Bertram, op.cit. p183.

general ones, and it worked, at least they were married only two months later on June 13th 1850. That day was also the anniversary of Dr. Arnold's birthday.

The ceremony was conducted by Dr. Bedford in the Old Cathedral Church of St. David, in Hobart Town. Andrew Clarke was Thomas's best man, and the two of them rode to church in Mr. Bicheno's carriage. Before the service Julia was baptised in the vestry then, a newly-admitted member of the Anglican Church, she moved into the nave accompanied by her sisters Augusta and Ada as bridesmaids for the actual wedding service. It was short for as Thomas commented, "Dr. Bedford, like Uncle Trevenen, had the good sense to leave out a good part of the service."¹ It is quite likely that Thomas's approval was as much a reflection on his haste or eagerness to have the formalities concluded as it is a comment on his religious or theological objections to the content of the ceremony. After the service they left St. David's in a carriage loaned by Dr. Bedford and proceeded to the wedding-breakfast laid out in Julia's home. Eighteen guests were gathered around the table, Mr. Bicheno presided over the usual speeches and rituals, Julia duly wept bridal tears, and at 1.30 p.m. she and Thomas left, once more in Dr. Bedford's carriage, for their own home on the New Town Road some two miles out of Hobart. From a description Thomas made of it about a year later it seems to have been a four-roomed stone-built house with a drawing room, dining room, bedroom and nursery on the front-of-house level linked by a staircase leading down to the back of the house to the

¹James Bertram, *op.cit.* p.185.

kitchen and pantry. The whole stood in something over a quarter of an acre of land with a kitchen garden, front garden, various paths and borders fronting on to the main Launceston road. In all it was a solid and convenient house for Thomas and Julia to begin their married life. It was a very different kind of dwelling from that hut in which Thomas had settled - or tried to settle - in New Zealand, and instead of a picture of Jenny Lind he had his own wife to share his home with him. The confidence and ease which Julia brought to him cannot be underestimated, both for her personal qualities and simply for being, and providing, his family. There is little doubt that part of Thomas's idealism and naivety stemmed from a degree of immaturity, so that having achieved marital status he felt a quality of obvious accomplishment, as if he had successfully completed one of life's major tests. Only a little over six months later he was able to write to his mother : "I have discovered that there is a wondrous fellow-feeling among married people. I scarcely care to be with bachelors now..."¹ Whatever the merits of his hasty marriage it came at a very opportune moment in his life: it saved him from the pangs of failure as first his sister Jane married W.E. Forster, in August 1850, and then Matthew, 'the Emperor' who, in 1851 not only married Frances Lucy Wightman but also in that year became an Inspector of Schools, at a salary of £700 a year. This signified the real break-up of the Oxford circle. Clough held out, though not by design, until 1852, but in the Spring of 1851 he gave vent to the kind of isolation Thomas would have felt had he not

¹ Letter to his Mother, 27 February 1851, Noorman MS., TL.

achieved the highly desirable marital state :

I myself begin to think, (Clough commented) that I shall be the last rose of summer, werry (sic) faded. But that foolish Shairp will hang on till he is quite bald, I think ..., till he become loathsome to womankind and a burden to himself.

Of Matthew's engagement to Frances Wightman Clough had one quite simple thing to say: "I consider Miss Wightman as a sort of natural enemy - how can it be otherwise - shall I any longer breakfast with Matt twice a week?"² This bantering tone barely concealed the anguish which at that time was contributing to his near-breakdown, partly as a result of the strain in his relationship with Blanche Smith and partly because of his deeper problems of work, faith and beliefs. Had the position been reversed, and Clough married in 1850, instead of Thomas, the isolation and sense of failure that Thomas would have felt would have been at least equal to the pain Clough had to endure. Under such circumstances Thomas might well have regretted very bitterly his decision to emigrate. As it was he was the first to secure a wife, which put him ahead of his contemporaries, and gave him a necessary sense of accomplishment. This new-found confidence at home gave him the strength to concentrate on his work as Inspector of Schools and, for a short period, to enjoy a sense of purpose - so sadly needed later in his life. He was absorbed in his marriage, it had given him an assurance that nothing else, not even his double First at Oxford, had given. In as far as he distinguished between the married and the unmarried Thomas felt that he had become a member of a world society, a kind

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.199.

² Ibid. p.202.

of mystical union with all others in the same state, and Julia had been his means of entering it. The parallel with his later admission to the Catholic Church is obvious, though in the summer of 1850 Thomas would have thought it more than a little ludicrous that he would ever become a member of that church. Naturally Thomas believed that what was good for him was good for others also. His younger brother, Willy, also married in 1850, and Thomas later remarked, with all the gravity of one who has experience of such matters : "I still think, that considering Willy's peculiar character, he has done well in marrying. May God's blessing go with him."¹ That in itself is sufficient comment on his satisfaction at having married Julia Sorell.

But the responsibilities of marriage also played their part in moulding him at this time. With a wife and home to care for Thomas had something to preserve and defend, and in a penal colony these were very real concerns. As Willy remarked in 1852, Thomas : "was once the great Experimentalist of the Family... But Marriage and Govt: Employ have clipped his wings as they do, to all of us."² As each boatload of miserable convicts docked the social conditions on the island deteriorated; general inflation and successive gold strikes in Western Australia brought a restless and shifting population to both that land and Van Dieman's Land, with the obvious social results: a fact which Thomas could hardly ignore as he travelled round the island inspecting poor schools housing poor children, taught

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.197.

² Quoted by K. Allott in W.D. Arnold's Oakfield, Leicester 1973, Introduction p.13.

by equally poor teachers some of whom were themselves drawn from the ranks of convicts on the island. New Zealand had been a free colony, and so largely satisfied his conditions for the establishment of a new and equitable society, but Van Dieman's Land had inherited the consequences of social evils in the old country. One evening this fact was given a very dramatic illustration when Thomas and Julia were abortively attacked as they drove home :

As we came to a rather lonely part of the road, near a large tumble-down house now unoccupied, we observed a man sauntering along a footpath who, as the gig drew near, sidled off into the road. He looked hard at the gig as we passed; a moment later Julia looked back; and cried out 'Tom, he is running after us'. I looked back; and sure enough, the rascal was running after us as hard as he could and was within three or four yards of the gig. I whipped the old horse into a gallop, and soon left the fellow at a distance, poor Julia however was very much frightened, and was sobbing hysterically all the way till we reached home... Two or three¹ persons have lately been stopped and robbed at that very spot.

Even in schools the same kind of social problems faced him, as he reported in May 1851 :

I first visited the British & Foreign school, kept by Mr. Jackson, a helpless Irishman. There were a few little children present, but even these were too many for the poor man to manage. They did just what they liked. 'Schoolmaster' bawled a little girl, 'come and set me my sum.' 'Ooh, Miss' was the reply, 'and if you won't get a good batin' as soon as the gentleman's gone.' At which there was a general roar of laughter.²

Inevitably, and with good reason, Thomas began to think of a stratified society; part of his role was to defend and protect his wife from the worst excesses, and to effect a change in the general condition through education. In the face of such real and immediate

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.194.

²Letter to Julia, March 23, 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

social problems his generalised, humanitarian views, expressed so earnestly to Shairp only two years earlier, faded. In principle he had been right; but in practice his views were too simple, as he began to realise. Accordingly he attacked the convict system, not out of humanitarian sympathy with the convicts but out of concern for the established population on the island :

The hateful red flag is flying at the signal staff, showing that another ship with male convicts is coming in. A thousand more of the worst among men are expected before the end of the year, to colonize Tasmania. Conceive what you would think, if every shade of villainy, murderers, burglars, forgers, thieves etc, etc, etc, were sent to your valley and permanently established there, and you will be able to realize in some degree the horror and disgust which those feel, who are bound to this unhappy country by ties which they cannot break, who see free emigration entirely stopped and its place supplied by the deportation of the felony of England to their shores. The mode, too, in which they are now sent, is the very worst that can be invented. The moment they land, they receive tickets of leave, that is, become comparatively free men, and as they cannot of course all find employment at once, many of them are thrown upon their old familiar ways of getting a livelihood, begging or thieving. If criminals are sent here at all, they should be almost in the condition of slaves, kept under a strict and stern control, and liable to a very summary treatment in case of any outbreak; this would be infinitely the best and kindest both to them and to society.

So he wrote to his mother in October 1850. Despite the fleeting reference to what is best for the convicts themselves, the whole passage is, understandably, defensive, and angry because it is defensive, and in this Thomas was not alone for the anti-transportation feeling was strong in Tasmania during 1850. Similarly, the England that Thomas had deserted because of its social injustices began to appear as an equitable country by comparison with Tasmania, and naturally the constant letters from home fed the lingering

¹ James Bertram, op.cit. p.193.

home-sickness which his marriage had cloaked. In November he wrote : "Parts of your letter bring the beloved Fox How very vividly before me. I have a wonderful longing to see it again, and Julia's desire is little less strong."¹ And less than a year later he urged Clough, who was by this time Professor of English History at University College, London : "Do not forget, that's a good fellow, to consider from time to time whether you see any opening for me in the way of employment if I were to come home."² In all but religious matters he had come full circle, but without realising it. In September 1851 he wrote to Clough in the old vein, with the grand metaphors and vague generalisations of the past:

And I too, dear soul-friend, am less changed than you might imagine. Some intellectual weapons, which in the old days I may have essayed to wield with what little strength I had, may now be rusted for lack of use; that is, alas! only too possible for a man situated as I am, with so few to exchange thoughts with; but the great hope within the grand effort of the will - the great beacon lights of life - remain what they were, and point in the same direction as of old.³

By the time he wrote these sentiments he had already lived in three societies: England, New Zealand and Tasmania. He was in his twenty-seventh year. Tasmania was the melting pot in which the alloy of his experiences was being fused; the full heat and the new metal were, however, still to come.

¹ James Bertram, *op.cit.* p.196.

² *Ibid.* p.205.

³ *Ibid.* p.204.

CHAPTER SIX.Inspector of Schools.

In 1850, then, Thomas began to enjoy the benefits of marriage exactly as his father had done thirty years earlier, and in similar circumstances. He was setting up his first house, which caused him a limited amount of debt, in a new community, and with a career in education opening ahead of him. He was not exactly 'cutting blocks with a razor', but the problems facing him were to prove no less onerous than those his father had had to meet. For a while the inevitable trivia of settling in took up his leisure hours: re-planning the house to allow for a nursery, re-painting, and establishing a productive garden. Some of the habits begun at this time stayed with him for life for many years later, when he was living in Ireland, he firmly advocated keeping one's own cow and a large vegetable garden to go with it. Julia soon acquired the Arnold habit of taking long walks, and dealt with the domestic servants, who often proved to be unreliable. One Louisa was found to be stealing, causing quite a stir in the Arnold household: "You were quite right," Thomas wrote to Julia while he was away on tour of inspection, "to get a search warrant as it turned out; but you did not tell me before of having missed anything besides the pink sash,"¹ Precisely how much had been missed is not revealed. And in one major way Julia's marriage began as Mrs. Arnold's had done: within a year - two days within a year - she gave birth to their first child, Mary. So, a year and a half after he first landed in Tasmania, Thomas

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.195.

had shed his meandering single state and become a husband, father, and a respected member of the island's administration. He was so engrossed in his own affairs that he neglected his friends in England to such an extent that Clough chided him in March 1851: "You have never written to me - since God knows when - not since you were first engaged to be married; which now undoubtedly, though not having heard it from you, I half do doubt it, you are ..." ¹

Fortunately he was not so remiss with his letters home to his family, and he sent one detailed description of a typical day to Jane, on March 23rd 1851:

When in town, our daily life proceeds in this fashion. Between 6 and 7 I get up, and when I am dressed, take a walk around the yard, to see how the pigs and poultry are getting on, and generally go round the garden also, which, as it is not more than a rood in extent, does not take long. Then I come in, and sit down to read or write in the dining room into which our bedroom opens, and whither I have now removed all the books from the study, which is at present in the transition or chrysalis stage of a workroom but it is intended to develop itself into a full grown nursery, should the Fates and Lucina be propitious. I jest, but yet you may well believe that I am anxious; who would not be? At 8 Julia gets up and we breakfast a little before 9. In little more than half an hour, I set off for town, 10 being the office hour. It is rather more than a mile and a half from our house to the office. At the office I answer letters, see persons who call on business, examine the accounts of the department, and so on. If my time is not fully occupied in this way, I go out and visit one of the town schools. About half past 1, I go to luncheon at Mr. Sorell's and talk over the gossip of the day with Gussie and Ada. I am very fond of both of them, though I do not always quite approve of things that they do. Julia sometimes comes into town at this time in the gig, driven

¹ James Bertram, op. cit. p.200

by 'Joey' as we call him, - though his real name is William and the youngest of the family. After Luncheon I return to the office or visit schools, - generally the former - until 4. Then I walk on home, and when there I either go out for a short walk, or I dig potatoes in the garden while Julia looks on. At half past 5 we dine. In the evening Julia sometimes plays on the piano, - you must know we got it from Mr. Carter our landlord, who allowed me twelve months to pay for it, - or else she works while I read aloud to her, or else I¹ read to myself. At 9 Julia goes to bed, and I follow about 11.

Thomas's remark about their hopes for the nursery referred, of course, to their first child, Mary, who was born less than three months later, in June 1851. At the time, though, in March 1851, it was natural that he should feel some apprehension for Julia at the impending birth. This also explains Julia's obvious concern for rest, and the - at first - odd remark that while he is digging potatoes 'Julia looks on'. Nonetheless they seem to have shared a basically leisurely life while Thomas was in Hobart and, except for the demands of office hours, to have enjoyed a good degree of independence; Thomas was at least free to plan his own method of working. One result of this was that Julia sometimes accompanied him on his tours of inspection whenever the opportunity allowed it, for he had steadily built up a network of friends and acquaintances all over the island with whom he stayed, especially when he had to visit schools in the remoter areas. Only when the advent of their first child made travelling difficult for Julia did they give up this practice; henceforth Gussie moved into the house with Julia whenever Thomas was away on one of his tours of inspection. P.A. Howell has remarked that Thomas "gained entree, because of Julia's

¹Letter to his Mother, March 23 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

connexions, to some additional country houses, such as A.F. Kemp's at Mount Vernon, and William Kermode's at 'Mona Vale', where he had not been welcome simply as an Arnold or as an Oxford First class-man."¹ Which seems a surprisingly acid way of commenting that Thomas's marriage to Julia, whose family had long connection with the island, helped him to find willing friends even in relatively undeveloped parts of Van Dieman's Land. A.F. Kemp, for example, was Julia's grandfather on her mother's side and the name 'Mount Vernon' refers to the very large estate at Green Ponds, just outside Hobart, which Kemp had started with 700 acres, but which he later substantially enlarged.² Inevitably, in a largely farming community, such wealthy and long-standing family connections worked, to some extent, in Thomas's favour.

Despite the relative ease and contentment of his life, and the comfort of his position, Thomas still reflected on the possibility of returning to England, until longing hardened into hope. But in February 1851 Mr. Bicheno died, and it was suggested to Thomas that he might be nominated to fill the vacant post. For obvious reasons he did not want it, as he explained to his mother, in February :

Mr. Fraser the Colonial Treasurer will be made acting Colonial Secretary. It has been suggested to me that I might use any interest I have at home to get Fraser's present post, supposing he is confirmed. But my desire and purpose of returning home are too steady to allow me of taking any step which would tend to fix me permanently in the colony. If I could live by taking pupils in England it would suit me much better than to luxuriate on a Colonial Treasureship out here, and I could also be more useful to others.³

¹ P.A. Howell, Thomas Arnold the Younger in Van Dieman's Land, Sydney 1964, p.44.

² In October 1852 Thomas described it as being an estate of 9000 acres. Moorman MS., TL.

³ Letter to Jane Arnold, March 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

Only a month later, in March, he recounted a conversation with a Mrs. Wynyard, who had planned to return to England and who strongly advised Thomas to do the same at the earliest opportunity so that he, hearing the advice he wanted to hear, expressed an intention "to go home as soon as possible after the Governor, whose time will be up in January 1853." He added the rider that "dear Julia is of the same mind." No doubt England seemed to offer a new life not available in the colonies: what a fearful irony in the light of later events! In the same letter Thomas also revealed that he had "already consulted Mother and Matt as to what I could do at home, and I hope they will not forget it." This last remark is the clearest indication that he was absolutely serious in his intention to return, and that he was quite prepared to use his Arnold influence - as he needed to do - in order to make his return possible. As far as the kind of employment he sought is concerned, there was only one possibility: some work in teaching which would not require him to be away for a week or more at a time, as was often the case in Tasmania. "The love of study grows upon me, my K, in spite of what you think of my natural ineptitude, and both that and my marriage make me wish for some employment which would admit of my being more stationary than I can be now..."¹

But his tours of inspection were not the only cause of discontent, nor were they necessarily the most important. It was inevitable that Thomas would eventually find the rigid administration of the colony irksome, and in this case his unease was focussed on Governor

¹ Letter to Jane Arnold, March 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

Denison. Thomas's earlier comment, that Denison was 'brave' might better be interpreted as 'strong' even 'inflexible' in his own views. James Bertram considers him to have been "an anachronism among Australian governors at this time: he defended transportation, resisted the movement towards self-government, and was thoroughly reactionary in politics."¹ P.A. Howell adds some important details to this portrait :

In the nineteenth century, many men considered themselves infallible concerning education. Sir William Denison was a classic example of this. His despatches, letters, memoranda, messages to the legislature, and his book, Varieties of Vice-Regal Life, show that he was both conversant with contemporary educational writings, and dogmatic in his own views. The Lieutenant-Governor's panacea for all the evils and weaknesses associated with the public education system in the colony was his "Bill for the Establishment and Maintenance of Primary and other schools in Van Dieman's Land."

Denison held that any legislation on education should be governed by two principles, namely, that it was entirely wrong that any part of the cost of public education should be paid from the general revenue, but that the whole cost should be thrown directly upon the inhabitants, for whose benefit the schools exist; and second, that - despite this repudiation of financial responsibility - the government had the right to exercise a close scrutiny over the teachers and general conduct of the schools.²

Clearly, a man of this temper and these views could not find Thomas a willing agent. Accordingly, as early as November 1850, in less than a year from his first arrival on the island, he began to record the first signs of conflict between himself and the Governor. Writing to his sister Mary he commented :

I too think my post is not without its capabilities of usefulness, yet it is more hemmed in by restrictions than you would think.

¹James Bertram, op.cit, p.175n.

²P.A. Howell, op.cit. p.14.

The Governor, although I have a sincere respect, and, in some points, admiration for him, is a man of very arbitrary temper, and thinks lightly of any opinion that does not tally with his own. The same temper leads him very often to assume a short and dictatorial tone towards his Government officers, which it is difficult to put up with. He views things 'en militaire' and seems to wish to enforce as strict a discipline and obedience among the civilian officers of Government as he would among the soldiers of a regiment. Now your dear brother, being naturally placid and civil towards others, has no fancy for being cavalierly treated himself. He has not been accustomed to it, and every better feeling within him revolts against it. The Governor has already somewhat taxed my patience and if he goes on in the same way, it will be impossible to put up with it.

Although he give no precise details in this letter of how Denison had taxed his patience up to this time, nor of any particular 'cavalier' treatment, his comment on the 'en militaire' state of things harks back to an earlier remark he made, in January 1850, that the office hours were "more strictly observed than they used to be at the Colonial Office" in England, which indicates the tenour of Denison's rule. The reference to the "capabilities of usefulness" is doubly interesting, clearly implying that Thomas hoped to be instrumental in changing the educational system of the island, with tangible and measurable results, while at the same time it reveals a typical Arnold liberalism - that education should do something for the public good. Clearly Denison could have little sympathy with either of these aims: his kind of rule could not easily tolerate an inferior officer of independent and sometimes sharply critical views - and Thomas's first report had been critical - nor would his political opinions countenance the social principles implicit in Thomas's general educational aims. A clash was

¹James Bertram, op.cit. p.196.

inevitable; and it came a year later, with the second Education Report. In his letters home Thomas played down the incident as much as he could, but he did not disguise the fact that when Denison had received the report and found it not to his liking he had brusquely returned it with instructions for its amendment. Since it was all done through official channels Thomas was denied the opportunity of discussing the matter face to face with the Governor; he simply had to do as he was told. Angered and hurt he wrote home :

I sent in my annual report at the beginning of last month, but received it back in a day or two with a minute from the Governor, in his best snubbing style, to the effect that I had gone 'beyond my province' in giving opinions, developing views, etc, etc, and must recast the report. I sent back a sharp reply through the Colonial Secretary, in which I denied that I had done more than English Inspectors of schools constantly do, etc. There the matter rests; and I have already thrown the report into a new shape; which was not difficult, since I had little to do but cut out. I was surprised at first at the Governor's incivility; for it would have given him less trouble to have sent for me, pointed out the passages to which he objected, and asked me to alter them, than to write to me a long slashing minute through the Colonial Secretary. But I have since heard something from Reibey which I think explains it. It seems the Governor believes that I write articles against the Government and against transportation in a new paper that has been lately started, conducted by Edward Kemp, Julia's uncle. You know me well enough to be sure, that whatever I might think of the policy of the Government, I should think it utterly inconsistent and wrong, if I, an officer acting under that Government, were to write in the papers against it. The only thing I have ever written for that paper was a trifling squib, which I mean to send to you by the next opportunity, containing not a single political allusion...

This specific reason for Denison's sharp rebuke may have been partly justified: the Kemps were his political opponents in Council, but

¹ Thomas Reibey: a sheep farmer living nearby at Entally, and one of Thomas's close friends.

² Letter to his Mother, 2 November 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

the incident was in fact part of a more fundamental difference of opinion of which Thomas was probably unaware at the time. It indicates the delicacy of Thomas's position, for throughout his term of office his suggestions for educational reform were intelligent and practical, aimed at genuinely improving the quality of the schools and the teaching carried out in them. But even more important than all the practical measures he introduced was something less tangible but more far-reaching; he defined and codified the Government's attitude to and responsibility for the island's educational system, so transforming a nebulous, fragmented collection of views into a coherent policy. Implicit in his ideas was the principle of social good, which meant the adoption by the Government of the social responsibilities inherent in a state system of education. He therefore advocated a strikingly modern notion of free education, based on fairly large schools so as to create viable working units with reasonable resources and equipment, and an effective Inspectorate to ensure that standards were maintained. Denison, however, looked at education through a different political telescope. Finance troubled him most, so that he wanted to end state aid to schools. He also believed in personal responsibility, and so could not grasp the notion of Government responsibility for education: he held that it was the responsibility of those who received it. Similarly he did not conceive of education as having social force, and therefore social good. But lastly, he had the arrogance of the administrator, demanding the right to inspect and control the island's schools even though the Government would not, in his scheme, be paying anything

towards their support. With such diverse views the two men spent nearly three years in conflict - or at least, disagreement - during which Thomas gradually introduced reforms for the good of the island's schools, until he achieved something of a vindication with the establishment of a Board of Education, in 1853.

To understand the nature of this conflict, which formed an important background to Thomas's life during this period, a digression is necessary.

Many factors combined to create an unstable social and political climate during the whole of Thomas's time in Van Dieman's Land: the first was the existence of the convict population and the social imbalance they created, for whatever their crimes - and some were genuine criminals though many were not - their state in Van Dieman's Land was wretched, and made worse by the rampant inflation of the times. There was an almost inevitable boom in the birthrate, so that an increasing proportion of the population was young and needed education, while the growing number of large families suffered a steadily declining standard of living. Then gold was discovered in Australia: food and other supplies became scarce, prices rocketed, and hundreds of able-bodied men left the island for the gold diggings, so that there was a consequent labour shortage. Thomas described the situation :

But now, owing to the extraordinary drought, causing a very short harvest last summer, everything has risen in price. Hay is £7 or £8 a ton, oats 5 or 6 shillings a bushel; and meat, bread, in short everything, has risen in like manner. And if things were not bad enough already, news has come within the last few days from Sydney of the discovery of a goldfield in the interior, not 150 miles from Sydney. If this gold-field should turn out to be anything like as productive as the Californian one, there is no saying what confusion will ensue. Already we hear of

shepherds in hundreds deserting their flocks, of the miners leaving the Newcastle mines in a body, and coal in consequence rising to an unheard of price. Bread has already risen on the strength of this news, and it is probable that all other kinds of produce will follow...

There was an additional consequence for education in these circumstances: even when the Government did vote money for school building there was insufficient labour available to carry out the work. "A ship with female prisoners has been due for several days," Thomas wrote home, "The demand for labour is so great that these wretched creatures are sure of being hired almost as soon as they land."²

To this confusion was added the character of the Governor himself, and the fate of his Education Bill, which enshrined his educational policies for the island. Denison had first conceived the Bill, and presented it to the Council in March 1848, two years before Thomas arrived on the island. Denison fought in the Council for the acceptance of his scheme for five years, up to 1853, against a partisan opposition united for defensive purposes. To his credit his scheme recognised the need for an overall education policy even though the details of the scheme were impractical and, in Thomas's view, based on the wrong principles. There were five main proposals: first, that schools should be financed by the population who used them, through a per capita tax of five shillings a year; second, that local committees should be elected to administer the schools and their funds, with local clergymen ex officio members of the committees; third, that the Government should appoint and dismiss all teachers;

¹ Letter to his Mother, 9 June 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to his Mother, 11 February 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

fourth, that no school should have an exclusively religious character, and fifth, that a Normal School should be set up in Hobart for the training of teachers. The Bill was an attempt to disengage the Government from education, without losing overall control. On its first hearing, in 1848, it was opposed because of the proposal to end Government grants to denominational schools. It was amended and re-introduced in January 1852. Again it was opposed, this time on religious as well as financial grounds since Anglicans and Catholics alike stood to lose substantially if the Bill became law. Denison re-introduced the Bill in the Second Session of the Council, in 1852, it was referred to a Select Committee and lapsed. Thomas wrote a brief comment on this session in one of his letters home :

The Legislative Assembly has just commenced its second session. It has not shone hitherto, having principally applied itself to the obstruction of public business. The leading members and best speakers had a personal feeling of ill will towards Sir William (Denison) and in the first session the rest of the elective assembly all followed in the wake of these like so many sheep. But at very commencement of this session a split has appeared in the camp, five of the elective members having voted with the Government on a rather important question and been well abused by their brother representatives in consequence. The phalanx being thus broken the Government will be able to carry its measures with less difficulty.¹

The measures in question were obviously not Denison's Education Bill, which was not carried, but the description Thomas has left indicates the acrimony in political circles. Denison, however, introduced his Bill once more, in July 1853, but it was not even given a first reading: during the five years of its existence it had been steadily

¹ Letter to his Mother, June 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

outdated by the educational developments introduced directly or indirectly as a result of Thomas's work as Inspector. The fact that on its final appearance the Bill was not even read, coupled with the successful establishments of the Board of Education in the same year, is an indication of the way in which Thomas had helped to inform opinion and focus attention on the really important issues, until Denison's 1848 solutions were seen to be inappropriate. But they were years of conflict, and even though Thomas was not alone in thinking the Governor misguided it would be wrong to suppose that there were many who agreed with him in detail for those who most opposed Denison's education policies, chiefly the Anglican Archdeacon Rev. R.R. Davies, the Catholic Bishop of Hobart Town the Rt. Rev. R.W. ^{Wilson} _h, and others, were as much concerned for their own localised gains or losses as for the larger educational objectives for which Thomas was striving. Certainly, no-one was in quite his position: he had no particular religious bias (in fact no clearly defined religion at all, only a humanist philosophy with the slightest of affinities to Anglicanism), a strong social conscience in the best Rugby manner, and political principles leaning still towards the liberal left of his Oxford days. Yet he had an eye for the practical considerations derived from a respect for authority and property and an usual degree of what Matthew would have called 'high seriousness'. Given the state of Van Dieman's Land at the time a better Inspector of Schools could hardly have been chosen.

When he arrived on the island he was totally unaware that he had landed in the middle of a continuing struggle between Denison and the Council. No doubt Denison hoped the new Inspector would lend

support to his Education Bill, but as this gradually began to appear unlikely relations between the two men hardened. Thomas's views on Denison's bill were mixed: he supported the aim of raising salaries because it would attract better teachers into the schools; he also favoured the establishment of locally elected committees to run the schools. But he generally opposed the rest. In his view the withdrawal of Government grants was doubly pernicious because it would require a tax to replace it and this tax would fall heaviest on large families who were least able to pay it. In addition it undermined the role of the Government in education. His reasoning on this score was clear: the Government acquired responsibility by providing finance, and the responsibility conferred authority exercised through the Inspector. Without Government finance there could be no Government authority for the Inspector to exercise. He further thought that schools should be large so as to maximise resources, equipment and teachers and remove wasteful competition between equally impoverished local schools. These were sound observations, but he had a great deal of political amateurism and inertia to overcome. Clearly, there was no hope of defeating Denison, or of converting him to more enlightened educational principles, indeed there is no evidence to suggest that Denison was really interested in education at all, except as a branch of politics, despite P.A. Howell's suggestion that he was well versed in current educational thought. All that Thomas could do was, like water on a stone, to wear away a little at a time, steadily eroding the problems by individual dribs and drabs of legislation. Whether he perceived this to be his best line of attack or not this is precisely

what he did, presenting a series of reports, regulations and suggestions to Denison. Some were accepted after modification others rejected outright, the rest were accepted in part, but the sum of their results was the establishment of a Board of Education, a rejection of the penny-a-day system, the introduction of good salaries for teachers, a state system of finance and a strong Inspectorate.

One of the first steps came quite early on, in the autumn of 1850, and related to Denison's Normal School. Although Denison had failed to get agreement on his proposals in 1848 he had nonetheless decided to go ahead with his Normal School. Accordingly a teacher named Roger Leach was appointed from London to take charge of the school, and he arrived in Hobart in September 1850. It fell to Thomas to confer with Leach to frame the regulations for the school, which he did quite quickly. The suggestions were quite simple: the minimum age for entry should be 18, board, lodging and tuition should be free. Denison objected. The regulations were amended by lowering the age of entry to 17 and charging £10 a year for board. No-one applied for a place. The age limit was subsequently lowered to 14, and all payment was abolished, as Thomas had first suggested. The result was that twelve students enrolled, but clearly a desperate situation had developed. A year later many of the students had either left or been found unsuitable, and the school closed down. Leach was badly treated, being dismissed summarily despite his contract, and had to pay his own fare back to England. This might justly be called 'cavalier' treatment. Obviously the first set of regulations would have produced few applicants but would most likely have produced

suitable ones, especially with the offer of free tuition, board and lodging, but it would not have solved the problem of recruiting suitable students from among the island's population; they were simply not there in sufficient numbers. It had become clear to Thomas that only by recruiting good teachers from England could a sufficient number be found to meet the immediate as well as long-term needs, and it was this that he subsequently proposed to Denison. In effect, of course, Denison had half conceded this when he appointed Leach from London. But the most direct result was a set of regulations which Thomas presented to the Governor in February 1851, when it must have been clear that the school would fail eventually, and these regulations embodied one or two principles which later became part of the education policy of the Board. Thomas suggested that "the first step proper to be taken is that of apprenticing some of the best and most intelligent pupils to their masters, and that it will be time to think of founding a Training School when the plan of Apprenticeship has been tried for some years and been found to answer."¹ The regulations he proposed were simply those outlined in his letter quoted above, which would, by apprenticing young students to teachers as monitors, also ease the short-term shortage of teachers. The successful students were to be given priority of entry into the Normal School when they had reached the required age. The Inspector would examine the students each year, as well the teachers, so as assure himself that the teachers concerned were able and fit to give the students proper instruction in subject matter and teaching method.

¹ Quoted by P.A. Howell, Thomas Arnold the Younger in Van Dieman's Land, Sydney 1964, p.18.

One or two points are worth comment. First, these regulations began to define the Inspector's role more exactly than previously; second, they began to lay down a practical teacher-training scheme; and third, they helped to temper Thomas's idealism with compromise for despite his opposition to the Normal School he nonetheless linked his proposals with that school, recognising that he had to take it into account whether he liked it or not. One consequence was that Denison looked at the proposals with a degree of sympathy - they did, after all, suggest a means of ensuring a supply of trainee-teachers for his school - though it is equally clear that he also objected to them. However he was sufficiently sympathetic to implement them as a temporary measure. But as P.A. Howell has remarked: "It is ironical that Arnold's monitorial system survived well into the twentieth century, while Denison's Normal School did not last two years."¹

There was one flaw in the scheme: examination proved what Thomas might well have guessed, that there were too few teachers of sufficient quality on the island to make the scheme wholly successful. To meet this problem he made two further suggestions, the first in June 1851, the second in October. The first proposed that a group of two or three settlements should each have a school but served by the same teacher who would divide his time between them in rotation. It is similar to the use of peripatetic teachers still employed in England today and is useful because it makes expertise available to many

¹P.A. Howell, op.cit. p.19.

more children than if the teachers were confined to one place. Thomas clearly believed that in a desperate situation quality of teaching was more important than quantity, so that two days a week of good teaching was preferable to a whole week of bad. Although Denison turned it down it was taken up by a different administration, in 1859. The October suggestion was more simple: that teachers should be recruited from England until such time as the Normal School became successful. This, too, was turned down by Denison, for obvious reasons since it not only pre-empted the output of teachers from his Normal School it also contravened his principle that the island's school system should be self-supporting. His stated reasons were different, of course, and there may have been some truth in his main argument that good teachers could earn good salaries without leaving England to do it. It is probable that he was afraid of the cost of the kind of education system Thomas was proposing, as most Governments have been since, but the immediate effect on Thomas was a feeling of frustration as his proposals were repeatedly blocked.

Later in the same year Denison made a suggestion of his own, which later proved to be significant in the development of the island's education system; he argued that there should be a panel of Inspectors consisting of the Chief Inspector and representatives of the three main religious groups on the island, Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Non-conformists. Thomas feared for his own position, suspecting that this was a disguised attack upon his freedom, but he at once proposed that the new panel should examine all the teachers, grade them and relate their salaries to their grading. Once again Denison objected and the reason is fairly obvious. At that time he was still hoping

to see his own education proposals become law, which would have meant Government withdrawal, whereas Thomas's proposals required even closer Government involvement than before. Only later, in 1853, did he agree, by which time Thomas had dropped the idea of relating salaries to grading. Despite this steady opposition from the Governor Thomas had, by 1853, made some gains including the acceptance of overall Government responsibility for education backed by thorough inspection of schools, the grading of teachers, the raising of salaries to a more reasonable level, and a teacher-training scheme which also helped to alleviate the teacher shortage by providing monitorial assistance. Even though the peripatetic teachers' scheme had been completely dropped the notion of recruiting teachers from England was still valid and in fact arose again later. In general the changes in the first three years of Thomas's work were modest as far as educational reform were concerned, but considerable in relation to the politics and personalities prevailing at the time. As for the Governor's opinion of his new Inspector little can be said except that although he seemed to oppose almost everything Thomas put up within three years he had accepted a great deal, considering the kind of person he was, and Thomas, without appearing to do so, had won a number of important concessions. One of the paradoxes is that it was Denison's own suggestion of a panel of Inspectors that finally helped his Inspector to triumph.

The panel consisted of Archdeacon R.R. Davies, Dr. J. Lillie, Father W. Hall, and Thomas Arnold. During May, June and July they visited all but the most inaccessible of the island's schools to make the most thorough evaluation of teaching conditions ever carried out,

and their report overwhelmingly confirmed what Thomas had reported as a result of his own tours of inspection during the previous three years. The Inspectors agreed that the penny-a-day system was detrimental to educational development, that there were too many small schools competing for funds so that they were generally ill-equipped, and that the standard of teaching was very low indeed. In broad terms their Report argued for the extension of Government involvement in education and the establishment of a Government-financed national system. On Denison's instructions the Report was presented to the Legislative Council on 23 August 1853 and to the Select Committee for Education. The result was that Denison set up an interim Board at the end of October, consisting of all the members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, with the Colonial Secretary as Chairman and Thomas, as Chief Inspector, the Secretary. Denison instructed the Board to create a system of education which would

enlist in its favour the sympathies of all denominations of Christians, and to submit, for approval, regulations for: the examination, classification and remuneration of teachers; the amount of school fees payable by the parents of pupils; the conditions on which aid would be granted for the erection of school buildings; and the securing of local supervision.

The Secretary became the chief executive since it was he upon whom "will principally devolve the responsibility of seeing that the regulations of the Board are carried into effect." The new Board came into being on April 1st 1854.

¹Government notice in the Hobart Town Gazette, 1 Nov. 1853; quoted by P.A. Howell, *op.cit.* p.26.

The most striking part of the whole process of setting up the Board is the compromise it effected between Denison's views and those of his Inspector. The clauses relating to the 'sympathies of... Christians', the 'amount of school fees payable by the parents of pupils', and 'local supervision' were Denison's, though Thomas had from the start been in favour of local supervision. The remainder - those clauses relating to examination, classification and remuneration of teachers, and the granting of Government aid for school building - were primarily Thomas Arnold's, and it is quite clear that even in the matter of relating teachers' salaries to their grading he had made an important gain for the principle is implied, if not definitely stated, in Denison's orders. The whole package was a compromise, perhaps grudgingly conceded by Denison, and not a fusion of views. The Governor was primarily concerned with the cost of the island's schools and even at best, at its most altruistic, the official attitude was that the new Board existed in order to provide education "to those classes of society who have it not in their power to combine to provide adequate instruction for their children."¹ In other words to act merely as an agency with little interest in or concern for the nature and quality of that instruction. Thomas, on the other hand, stated in his 1852 Report that "education is the only effectual means which may be looked to for improving the social and moral condition of a large proportion of the population."² Such different views are not merely opposed but on quite different wavelengths: there is no possibility of their coming together, and it is interesting

¹P.A. Howell, op.cit. p.32.

²Ibid. p.40.

to note P.A. Howell's observation that in his official memoirs Denison, though writing about the island's educational progress during his administration, never once mentions the part played by Thomas Arnold. So little did he understand of what was really taking place.

The immediate result of the establishment of the Board was chaos in the island's schools. The majority were not good enough to qualify for aid so that steps had to be taken to bring their buildings, facilities and equipment, and teachers, up to the required standard. Few good teachers were available and building was slow: inevitably schools closed, while some of the good schools refused aid because they did not want to forfeit their denominational character; they were temporarily outside the system. According to P.A. Howell, after three months of the Board's work there were forty one fewer schools open than at the peak of the old system, in 18~~6~~⁵. Over two thousand fewer children were being educated, which indicates the severity of the pruning operation introduced by the new regulations. The Board fortunately followed Thomas's inclination and aimed for quality rather than quantity, steadily refusing to open more schools until good teachers and proper facilities could be found. Out of these ruins the new system began to emerge and the fact that the new pattern had been successfully introduced before Thomas left the island in 1856 is a comment on the tremendous amount of work he covered. It also indicates the intelligence of his plans for the island.

The Inspector's work-load, however, was considerably increased by the new regulations. In order to set up a school the local inhabitants had to apply to the Board, stating their educational needs. Thomas then had to make an inspection of the area and submit his report

to the Board. If the application was supported by this report the Board allocated funds, appointed a teacher and apportioned his salary, all of which Thomas had to expedite. This meant, of course, that he was also required to examine the teachers, and though there were many it was the old tale of many applicants but few of any quality. In addition he had to handle all the other matters relating to general finance, salaries, school buildings, equipment, and continue with his tours of routine inspection. So great was the administrative load that a Secretary, S.B. Kingsley, was appointed.

Though parents were apparently anxious to set up schools they lacked stamina to maintain them; the local committees therefore failed in their supervisory role and looked to the Board to carry out the work. The result was a sharp increase in the number and length of Thomas's tours of inspection, the scale of which can be deduced from the travelling expenses he received: in 1854 he received £133, in 1855 this shot up to over £300. His annual salary was £500. As the number of schools increased so did his work and in recognition of this the Board appointed an Assistant Inspector in May 1855, a Mr. Murray Burgess, and a full-time messenger. In January 1856 Thomas's salary was increased to £679.10s; an increase of roughly 35%, which is as good a comment as any on the increase in his responsibilities.

The only real brake on the rapid expansion of schools was the shortage of suitable teachers and this led Thomas to look again at the monitorial system he had proposed earlier to Governor Denison and at the possibility of recruiting teachers from England. Quite how far the monitorial system had been implemented is not now clear but since Denison's Normal School had closed in 1852 Thomas saw the chance to revive his original

scheme. It was accepted by the Board in May 1855 in much the same form as it had been originally drafted except that it was more self-contained. The monitors were to be attached to teachers with classes of at least forty, they were to be apprenticed for five years until they reached the age of eighteen and were to receive one and a half hours' instruction each day in the whole range of teaching subjects and skills. The main change was that at eighteen successful monitors were to be eligible for appointment as teachers in their own right; there was no further training. This scheme subsequently proved to be a very successful way of providing the island's teachers. The Board also accepted Thomas's recommendation that schoolmasters should be recruited from England, and in 1855 eight landed on the island and not only performed well themselves but also became excellent tutors to the monitors. It has been said that from the date of their arrival the monitorial system flourished. So successful were these appointments that a year later, in March 1856, the Board began to look for teachers elsewhere and especially nearer at hand in the other Australian colonies. By May 1856 the chaos of the change-over had been replaced by an organised and steadily expanding school system which was also training its own teachers, the school population had climbed back to its 1851 peak but the quality of the instruction was far superior to anything attained at that time, indeed, "the majority were in 'fair average state', and Arnold believed that several would take high rank as primary schools in any country."¹

¹P.A. Howell, op.cit. p.32.

The statistics alone, however, ignore as much as they reveal. They disregard the change of climate occasioned by the arrival of a new Governor, Sir Henry Fox Young, in 1853, they take no account of the cost to Thomas in terms of frustration, worry, hope and disappointment. The scheme for recruiting teachers from England was very dear to his heart for personal reasons - he hoped to be sent home to recruit them - but his hopes in that direction were dashed by the decisions of the Board. And the years of his Inspectorate were also years of profound personal upheaval quite apart from the strains normally associated with marriage, a new family, and work. At the end of his term of office his life was moving in a new and surprising direction, not without its tragic elements, taking him out of Australasia and back to England. Once again he began a wandering life, and it is this thread which must now be picked up.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

Home life in Van Dieman's Land.

Thomas felt slightly uneasy about his family's reaction to his marriage, fearing disapproval either of Julia, or her family, or both. He did what he could by letter to bridge the gap between Hobart and Fox How by providing a fairly detailed description of moments of family bliss or anguish, relating the trials of parenthood or describing the scene as it presented itself while he wrote his letters. He underplayed Julia's beauty, perhaps to give more credence to his reports of her, but probably also to soften any suspicion that he had been swept into marriage for reasons that would not be immediately approved by the family council. In February he sent a daguerrotype of Julia with an accompanying commentary :

I send you a daguerrotype of my Julia; the face is very like, with the exception of the lower part, which looks as if she had a swelled face. Of her figure you can form no judgement from this picture, which makes it look awkward, and, if I may say so, podgy. However, though it does not by any means flatter her, I thought you would sooner have it than none.

Of course he was right, and so were his implied fears that she would not be liked, as the reply indicated when it came back in November: "I am not surprised that you do not like the picture of Julia," he confessed, "perhaps I did not enough consider that you cannot supply defects as I can, who have the original before me. We will send you a better picture when we can afford it."² Or perhaps it was Julia's family history that Thomas feared. He was, therefore, guarded about the Kemps and Sorells without hiding the fact that all was not

¹Letter to his Mother from Hobart, 27 Feb 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

²Letter to his Mother from Entally, 2 Nov 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

impeccable.

You ask me to tell you more about Gussie Sorell, attractive as she is in person, I cannot complete the picture by telling you of her gentle temper and well-regulated mind; in these respects Nature has not done so much for Gussie as she might have done, and the influences which are corrective of nature are comparatively rare and feeble in colonial society. Such as she is, however, I like her, and feel a warm interest in her; and so would you if you knew her.

What had prompted this enquiry about Gussie is not clear, but the Arnold family were clearly asking questions about the marriage Thomas had made in Van Dieman's Land. By this time, of course, Julia had become part of the Arnold family in a very real way through the birth of their first child, Mary, on June 11th 1851 and presumably the choice of name endeared the child to Mrs. Arnold. The birth took place at Thomas's home, and the letter describing it must have reached Fox How at about the time Thomas received the letter acknowledging the receipt of the daguerrotype of Julia.

Your grandchild, dearest Mother, was born this morning at 20 minutes before 7, and both Julia - my beloved Julia - and the baby are going on very well. It is a girl with a good deal of black hair, brown eyes, and a well shaped nose. If you could but be with my Julia now! But you will return thanks to God for us as devoutly on the other side of the world as if you were here...²

It was an interesting opening gambit - albeit subconscious - to introduce the birth in this way, but the effect on family relations was clear as gifts began to arrive later and mutual expressions of goodwill were exchanged.

Whether the marriage service had anything to do with it or not, during the first year of his marriage Thomas began to attend church

¹ Letter to his Mother from Hobart, 9 June 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to his Mother from Hobart, 11 June 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

again, from time to time. It may have been little more than the adoption of the colonial habit of Sunday parades, such as the service he attended in St. David's Cathedral on December 15th 1850 which was graced by the presence of a military band, but Mary's birth raised the question of a christening, which he could not avoid in the close society afforded by Hobart Town. His equivocation is made clear in a letter written in August 1851 :

The dear little daughter is not christened yet, the cold weather being partly the reason; but she will be before long. As, however, I do not believe either in Original Sin (in the theological sense) or in its obliteration by Baptism, I remain very easy on a subject which would fill a Puseyite with alarm, and am not inclined to regard our precious child as in the way of perdition before any more than I shall think of her as ¹ peculiarly in a state of grace after the baptismal ceremony.

But christened she was, in September, with Charles Reiby as her Godfather and Gussie and Jane (Arnold) as her Godmothers. With that difficulty out of the way, Thomas settled down to enjoy his role as father, reporting regularly to Fox How on every detail of the young child's development, and taking the opportunity to strengthen the family bonds in anticipation of his eventual return to England and Julia's acceptance into the family :

The other evening when I got Mother's letter by the Hector, I read out the last sentence to Julia, and the child looked at me and crowed and laughed, as if she understood the words and were thinking how nice it would be to see her dear grand-mamma in England. It is a source of ever new delight to watch the changing expressions that flit over her little face, and mark the rapid growth of her limbs. Do you remember some beautiful lines upon the unfolding of the sense and soul² of an infant in Coleridge's Ode to the Duchess of Devonshire?

¹ Letter to Mary Arnold, 15 August 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

² Ibid.

With the exception of Denison's rejection of his annual Report, and a certain amount of chagrin at not hearing earlier about Matt's engagement and his appointment as Inspector of Schools, Thomas enjoyed reasonable contentment. Even the school tours became more enjoyable, for Julia, having recovered from the birth of Mary, was once more able to accompany him, thus giving them both the chance to visit old friends en route. One such tour, in November 1851, found them staying with the Reibeys, as Thomas often did during his time on the island, and one incident which occurred then is worth comment. Mrs. Reibey was apparently suffering from some kind of internal complaint which seemed to cause her great pain. The manner in which she conducted herself impressed Thomas enormously:

While downstairs among us, no complaint ever passed from her lips; nor, when in the greatest pain would she let any external symptom of it appear; only sometimes an involuntary quivering of her lips, or a shadow passing over the countenance would betray her. She is truly good, - truly religious; verily a light in a dark place. Dear Julia loves her as if she were her own sister.

The final comment is interesting for its careful placing - designed to have the most beneficial impact on the family in Fox How - but the most interesting element in this description is what it suggests about Thomas himself. Clearly he saw a quality of martyrdom in her behaviour, even a saintliness, with its self-control and self-negation, bearing suffering with good grace almost, perhaps, seeing in it the same beneficial qualities that Dr. Arnold had claimed for it. Here was the essence of religious life, the daily practice rather than the theological speculation. Later in the same letter he touched

¹ Letter to his Mother, from Entally, 2 November 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

upon the same strain of thought in connection with the Latter Day Pamphlets of Carlyle. After leaving Reibey's farm at Entally he continued to Oatlands, Campbell Town, and then, having called on more friends by the name of Bisdée, arrived at the settlement named Bothwell. There his friend, the Presbyterian Minister Mr. Robertson, gave him a copy of Carlyle's Latter Day Pamphlets, which he promptly settled down to read. He wrote home :

I am now reading them through, my heart affirming to almost every sentence; indeed, I know of no spiritual sustenance, being the growth of modern times, half so good as these pamphlets. They are not more elevating than they are humbling; they do not ground the hope of a general change and reformation on any other foundation than on the repentance of the private man...

Two points are worth making here: first, that Thomas was still reflecting on the link between belief and moral good. He had no precise faith, and his letters of this period contain a confusing mixture of references to God and prayer side by side with rejections of such Christian concepts as baptism and original sin, yet he still held to the notion of private repentance and salvation. This latter concept raises the second point: that since the scale of social change was so large he could only look for general reform through the individual reformation of each single soul. In this light the school becomes a reforming agency of greater potency than the church, and he gradually began to regard his work as Inspector of Schools in this missionary light, embodying, perhaps, another lesson of Carlyle's from Heroes and Hero Worship:

We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man, without

¹ Letter to his Mother, Entally, 2 November 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

gaining something by him. He is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near. The light which enlightens, which has enlightened the darkness of the world; and this not as a kindled lamp only, but rather as a natural luminary shining by the gift of Heaven.

The great weakness of this argument is that it assumes common agreement on what constitutes a "great man". In a sense Dr. Arnold's reliance on the promptings of the conscience had had a similar diffuseness as its root, trusting to the individual soul to recognise good and evil in all its varieties on all occasions. Both lack a precise religious or philosophic framework, both are without a clearly-defined church and creed. This was precisely Thomas's problem in 1851: he was groping for a creed of his own devising, regarding all external doctrine as an unacceptable limitation on his individual freedom. Freedom and doctrine were to him opposed and incompatible. An example of how this worked in practice is afforded by his letter to Jane a month or two later when he discussed both Carlyle and Mazzini, whom Jane had visited only a few weeks previously. Referring to Mazzini he said :

I admire him as a man, though I think his political philosophy unsound. He elevates the republican form of government - and even one particular modification of it, viz this unitarian or centralized form, to the dignity of an idea or abstract truth, and exacts a religious devotion to it as such. But this is the old error of Rousseau in the 'Contrat Social', which Coleridge has so admirably exposed in the 1st volume of the 'Friend'. I suspect ... Mazzini's obstinate devotion to his theory ... In short he seems to me to be a Doctrinaire Republican; and heroic as he is,² he will, as such, do enormous damage to the cause of Freedom.

As a pupil and follower of Dr. Arnold Thomas naturally distrusted

¹Thomas Carlyle, "The Hero as Divinity", On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, (1841), London 1950, p.2.

²Letter to Jane Arnold, from Hobart, 14 January 1852, Moorman MS.,TL.

systems or organisations and had to fall back on the promptings of the conscience as the source of moral guidance. R.E. Prothero has made a similar comment on A.P. Stanley :

He never seemed to have studied Christianity out of books, or to have attempted to reconcile by metaphysical speculation the will of God and the will of man; he made no effort to reduce Christ's precepts to a system, or to formulate His teaching or doctrine. But he kept before himself as a perpetual example, the life of Christ, and made it the spring and standard of his moral growth ... Stanley followed in the steps of Arnold. His piety was practical and personal, not doctrinal ...

Thomas was beginning to feel, then, that by seeing to it that the island was equipped with good teachers he was helping to provide the living examples who would become the touch stones by which others would measure their lives; but by helping to create a secular, non-denominational, education system he could help to bring about a general change and reform without the accompanying evils he associated with a doctrinaire system. It suggests that he was thinking of a kind of secular religion, an evangelicalism with no creed except that of a striving towards an unspecified moral good. It also suggests that he was moving out of the temporary, non-religious phase which had lasted since 1845. It was not to be long before the concept of the great men - of the saints and martyrs and of his own father - was to catch his imagination and take him further into established religion than he would ever have thought possible.

1852 proved to be a relatively uneventful year, except for the birth of Thomas and Julia's second child, a boy named William, in August. The continuing financial problems were made worse by the

¹R.E. Prothero, Life and Letters of Dean Stanley, 2 vols. London 1893, I, pp.381-82.

general inflation which was, in turn exacerbated by the drift of men to the Australian gold fields, with a consequent shortage of basic materials and food. But for some men the gold brought success, as happened to a transported man by the name of Atkinson, to whom Thomas had loaned thirty shillings in November so that he could buy better tools - he was a joiner by trade - to be repaid at the rate of five shillings a month. Suddenly, in March 1852, the Atkinsons reappeared, much to Thomas's amazement:

On Sunday they came to visit us. We beheld them with astonishment as they walked up to the door, he in a new hat, a black frock coat, silk waistcoat, black cloth trousers, Wellington boots, and a gold chain and watch; she decked in feminine apparel correspondingly splendid. The marvel was soon explained; he had, after clearing all his expenses, brought back £160 sterling! He paid me back the money I had lent him like an honest man, and said that it had been the greatest assistance to him at starting; he also said that he meant to make a present to the baby. He is going back to the diggings next month and will take his wife with him; he hopes to get enough to take him home and enable him to support himself when there. I really hope he will succeed...

With living evidence of the gold to be found in Australia it is not surprising that men in their hundreds left for the gold fields, with dire consequences for those left behind :

Bread is now rising rapidly, not because flour is dear, but because the bakers' men have all gone or are going to the 'diggings'. For the same reason wood, coal, water, meat etc are all rising in price. One learns to accommodate oneself more or less to such a state of things; thus if bread rises any more, I shall lay in a stock of flour and bake at home; if meat ditto, we must eat very little and fall back on our poultry yard...²

And this is precisely what they did, Thomas proving to be a very successful gardener :

Our kitchen garden which we found as you may remember, a mere

¹ Letter to his Mother, 9 March 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to Jane, 14 January 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

part of Sir George Grey, whether I felt inclined to return to New Zealand as Principal of a College at Wellington, which, he said, Grey would endow more highly for me than for any other man whom he knew in New Zealand. He did not mention what the exact amount of salary would be. I shall, of course, write for further particulars before giving a decisive answer; but I do not think I shall go. Unless the salary were at least £100 a year more than what I receive at present, which is very unlikely - it would not be worth my while to go in a pecuniary sense; moreover Julia would not like it, nor am I myself particularly fond of Wellington, and lastly it would interfere with the wish we both cherish of returning home.

In January 1852 there was no immediate prospect of a return to England, as Thomas well knew, so that his refusal of the offer derived from the inertia produced by his relative contentment in Van Dieman's Land.

Beneath this temporary ease, however, lay a deeper sense of dissatisfaction with colonial life in general so that the idea of changing one colony for another gave him no advantage at all. Increasingly he felt the cultural limitations of all colonial society. Although his marriage was happy, and his work though frustrating yielded some satisfaction, he sensed the absence of the larger intellectual and cultural stimulus normally present in England: he had grown up in a European cultural tradition by comparison with which Colonial life was raw and impoverished. As this realisation grew on him he accepted that only a return to England would, in the end, prove satisfactory. Local attitudes, too, shocked him into an awareness of his deeper values. Both convicts and free settlers alike detested the transportation system, the convicts for being torn away from their homeland, the free settlers for having to live amongst them, and this eventually gave rise to an anti-British feeling in

¹ Letter to Jane from Hobart, 14 January 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

colony since both groups blamed the British Government for the situation. Thomas opposed the transportation system as much for its cruel effects on the convicts as on the free settlers, but he saw in the hostility to British actions a rejection of British values which was completely unpalatable. Before long a return to England seemed vital.

... for my own sake, for Julia's perhaps most of all for our darling child's, I feel bound in duty to attempt (it). I cannot reconcile myself to the thought of becoming a permanent denizen in a community like this, nor to that of our child; forfeiting the glorious heritage of an English woman, and learning perhaps to hate and scorn the land of her fathers. Do not think this an imaginary fear; there is a young lady staying in our house at this very hour - a native of the colony - whom, with an indignation you can conceive, I have heard give expression to such feelings towards England, and who I suppose is now incapable of seeing things in any other light. That my child should ever fall to such a condition of mind, may the good God forbid; and yet seeing that the example of our equals is so powerful, I can not say to myself that it is absolutely impossible.

The mixture of personal concern and patriotism is evident, and when, in June, he heard of the change of government in England, he broke out into more rhetoric:

Public affairs also fill one's thoughts a good deal, since hearing of the change of ministry. The more I think of it the more I am amazed at many of the names ... Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, Gladstone, Goulburn, Sydney, Herbert and etc., all excluded, and a set of Protectionists unknown to fame set to preside over the destinies of great England! A Malmesbury unseating a Palmerston, and Eglinton replacing a Clarendon!²

The sense of alienation which had helped to drive him away from England in 1847 had passed, to be replaced by a growing sense of identification with England in particular and the European tradition in general. In March he wrote home a comment about his brother Willy, Director of Education in the Punjab, who though happily married was

¹ Letter to Jane from Hobart, 14 January 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to his Mother, 14 June 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

suffering the effects of climate and living standards in the region.

What dear Willy says about his boy, and Fanny being unable to nurse him, makes us both very anxious. That dreadful soul-and-body-destroying climate! I would not tell Willy so for the world; but for my own part I would not let a son of mine go to India for all the wealth it contains. The dear boy seems to look upon the state of things in Europe in the same gloomy way that I used to do four years ago; only that his lamentations, owing to the difference of climate, are more lugubrious and perhaps less hearty than mine were. I shall try to write him a letter that will give him a little lift out of the depths of his patriotic despair for it is possible that originally ¹ had some share in producing it.

This is a sober rejection of the subtle indoctrination Dr. Arnold had subjected his children to, by preaching the virtues of colonial life. But with Dr. Arnold the whole matter had been something of a hypothesis, an idea to be toyed with rather than to be put into practice, indeed it might even be suggested that there had been a hint of frustrated ambition in it on occasions, as for example when he wrote to Sir John Franklin, newly appointed Governor of Van Dieman's Land, in 1836: "I sometimes think that if the Government would make me a Bishop, or principal of a college or school, - or both together, - in such a place as Van Dieman's Land, and during your government, I could be tempted to emigrate with all my family for good and all."² It fell to his sons to actually take the step and emigrate; in Willy's case the results were disastrous, for he and his wife died prematurely and their children were orphaned. Thomas fared better: he was in a relatively privileged position, to which his family name had contributed quite considerably. In a sense Van Dieman's Land provided a society even more sharply polarised than

¹ Letter to his Mother, 9 March 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

² Quoted by A.F. Stanley, The Life and Letters of Thomas Arnold D.D., 2 vols. London 1844, II, p.45.

that which Thomas had left behind in England five years earlier: the extremes of wealth and poverty existed in close juxtaposition and he moved in both. The moment the convicts staggered off their ships they were effectively sold off to the island's farmers, which caused Thomas to write home in disgust and anger :

And the worst feature of all in the business, that which swallows up all pity in bitter contempt and disgust, is to see the large number of persons who actually buy their degradation, and for the sake of 'cheap labour' are ready to barter everything else worth living for. I see clearly that unless the English government come of themselves to a sense of their duty in regard to this colony, there will never arise any effectual obstruction¹ in the colony itself to the importation of any amount of felony.

Yet he was prevented from sympathising entirely with the convicts, despite the obvious misery of their condition, because they created a threat to the very social values he held dear. They were sources of potential violence, which he feared not only as a general phenomenon but also as daily fact, as he reported home in October :

Mr. Sorell and his son William have been gone about an hour. I will tell you a little circumstance which occurred before they went, which will give you a notion of what this country is. Algernon Jones, who married one of Julia's aunts, was here. About 200 yards from our house is a public house, by the road side. From the dining room window we saw a man rush out after a woman from this public house, knock her down, kneel upon her, and commence beating her. The woman screamed and we thought it was time to go to her assistance. Algernon, who is a magistrate, sprang on his horse which was standing at the gate, and galloped to the scene of action. I and young Sorell followed. When we reached the house we found Algernon parleying with the scoundrel; he was drunk, and so was the woman; he said she was his wife, and that he beat her because she would not attend to the house properly. At the noise of the altercation, eight or nine men came out of the public house; such cut throat looking ruffians as I hope you will never live to see. Some of them seemed disposed to be insolent and to take the man's part; so as there was nothing to be done without (a) constable Algernon came away,

¹ Letter to Frances Arnold, from Hobart, 17 October 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

after telling the landlord that he would get his licence taken away from him, and rode off to fetch the police.

Such events were not uncommon in Thomas's life in Van Dieman's Land.

Yet when he did send the promised letter to Willy, in India, he devoted nearly all of it to a description of a plan he had conceived for setting up a new English colony in Palestine. It was virtually a blueprint for the modern state of Israel, at least in its geography and economics. The length and detail of the plan suggest that he had reflected upon it for some time so that it was not just a trick to lift his brother out of his unhappy state in India, rather it looks like an appeal from one colonialist to another to join in a dream of the perfect colonial society.

His financial position, however, steadily worsened as the year moved on. It is clear that at the time of his love affair with Julia Sorell he had been so anxious to marry her that he had bought all his furniture on credit, which left him with a steady drain on his income after their marriage. Despite the plentiful supply of cheap food he produced from his garden he found the rising prices too much and decided on drastic economy measures. The first was to relinquish one of his servants, the second was to sell off every piece of superfluous furniture. The sale took place on 14 October, and proved to be profitable, indicating at the same time the scale of inflation: "The drawing room furniture was sold last Thursday ... It sold very well; I have got about £55 for things which when new did not cost me £40.² This may have been the germ of an idea which grew into a

¹ Letter to Frances Arnold, from Hobart, 17 October 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to his Mother, October 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

number of projects for raising money the following year, and for a project with W.E. Forster later. There is no evidence that they came to anything, however. He was helped by a number of present-boxes sent from England, a draft from Mary Twining, and one of several loans from Mrs. Arnold. His salary at this time was £400 a year which, when compared with Matt's £700 a year as an Inspector in England, perhaps justifies his feeling underpaid and deprived. Matt's example also held out to him the possibility of a higher salary in England, which intensified his fitful longing to return: "Common sense, no less than the deep yearning and hunger of my heart, command this course," he wrote, "and all my actions are shaped in reference to it."¹ The last statement was not strictly correct. Thomas was rarely so consistent in his forward plans as to shape every action accordingly, but it is clear that as 1852 drew to a close he was thinking more and more about how to effect his return.

The following year, however, brought a new buoyancy into the Arnold household. The ending of transportation, the acceptance by the Council of the Select Committee's Education Report which embodied virtually everything Thomas had suggested, an increase in salary to counter the rising cost of living, a move to a new and cheaper house, formerly the Normal School building, and the clear possibility that he might be sent to England as an agent to recruit teachers for the island's schools all combined to generate in him a new optimism and sense of purpose. For a while he felt content to stay in Van Dieman's Land to see his education measures carried through to completion, and this was particularly rewarding not only because it

¹Letter to his Mother, October 1852, Moorman MS., TL.

removed the sense of frustration and inertia of the previous two years but also because he had come to believe that through education he could become the means of moral, intellectual and social regeneration on the island. It inspired him with a sense of mission which lifted his work out of the humdrum of mere administration and into the realms of pastoral care. He wrote to his sister, Jane :

I told Mother in my last letter, that I had come to regard my work as Inspector with different eyes. This is true to such an extent that you will laugh at me I know but still I shall say it - I should be sorry to leave this country finally before the schools had been put on a much better footing than they are now. Considering the idleness the wordliness not to speak of yet more flagrant delinquencies which are found in the greater part of the Anglican clergy in this colony; considering too that three fourths of the labouring population pass nominally for the flocks of these bad shepherds, - considering lastly that very great power which a colonial government really has if it chooses to exercise it, notwithstanding the important democratic spirit prevalent in colonial society - I cannot but look with greater hope to the results which good schools, organized and carefully watched over by the Government, will produce, than to any other restorative agency, which may be fairly counted on as available. I say emphatically, - good schools - for I am doubtful whether bad schools are not worse than none. But I confess I should very much like to be able to say, upon leaving the colony, that I had left from 60 to 100 primary schools in operation in different parts of the island, conducted in spacious and substantial buildings, well provided with books and every necessary material, and - last but not least - presided over by right-minded and intelligent men, who would receive their due hire but have nothing of the spirit of the hireling, men whom their scholars would respect and love, and in so doing unconsciously come to resemble. To raise the children of a felon far above the moral level of their parents is no easy task; and only the power of the state, directed by a humane intelligence can be expected to make any approach to its achievement. If in England, with all her private philanthropists and good Samaritans, the voluntary principle in education has not been able to save a million and a half of the people from the doom of pauperism, and the whole lower order from the most fearful moral and physical deterioration, how much less can that principle be relied upon here?

¹Letter to Jane, 14 May 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

The immediate cause of his new faith in education was his reading of Joseph Kay's book The Social Condition and Education of the People.

If education and peasant proprietorship have only done half as much for the German French and Swiss populations, and the absence of both have made the social state of the English poor only half as bad, as he represents, it is quite enough to infuse a spirit of activity into any human breast upon which rests any fraction of responsibility in regard of either of the two agencies so unspeakably important. It is about six weeks since I came to regard the thing in this light; and certainly I have done more in those 6¹ weeks than in any other 12 since I was first made Inspector.

For once he was sufficiently secure and purposeful to look at himself with candour and still feel safe. He admitted his tendency to instability - a judgement that Julia had bitter reason to level against him a little over two years later - and explained his new, steady frame of mind:

You will not be sorry to hear that in the course of the shiftings of mental position which a restless-minded man like myself experiences, I have at length rested in what I am inclined to think is stable equilibrium. Somehow or other my eyes are at last opened to the greatness of the capabilities of good which the office I hold presents, and the importance of the interests which my situation empowers and enjoins me to superintend. It is true that for three years I have worked very little; but this I may say for myself, that the cause was not innate laziness, but rather a despondency of effecting anything, arising from a want of faith, partly in the power of Education itself, partly in the mission of the State respecting it...²

This new faith interlocked neatly with his growing political belief in national government. He held that the normally accepted values of a nation should be those freely held by the majority, assuming that the majority were made intelligent by education. This contradiction is indicative of his love of individual freedom and his fear of the majority. If ever a situation arises in which the majority,

¹ Letter to his Mother, 17 April 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

² Ibid.

democratically or otherwise, appear to overthrow the intellectual and moral values which he holds dear, he is ready for some social adjustment which will, without robbing the mass of their freedom nonetheless mitigate the results of their choices. Writing home about "Uncle Tom's Cabin", which he had recently been reading he proclaimed his belief in the freedom of the individual within the law :

Is it not striking to notice how 'Canada' - the English soil - appears throughout the book as the happy haven of refuge to the miserable runaway, which if he can once reach, his chains drop off him, and he is free, the possessor of rights, and recognized by the law; that is by the authoritative expression of a nation's will, a nation's ideas.

In the very same letter, however, he commented upon the election of Louis Napoleon as President of the French Republic described in Victor Hugo's book Napoleon le Petit :

It seems odd to me that Victor Hugo never once alludes to the radical blunder without which this miserable business might never have happened, that of committing the choice of President of the Republic to universal suffrage. To expect from 35m. of people "mostly fools" that they will choose the wisest and best of Frenchmen to rule over them! Had the choice been left to the National Assembly, they would certainly have appointed Cavagnac, a man of honour and honesty, who would have thought of his duty to his country, and not his own miserable self... Yet the advantages of indirect or secondary election have by none been so clearly pointed out as by a French writer, De Tocqueville.²

Thomas's new sense of mission was derived from his newly-acquired vision of a vast uplifting of the national consciousness through the development of a national education system. It gave him an answer to the pessimism expressed so often in Matt's poetry, a pessimism which he had once shared, and a means of attacking the 'forts of folly'.

¹ Letter to his Mother, 7 February 1853, Moorman MS., TL.
² Ibid.

In this sense it had all the eagerness and force of a religious faith aimed at solving immediate human problems.

In May 1853 he received a complimentary letter from the Governor on the Report he had submitted in the previous October, and this persuaded him to press once more for the recruitment of teachers from England, with the happy corollary that he might himself be the very man the Board would send to England to interview the candidates. Thus to his general satisfaction was added the excitement at the real possibility of being sent to England, with all his family, within a year. To rejoin his family, to introduce them to Julia Mary and William, to leave them at Fox How, or with his sister Jane while he toured the country on behalf of the government of Van Dieman's Land was a prospect which shot an undercurrent of excitement and anticipation through his whole year. All that was required was the Select Committee's acceptance of his suggestions.

His financial circumstances, too, took a sharp turn upwards. In May all the 'superior officers' - as he called them - claimed an increase of 25% to meet the rising cost of living. The basic necessities of life they listed were inclusive of 'servants, house rent, washing and etc.' In July their claim was met in full and Thomas received an increase of £120 a year. At the same time he gave up his old house and moved into the Normal School, at nominal rent. It was with great satisfaction that he wrote home :

It is now settled that our pay is to be increased, so that I shall get an additional £120 this year. And as I told Matt, Mr. Palmer, the rich Melbourne leather draper, gave me £60 to give up my old house, and go into this (for which I only pay £20 a year rent) and also I shall clear £30 or £40

by our Travelling Commission¹ which is just completed. So that I suddenly find myself much better off than I was three months ago. A few days ago I paid off the last instalment of the long upholstery bill which came in at the time of our marriage, and now I am glad to say I do not owe a penny on account of that old score, which hung about my neck so long. Of course, I have incurred a few debts since...²

Only two months later, in September, the Select Committee's Report was accepted by the Government, so that all Thomas's plans became official policy, including his hopes for recruiting teachers from England :

Today Mr. Leake, a member of the Council, came up to me in the street, and told me that I should be glad to hear that the Select Committee had agreed on their Report. They will recommend that schools be still supported from the general revenue, but that the vote be largely increased; that the present penny-a-day system be abolished, and fixed salaries be substituted; that these, from all sources should be between £150 and £300 per annum; that a Board of Education be established, and that trained masters be obtained from England. This last point is what I have been striving for; and now we shall see. As soon as the Council has adopted the Report, which they are certain to do, I shall formally propose that the Government should send me home to select masters. I feel sure that if they were merely written for, there would be a strong possibility of a large sum of money being wasted in bringing out unfit men; and that with the scholastic connections of our own family, I should be perhaps in a better position to make a good selection than any agent whom they could find in this colony. I should therefore propose to select about ten English, five Scotch, and five Irish masters; all trained and, I think, certificated men; their loss would be hardly felt at home, while out here the arrival of twenty intelligent and virtuous persons, qualified and prepared to exert their whole energies for the benefit of society, would be productive of an incalculable amount of good. But after all, as Julia says, it seems too good to be true; the prospect is almost too delightful, the plan too simple and natural, to be realized in this cross-grained world. At the same time, it is also true that faint heart never won fair lady; and I shall try my hardest to mould³ the feelings and opinions of those concerned in the desired way.

¹This was the group of four Inspectors set up by Governor Denison to tour the island's schools and make recommendations to the Committee.

²Letter to his Mother, 24 July 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

³Letter to Jane, from Hobart, 22 September and 30 September 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

Six days later the Report was officially accepted, and the possible became probable, though not yet certain. Thomas turned over and over in his mind the best tactics to adopt to ensure that he was the selected agent; he considered approaching the Governor, he considered formal motions, but finally settled for the indirect method of speaking privately to individual members of the Council so as to enlist their support for his claim. If the acceptance of the Report did nothing else immediately however, it held out the promise of yet another increase in his salary in recognition of the extra work he would have to do as Secretary of the new Board of Education.

It is clear from other factors, too, that he felt a new sense of opportunity during 1853, not necessarily connected with the growing success of his educational work and his professed commitment to it. It was a year in which he began to think of financial speculation, to exploit the inflationary prices. Late in 1852 he had suggested to W.E. Forster that they might together engage in some kind of importing into Tasmania, buying English goods cheaply and selling them on the island at the higher prices current at the time. There was some delay in Forster's reply - as Thomas might have expected in view of the nature of the suggestion - so that when he wrote to Jane in May, he had to drop in a gentle reminder :

I hardly expect your good husband will have been able to do what I asked him to do; though if he has, it will turn out an excellent speculation both for him and for me. It is a common thing now for invoices of English goods to be disposed of at an advance of from 15 to 150 per cent before the goods arrive.

It is easy to condemn such a suggestion, but Thomas had revealed in

¹Letter to Jane from Hobart, 14 May 1853, Moorman MS.,TL.

his assessment of his father's land in New Zealand that he had a certain shrewdness about investment matters - despite his general inability to handle his financial affairs satisfactorily - and it would not have taken a financial wizard to see how easily Tasmania's inflation could be exploited for profit. At the same time the general climate of opinion and the living evidence of many who had made a fairly rapid rise to wealth helped to make this kind of speculation acceptable to many men who might otherwise have regarded it with some suspicion. It is not clear what happened, but Forster did not enter into the venture, and Mrs. Arnold wrote what seems to have been a mild rebuke to her erring son. Thomas replied:

William says - and I was quite prepared to expect it - that he is unable to find any way of complying with my proposal that he should send out a consignment. You seemed, dear Mother, not sorry for this, for in the first place I dare say you thought it strange that such a notion should have entered my head at all, and further you seem to have thought that the transaction would involve me in some risk. This however would not have been the case. If William had sent out the goods, as the profit would have been his in case of a good sale, so the risk would have been his, in case of a bad one. As to "winds and waves", that risk, you know, is always guarded against by insuring. I would have been merely an agent, getting a commission or per-centage on the value of the goods sold. As it happens, every article that I mentioned would if in the market now yield a very large profit to the shipper. And as to the first consideration - the unsuitableness of such transactions to me - it is so common in the colonies for a man to turn his hand to several things at once, to have several irons in the fire, as the saying is - that the strangeness of this would naturally seem less to me than to you. However the object on account of which I asked for the consignment, has been pretty well answered in other ways. It is now settled that our pay is to be increased...

Here is the usual mixture of rationalisation and candour sitting strangely together; Thomas's innocence describing what might have

¹Letter to his Mother, from Hobart, 24 July 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

been a dubiously speculative venture. It is not surprising that Mrs. Arnold feared that the idea was risky, but not, perhaps, for the obvious reasons Thomas mentions: it is a reasonable inference that she regarded the enterprise as inappropriate to an Inspector of Schools, especially when he was an Arnold.

But if he could not arrange financial deals with his own family he could do so with Julia's. In May he acquired 500 acres of land in the Huon River valley in a joint venture with Mr. Sorell. Once again it was an entirely speculative operation and engenders the suspicion that it was perhaps from Julia's relatives that he was deriving this sudden interest in exploiting market values for profit. In this instance he seemed to have nothing at all to lose, and no risks to run :

Jointly with Mr. Sorell, I have lately taken 500 acres of land on the Huon river, some 30 miles from here, under the Government Regulations, which allow you, on condition of paying £12.10. per annum for ten years, to buy the land at the end of that time at £1 per acre. Or you may pay down the purchase money at any time before the expiration of the ten years and get the land out and out. I am in hopes that this will turn out a good speculation, for I have heard today that a lot of 500 acres adjoining ours has just been bought from the Government in this way at £1 per acre, and resold for £900, the owner thus pocketing £400 by the transaction. It is probable therefore that ours also is good land and might be turned to account in the same way...

How strangely such sentiments appear against the altruism of his new faith in his role in education. It was almost as if he, too, sensed this. He went on to modify the picture he had built up :

If we do not sell it, I have been thinking whether some honest working men from Westmoreland with their families could be brought out and settled on the land, under an agreement to sell small

¹ Letter to Jane, 14 May 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

portions of it to them, say from 30 to 50 acres, at a fixed price after a certain number of years. It is an emigration of this sort that this country so greatly wants, and now that Transportation is discontinued one would have no misgivings about bringing such people out.

This looks remarkably like a retrospective justification, to make the scheme more acceptable to his family in England, and perhaps even to himself. It does not alter the fact, however, that this plan was of the same nature as his proposals to William Forster: he was hoping to exploit the inflation in Tasmania in order to make a substantial profit. It indicates the prevailing mood at work in some quarters of Tasmanian society and Thomas's susceptibility to it. It also highlights the nature of that instability which his mother, and later his wife, were so aware of: he was inconsistent, flying back and forth between apparently irreconcilable opinions. In the year 1853 he was proposing and, in the case of the land deal, carrying out financial speculations that were legal but seemingly out of character. Certainly they would have seemed utterly inconceivable in 1847 and 1848 when he was at his height of reforming zeal. Yet at the same time he was making these proposals he was also beginning to feel a new sense of mission in his education work, for social reform and equality of men, which was entirely in keeping with the 1847 views, and which made him decide to stay in Tasmania until they were actually working in practice. Paradoxically - almost characteristically - he was expressing his wish to stay on in the island at the very time when he had good hopes of being sent to England to recruit teachers. So, as the year drew to its close he was able to adopt a slightly superior moral tone over

¹Letter to his Mother, 24 July 1853, Moorman MS., TL.

his brother Walter's precipitate withdrawal from the navy, without realising that his own position was far from stable, that his immediate plans were destined to fail and his whole future to be drastically altered by an act of faith even more devastating than his decision to emigrate. In as far as he believed himself to be both stable and secure, 1853 was one of the happiest years of his adult life.

CHAPTER EIGHT.The true Catholic spirit.

The new year, 1854, began badly. From reports of the debates in the Legislative Council Thomas began to fear that even if his plan of recruiting teachers in England was accepted he would not be the man sent to England to carry it out. As this possibility became a probability and then hardened into certainty his hopes progressively dwindled. His temporary buoyancy sagged and his financial problems accordingly loomed larger. In particular he was worried about the debts he had incurred at his marriage, and which were still not all cleared off. In a moment of frustration he applied to the Governor for an immediate increase in salary, and coupled it with the observation that if no such increase were allowed he would be "forced to look out immediately for some other employment."¹ At any other time this would have been an empty threat, but not in January 1854 for he had two possible escape routes, one to New Zealand the other to Australia. The New Zealand opportunity arose because at last there were definite proposals for the establishment of a college in Nelson on funds provided by the New Zealand Company, and Thomas, with good reason, believed that he had a good chance of becoming its Principal. He decided to make enquiries. The post in Australia was that of Assistant Colonial Secretary in Melbourne. The attraction was obviously the salary: £1,000 a year plus an initial house allowance of £500. Since the salary was virtually double what he was earning in Hobart, Thomas hoped to be able to save up to £300 a year for five

¹Letter to his Mother, 10 January 1854, Moorman MS.,TL.

years before retreating from the hot, dusty climate of Australia. In this venture, too, he had some reason for optimism. He had proved himself to be an efficient administrator, and he was well qualified, but he also had a useful ally in the person of Mr. Nairn who had left Hobart only months before to take up a Government post in Melbourne. Before his departure Nairn had promised to support any application Thomas might make for Government posts in Australia; the application for the post of Assistant Colonial Secretary was the first time that support was called upon.

So, through January and February Thomas waited for the results of his various applications. In the meantime he wrote home, rationalising his actions with the argument that "a settler's life appears to be the only truly desirable life."¹ In January Julia had disclosed the news that she was expecting their third child, and this served to increase Thomas's anxiety about his financial position.

In March his hopes were dashed. He learned from Mr. Nairn that he had no hope of the post of Assistant Colonial Secretary, and since he had received no reply to his enquiries about the college in Nelson he recognised that there, too, his chances were blocked. In the enforced calm, while he was waiting for Denison's response to his claim for a higher salary, he fell to reflecting on the whole, confused state of his mind at this time. He was not contented in any true or fundamental sense even though he had moments of relative calm. His work as Inspector offered constructive opportunities, and the means of effecting social reform on a fairly large scale, but progress

¹ Letter to his Mother, 21 February 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

was slow. What he really needed was the conviction that his work had a moral purpose, that it would eventually bring about the spiritual regeneration of each single soul, to raise each to the kind of self-denying control he had so admired in Mrs. Reiby. Educational reform seemed unlikely to achieve so much, but it was all he had to work with. On the other hand he was tempted in the opposite direction, towards financial speculation aimed at exploiting the inflation of the times, even though he felt somewhat guilty about it. This conflict of attitudes produced in him an unstable equilibrium which required very little to tip it one way or the other, and he happened to read Thackeray's Pendennis. The effect of the book was to turn his mind back to the problems he had faced in 1846, when he had oscillated between the attractions of social reform and the claims of Wesleyan Methodism. On that occasion he had finally turned his back on mere social reform for a while, and had accepted the belief that

to know God and to be known of Him, must henceforth be the only object of his ambition; that for him it was impossible any more to serve the world, when the bright hope was thus held out to him of resting even in this life in the Eternal Arms, safe from the fretting anxieties and earthly cares, and resigned obediently to the guidings of One infinitely wise and good.

That phase did not last long in 1846; in 1854 it was the beginning of a life-long love for the Catholic Church, even though he did not and could not realise it at the time. The passage in Pendennis which helped to tip the scales can be identified easily from the remarks he made in his letter home :

I have just finished reading 'Pendennis', and found myself wishing

¹'Equator Letters' quoted in James Bertram, op.cit. pp.212-13.

at the end of it that it had been at least five times as long as it is. There is a conversation between Pen and that dear old Warrington upon English institutions, and the attitude in which the former, being a clear-sighted but withal cynically disposed young gentleman, proposes to stand towards them, which contains many thoughts that have passed through my mind already...

The reawakened dispute in his own mind, the anti-British attitudes in Tasmania, and now Pendennis raising the whole matter forced him to re-appraise his scale of values. It caused him to return to the convictions of his youth, before the corrosive effect of Oxford.

In the argument between Pen and Warrington Thomas saw himself as Pendennis, the sceptic, but he wanted to see himself as Warrington.

The sceptic begins :

'... I say, I take the world as it is, and being of it, will not be ashamed of it. If the time is out of joint have I any calling or strength to set it aright?'

'Indeed, I don't think you have much of either,' growled Pen's interlocutor. 'Why what a dilettante you own yourself to be, in this confession of general scepticism, and what a listless spectator yourself! You are six and twenty years old, and as blasé as a rake of sixty. You neither hope much nor care much nor believe much. You doubt about other men as about yourself. Were it made of such pococuranti such as you, the world would be intolerable, and I had rather live in a wilderness of monkeys and listen to their chatter, than in the company of men who denied everything.'²

The fact that Thomas selected this passage for comment in his letter home could indicate that his mind was already moving along these lines before he came across the book, so that it confirmed rather than initiated his line of thought. Equally speculative, but relevant, is the possibility that in Warrington's voice he heard an echo of Dr. Arnold - a trace of that old call to obey the promptings of the conscience. Whatever the truth of the matter it is a fact that

¹Letter to his Mother, 10 January 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

²W.M. Thackeray, Pendennis, London 1968, pp. 604-609.

during 1854 he began to turn back to the Anglican Church, he regained his former admiration for his father and then, in the momentum he had built up, went beyond, to join Newman in the Catholic Church. At the root of his deliberations was a re-awakened respect for European institutions, especially that of the church, and their historical traditions. It was not a particularly unusual state of mind for an expatriot Englishman to adopt, except in its concentration on the institution of the church.

Such deliberations were simmering gently in his mind during the early months of the year while at the same time he was still turning his eyes towards New Zealand. With the Melbourne precedent in his thoughts he gave up hope for the Nelson post, about which he had still heard nothing, and proposed, instead, that his brother Willy should join him in a farming or education venture in New Zealand. Willy, however, was already set on finding an opening in England. In the event, he returned to India, to the Punjab, in 1855 and Thomas never saw him alive again.

At the end of March Thomas had the ironic task of writing to the Board of Education in England to arrange for the recruiting of teachers for Tasmania. It was the final end of any hopes he once had of being sent himself.

In April, however, the Governor approved an increase in the Inspector's salary in view of the dual nature of the responsibility, and with the prospect of a further general rise later in the year Thomas began to anticipate a salary of about £750 a year. "With common prudence we ought to do very well," he wrote "and get out of debt in a jiffy."¹

¹ Letter to Matthew Arnold, 20 July 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

Once again he wrote home with a proposal that Willy should join him, this time in Tasmania, and this is perhaps just a hint that despite his declared belief in the virtues of colonial life he was beginning to feel the pangs of loneliness caused by six years of separation from his family in England.

In May their third child was born but died after three days of gasping life while Thomas and Julia could only sit helplessly by keeping it warm. When Julia had recovered sufficiently to be left on her own without anxiety, Thomas undertook a school tour which, in large measure, helped him to settle his mind: it was a typical Arnold remedy to take on a regimen of hard work. It was equally typical that he did not sulk over the Legislative Council's decision not to send him to England: in June he wrote to Matthew to ask him to take an interest in the matter so as to ensure that only good teachers would be appointed, and, if possible, that Matt should nominate some candidates himself.

As the middle months of the year moved on both Thomas and Julia seem to have enjoyed better spirits. In Julia's case it was partly because she was once again able to enjoy parties and other social occasions, and Thomas was proud to report that "in spite of children and domestic vexations she is still the unquestionable 'Reine du bal' wherever she likes to make her appearance there."¹

In September he set out on the long school tour which precipitated his religious crisis. It happened that because of the involvement of the clergy in the management of the island's schools Thomas was

¹ Letter to his Mother, 3 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

thrown into the company of clergymen on every school trip, indeed without them amongst his friends he would not have had the means of making his school tours as pleasant as they were. He seldom stayed in what passed for hotels or in lodgings but instead moved from vicarage to vicarage. The 1854 tour was typical in this respect. He stopped first at the home of the Rev. W. Gellibrand, whom he had known briefly at Oxford, and after school business was concluded they ate supper together. "After prayer Gellibrand and I adjourned to his study, which is just like an Oxford man's room. We smoked a cigar apiece, and talked Church a little. Gellibrand is high Church, but in a mild Anglican sort of way..."¹ The following day he travelled on to Pittwater, where he met the local clergyman, Mr. Norman, whom he classified as "of the low and slow school."² After visiting two more schools and staying one night in a schoolhouse and the second at an inn he moved on to Sorell to meet Charles Wilmot. Again he assessed his host in terms of his religion but in describing the incident referred to himself at this time as a "mid-church Protestant."³

It is not surprising, therefore, that in October 1854 he wrote to his mother explaining that he had begun to lose his post-Oxford scepticism and was regaining his earlier Christian faith, of the days when he was at Rugby. The result was that "a great wall of partition which stood between me and all you dear ones who have never strayed from Christ's fold, is now quite broken down."⁴ He wrote a long letter,

¹Letter to his Mother, 3 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Letter to his Mother, 23 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

now lost, explaining his change of heart in detail, but in the

October 23rd letter added :

Oh, since the scales fell from my eyes how has that beloved father been reinstated in all the reverence, the unstinted admiration, with which I used to regard him, but which, reduced by vain theories, I had learned partially to withhold. Not that I did not always love and admire him, but it was not with that wholeness of feeling, that absence of misgiving, with which I can now.

He continued with an image which shows just how far he had recovered that habit of reverence which Matthew used to smile at, and which so clearly points the way his mind was moving :

... my father was and is one of the blessed company of heroes and saints who have carried on the light of the Eternal Gospel from age to age, and have been themselves standing monuments of its inexhaustible truth.²

It was against this scale of reference that the mentors he had found at Oxford now appeared so inadequate precisely because they were isolated, intellectual figures who belonged to no church, represented no historical tradition and offered only intellectual answers to life's problems. Carlyle he described as "only the Heathen philosopher revived", while Emerson was "only a Porphyry or a Proclus come again - a new Platonist in the midst of a utilitarian people." They had, he felt, provided a set of attitudes towards life but these were no substitute for a faith or a church. He wanted, and needed, the comfort of shared religion, with its associated rituals and practices. Theological, social, ethical, or philosophical debate could not replace the intangible satisfactions of the church he had lost during his Oxford days. By coming into contact so regularly with many clergymen

¹ Letter to his Mother, 23 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

² Ibid.

in Tasmania, by living in their homes and sometimes taking part in their worship he had gradually come to see that he needed the security and the reassurance of belonging to a church, to the Christian Church, which had been part of his earliest patterns of life, and that an imperfect faith, without a "firm objective basis" was not a sufficient reason for being without that church for the rest of his life. The comfort and satisfaction he derived from its familiar rituals, though they solved none of his intellectual doubts, meant more to him than he was prepared to lose. Gradually, from about 1851 onwards, he began to compromise, to enjoy the satisfaction of church worship without feeling obliged to accept all its articles of faith in return. He still, of course, lacked the conviction that the church had a valid claim on his faith; what he seems to have been searching for was a proof - akin to the nature of scientific fact - that the creeds of the Church of England were worthy of his submission, that they had a basis in fact. His growing idea of the church as a historical link with the past, through to Christ, seemed to be the kind of proof he was seeking, hence his new-found respect for his father who had been a witness to that eternal truth. He was moving towards a rational - or rationalised - basis for belonging to the Anglican Church.

His reaction to two different services on the same Sunday illustrates his state of mind at the time. One morning in October 1854 in Perth, near Campbell Town, where he was visiting schools, he attended a Presbyterian Church held in a hall used the previous day for an auction. He deplored the plainness of the surroundings, and the equally plain service, but its main defect was that it was all :

an intellectual performance, containing a great deal about the

attributes of God, but little or nothing about the passion of Christ. The sermon was a clever moral discourse, with the exception of two or three sentences towards the end, which might just as well have been delivered by a Pagan philosopher.

That very same day he attended an Anglican Church, for evensong, and commented upon it :

There was a congregation of about 100 people. Then followed the dear old well-known prayers and thanksgivings, associated as they are with all one's earliest, happiest and purest recollections: forms of prayer certainly, but forms filled full of the spirit of Christ.²

The emotional satisfaction of familiar ritual, the sense of sharing a common experience, linked as it was the memories of a happy childhood and bringing past and present together; these could never be found in the dry 'chaff and wind' of intellectual speculation and debate. The personal involvement in worship, the emotional response to a shared experience, recalled the security of Rugby Chapel and the presence of his father, who was thus re-instated, with and despite all his faults, as a powerful representative of that personal God who had been so real in Thomas's childhood: "... whatever may have been wanting in Papa, intellectually or spiritually - was supplemented by Christ, up to whom we all look through him."³ Emerson, Carlyle, Goethe, George Sand, may have temporarily seemed to be intellectually greater than Dr. Arnold, but he, and not they, had always represented a long-established church which was accessible because it was made manifest through him - and others like him - and in whom Thomas could identify a God of human proportion. Men such as his father thus became the word made flesh. So it was that he believed, in October

¹ Letter to his Mother, 23 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to Julia, 30 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

³ Ibid.

1854, that the rituals of the church service "join us and our age in the unity of the same holy faith to former ages and sleeping saints of the Church, to the Reformers, to the Primitive Church, to the Apostles - to our Lord himself."¹ It had taken him six years away from home to analyse his real needs; unlike Matt he could not support indefinitely a dehumanised view of the universe, he needed a personal God. Paradoxically, by 1854 he had come full circle to where he had begun as a child in his father's house. In 1848 he had declared to his dead father: "The form, the outward vesture of thy faith - it is only this which I cannot accept."²; in 1854 it was this very form and vesture which gave so much comfort. Without realising it at the time, he was on the path to full Catholicism. The root of it was his longing for a sense of community with like-thinking men, such as he experienced at Rugby where his father's influence had been so strong in making the ranks march in one way. But Rugby was not a true reflection of the world, it was a special, intense community of its own. Part of the confusion caused by the Oxford days was the very freedom, and thus the anarchy, which existed in the university. Part of Thomas's bewilderment had stemmed from the loss of that sense of community, and for ever afterwards he had been searching for it even though he did not recognise it. As early as 1851, after the disastrous Otago expedition, he had written: "I think the greatest mistake I have ever made was that of fancying that an honest man was sufficient society to himself,

¹Letter to his Mother, 23 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

²"Equator Letters", January 1848, James Bertram, op.cit. p.219.

and that the growth and vigour of the intellect was compatible with loneliness."¹ His "wondrous fellow-feeling among married folk", when he married Julia, was a facet of his need, but it answered only temporarily. By mid 1854 he had rediscovered the community of the Church, and recognised what it meant to him: "And it is this companionship - this connexion between Christian and Christian through their common bond, which makes the strength and tranquillity of one's confidence."² At once he began to regret his years of doubt and feared that his example might have adversely affected his family, so that he looked for their conversion to his new zeal: "May that time come soon, dear wife," he wrote, "and may you and I and our beloved children be united together much more closely in Christ than we ever could be by the bonds of mere earthly and natural affection..."³

From Julia's point of view these developments were alarming. During the four years of their marriage she had shared his victories and disappointments as Inspector, had borne with him the problem of their various debts, had given birth to three children losing the third in what were obviously distressing circumstances, and had so recently watched the steady collapse of his hopes of being sent to England. But throughout she had had one constant and apparently obvious certainty: Thomas was proof against the Catholicism she so detested. In October this confidence was shattered and she saw her husband displaying all the signs of religious zeal, intently studying

¹ Letter to his Mother, 9 March 1851, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to his Mother, 3 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

³ Letter to Julia, 30 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

the description of the Primitive Catholic Church in Bunsen's Hippolytus "with great delight". She tried to exert a steady influence, but she feared that his emotional instability was too great. She failed, of course, for there was no pressure she could exert which could counter the mounting excitement his new faith was generating within him. But she tried, and he was uncomfortably aware of what she was thinking. At the end of October, he found it necessary to defend his growing commitment to the Church and his regret that he had spent so many years "in a state of rebellion and alienation." He wrote: "I know all this will seem to you to come with an ill grace from me because you think me unstable. However, it is the truth, and I pray for nothing more earnestly than that you too may come to know Him who died for you."¹ Merely stressing the word 'truth', however, could not give his argument the firmness it wanted in order to refute Julia's suspicion that this was a new development, a new kind of emotional upheaval, and one which she could neither penetrate nor influence.

There is a curious post-script to this letter. Julia had, it seems, asked for his advice on whether to hire a new servant to replace one they had recently dismissed for stealing. He advised her not to bother with a search warrant but to hire a new servant without delay. The only caution advised was: "... but I would not take a Roman Catholic if I were you unless very strongly recommended, altogether you cannot be too careful."² He was not capable of such

¹Letter to Julia, 30 October 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

²Ibid.

subterfuge as to make this kind of remark simply to hide his own tendency towards the Catholic Church. His statement must be taken at face value. Whatever his religious feelings were at this stage he was not obviously aware that he was moving towards a Catholic position. Julia perhaps feared otherwise, for she knew him too well.

His long school tour lasted until November 18th when he returned to Hobart and thankfully settled back into the family routine. Mary, his daughter, was troublesome and defiant and he dealt with her by locking her in her room, or, in the last resort, by giving her "a good whipping". This seemed to effect the cure, though it is interesting that Thomas more than once remarked upon the mild good temper which Mary displayed whenever she returned from staying with Mr. and Mrs. Reibey who seemed to have treated her with great affection and kindness. But in general the family flourished; the garden yielded an abundance of greens and vegetables, the two cows provided all their milk and enough over for Julia to sell 13lbs. of butter a week to local shops, and Mary, Thomas's sister, sent a gift of £25, which was very welcome. At this time the Governor retired from service in Tasmania and Thomas revised his initial opinion quite drastically; by October 1854 the retiring Governor was seen to be "so good and brave and able" whereas the new Governor, Sir Henry Young, promised only to "Make himself very troublesome at first."¹ Such was Thomas's tendency to conservatism in face of change. A further clue to the state of his mind at this time can be gleaned from his reading of the Life of Chalmers which had recently been

¹ Letter to his Mother, 20 November 1854, Moorman MS., TL.

published in England. He was aghast at the kind of Calvinism he detected in Chalmers' attitude towards sin and forgiveness and commented:

I am inclined to think that much of the hard worldliness and selfishness which are so common even in religious professors in Scotland is to be attributed to their wilful rejection of that heavenly sustenance which Christ himself provided, and designed for the continual food of the souls of believers.

Clearly he had advanced along the path of acceptance; the conventional language of the church had replaced his own metaphysical observations, he was moving into a submissive state of acceptance of divine mystery in which the metaphysical image and the idea are the same, existing indivisibly and uncritically in the mind of the believer. Rebellion, personal theological speculation, all were finished in his mind; the next step was complete submission signified by a ritual act prompted by external events. They came within a matter of months.

Sir William Denison left Hobart in the middle of January 1855 and "expressed himself very kindly" to Thomas when they met for the last time. The new Governor settled in. Though it seemed a routine period it was, in fact, a crucial period of decision for Thomas. He was not away on tour so that there are no letters between him and Julia, but later letters suggest that during the first four months of the year she fought desperately to stave off his clear intention to

¹ Letter to his Mother, 20 November 1854, Moorman MS., TL.
Note. Thomas Chalmers D.D. (1780-1847), mathematician, natural scientist, social reformer and clergyman, for five years Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews, and of Theology at Edinburgh. Renowned for his discourses aimed at relating theology with natural science, and for leading the defection of 470 Scots clergymen to form the Free Church, in May 1843. Life of Chalmers published in six volumes 1849-1852 by his stepson William Hannah.

become a Catholic; it was a time of qualified promises, of stratagems and appeals, with Julia growing more and more agitated as each step was taken. The fact is that by April he had made up his mind; in May he wrote to John Henry Newman for advice not, as might be envisaged, on whether to convert, but on what employment to obtain after his conversion. His letter was entirely practical and sober, as was his conversion, it was not dramatic or sudden for he was no latter day Saul.

The whole picture, leading up to these momentous months, is clear. His increasing contact with clergy, both within his close circle of friends and in the course of his work kept religious questions in his consciousness. Desultory attendances at worship steadily reinforced his expressed enjoyment of the forms of worship in the Anglican Church and caused him to reflect upon his old securities and present doubts. Social and cultural isolation in Van Dieman's Land gradually impressed upon him his real dependance on external forms of symbols, generally accepted values and cultural traditions, and the one place in the colony where many of these could be found was the church. At the same time the steady success of his educational programme led him to feel that he really could act in a practical way to improve the life of the majority of the poor in Tasmania, for through education he could help to promote moral good as well as raise intellectual standards: he was beginning to follow his father's educational priorities. Thus both the theory and the practice of Christianity came together and took on that purposeful evangelism which he had once experienced himself at Rugby under his father's leadership. But he still lacked a binding or unifying theory

which would explain the role of the church in a modern state. The kinship which he began to feel for his father in the middle of 1854 was derived from his growing conviction that moral values derive from religion - his comments on good teachers clearly show that he thought of them first as living examples of right behaviour - so that good teachers are akin to priests. His father was both. It was but a small step from there to visualise the great preachers of the church standing in a continuous line from the present stretching back into the past as witnesses of Christian truth. This gradually became the source of the Church's authority, in Thomas's mind, and steadily, throughout 1854, he turned more and more to contemplating this historical tradition, increasingly assuming that 'historical fact' is synonymous with 'objectivity'. And objectivity is what he particularly strove for: "A state of mind which in philosophy goes by the name of Pyrrhonism had possessed me for some time," he wrote. "There seemed to be nothing which rested on a firm objective basis, nothing which was not a matter of opinion."¹ But historical facts did seem to have a firm objective basis, and he set out to discover all he could about the history of the church.

The logic of this action is similar to that search for the continuous inspiration of scripture which led Newman to Catholicism, through Anglicanism, over ten years earlier, and is an almost inevitable consequence of the attempt to find rational - even 'scientific' - explanations of religious belief. The concept of the development of doctrine had enabled Newman to discern a continuous thread of divine

¹Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.155.

inspiration through the changing and sometimes contradictory doctrines of the early church; it was a kind of evolutionary theory applied to theology. This gave the Roman Church, in his eyes, its ancient and unbroken authority and therefore its claim on his allegiance.

As a result Newman had concluded :

I came to the conclusion that there was no medium between Atheism and Catholicity, and that a perfectly consistent mind ... must embrace the one or the other. And I hold this still: I am a Catholic by virtue of my believing in God.

In 1854 Thomas was taking a parallel route to that taken by Newman, but being of a mind more susceptible to scientific or rational argument the key factor for him was not the divine inspiration of scripture but the historical continuity of the Roman Church which seemed increasingly to stand in direct line from the present to the past, and even to Christ himself, in a way that the Anglican Church could not claim to do. In this historical fact was a semblance of that scientific objectivity which he sought, and in the light of which the Reformation was exposed as an error, a deviation from the norm. He was prompted to turn to history not only because of a natural inclination but also by a curiously appealing passage from the First Epistle of St. Peter, which he heard one Sunday during his long school tour. "Who was this Peter?" he asked. "What was his general teaching? Who were his earliest helpers and successors?" For answers to these questions he turned to the Tracts for the Times, which he remembered had dealt with this period, and began to study the lives of the early saints and martyrs and the origins of the primitive church.

¹J.H. Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua, London 1955, p.190.

All the while he was steadily consolidating his respect for historical evidence, but it was destined to make his continued membership of the Anglican church impossible.

A relatively minor event then intervened, so minor that he did not even mention it when he wrote to Newman later, but it was sufficiently striking to remain imprinted on his memory for the rest of his life. Staying for the night in a country inn between visits to remote schools, he stumbled across a copy of Butler's Lives of the Saints. Opening it at random he found the life of St. Brigit of Sweden, and he began to read. He was at once surprised to discover that St. Brigit's Festival day falls on the very day that he had first heard the striking Epistle of St. Peter. To him that fact bore the marks of providence (though Julia accused him of superstition, possibly over this very issue). With this mark of significance upon his discovery of St. Brigit he readily identified with her, for, notwithstanding her connection with the Swedish royal family, she was an ordinary woman whose saintliness derived not from miraculous achievements but from continued loyalty to the Pope and steadfast observance of her Catholic beliefs against all opposition. In this story he found tangible saintliness he had already glimpsed in Mrs. Reiby, and with which he could identify. He recognised and accepted the sanctity of obedience, and with his growing belief in the validity of the historical continuity of the Catholic church - a continuity the Anglican church could not properly claim - he began to feel, as Newman had done before him, that there was no acceptable half-way position: ultimately all his argument and assessment of the available facts led him to the Catholic Church. Thomas was, of course,

a man who generally took his arguments to their logical conclusions; he could not remain for long in a state of uncertainty. His emigration had come about precisely because he, unlike many of his sympathetic contemporaries at Oxford, could not tolerate the uneasy conscience which resulted from having a set of ideals or opinions which were at variance with his actual behaviour. Having come to the same general conclusion as Newman, that "... there are but two alternatives, the way to Rome, and the way to Atheism" of which "Anglicanism is the half-way house on one side, Liberalism is the half-way house on the other"¹ he knew that the "half-way" houses were unacceptable to him; he had to take his arguments to their conclusion. As a result he remarked in April 1856 :

In April last year I had become convinced of the truth of Catholicism because the one Catholic Church ... is the only safe and sufficient witness across time and space.²

Having made his decision he found the next, and obvious, step was to write to the man who had trodden the same path so many years before; in May he wrote to Newman. It is clear from the tone and content of the letter that the decision to become a Catholic had already been taken: he wrote asking practical questions about the probable consequences of the decision, and it is equally clear from Newman's reaction to that letter that he regarded Thomas as being already a Catholic in spirit and intention. Thomas asked three questions: about the best time to make his submission to the Bishop, whether it would be right for him to continue working in the undenominational education system in Tasmania, and lastly, whether

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit. p.190.

²Letter to Newman, April 1856, Oratory MS.

Newman could see any prospect of employment for him in a Catholic college or seminary in England should he be asked to resign his post in Tasmania. Even at this early stage he clearly envisaged that he might lose his post as Inspector of Schools and Secretary of the Board of Education. It was a prudent, rational and practical letter. Newman's reply was immediate and though it is now lost the text of Thomas's reply is sufficient to indicate the warm and encouraging tones in which it must have been written. It was in this reply to Newman that Thomas revealed the tangle of promises and stratagems which surrounded his gradual movement towards Catholicism during 1855. Mrs. Reibey had made him promise to consider his position carefully, read books in support of Anglicanism, talk the matter over with clergymen whom she would name, and promise in any case to defer any decision for six months. He clearly made these promises - perhaps with Julia anxiously in the background - in April or May. By the time Newman's reply came he had observed the details of his bargain and still inclined towards the Catholic Church. Mrs. Reibey thus released him from his promise. Julia, on the other hand, exacted a more binding promise from him. On his evidence, she had "a violent prejudice against the very name of Catholic" and he agreed to her requests largely to calm her excited feelings "and allay the extreme irritation into which she was thrown by the knowledge of my state of mind."¹ So he promised that he would not become a Catholic without her consent until he had seen his mother in England. This latter point is important: Julia was shrewd enough to know that Mrs.

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 18 October 1855, Oratory MS.

Arnold's opinion would be important in Thomas's final decision; she believed, with some justification, that the family would oppose any such move and in any case there was no immediate prospect of their returning to England. She thought she had exacted an utterly binding promise from him. But in his second letter to Newman, written in October 1855, he was already seeking a way round his obligations to his wife.

I am now therefore in a position of great perplexity, I do not give up the hope that her eyes may be one day opened but at present she seems resolutely bent upon shutting up every avenue by which conviction might reach her soul. I think my best course will be to ask for a short leave so as to go home, see my mother, and return again...

He also intended to consult the Catholic Bishop in Tasmania.

It is evident that throughout the middle months of 1855 he tried hard to find ways around that promise, and the bitter and painful debate between them continued by letter during his school tour.

On June 22nd he wrote from Bridgwater :

I have been thinking much over the question at issue between us my dearest, and I can see my way clearly as far as this, namely to renew the promise I made to you some time ago, not to take any decided and final step until I had seen my mother. Whether I ought to have made the promise at all is another question; however it was made, and I feel I ought to abide by it.

But then he added a qualification that was to prove decisive in the fierce discussions which occurred during the months following :

... unless in the event, either of my being at the point of death, or of your voluntarily releasing me from it. I do not say indeed that I have ever formed any distinct idea of departing from this promise: still the possibility of doing so had occurred to me; but on farther reflection I feel that a promise is a promise, and

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 18 October 1855, Oratory MS.

² Letter to Julia, 22 June 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

ought to be kept, if it can be kept without pain, without regard to any changes of view which may subsequently come into the mind of the promiser...

The initial remarks were a melodramatic flourish, but the ensuing qualifications make it clear that he had really made no binding promise at all. In great distress Julia replied at once, to Oatlands, as he directed :

I received your letter this morning and if possible the contents of it made me more unhappy than I was before. In it you clearly gave me to understand that your mind is irrevocably made up on the subject, in that were it not for a promise you had made me, which you seem to think you were not right in making, you would join the Church of Rome, I conclude after the six months had elapsed during which you promised Mrs. Reibey you would take no decided steps. So the fearful gulf between us is made past redemption, God only knows what it costs me to feel this. How different were my first feelings on learning that you had become a believer in Christianity, I thought (how truly mistaken I was) that through you, I, and our children, would be led to God. But now for myself, I almost feel the utter impossibility of such ever being the case; a Romanist I cannot be, my whole soul revolts from a religion so entirely to my mind inconsistent with the true worship of Christ, and for our children I cannot but feel the prospect to be equally dreary. All I ask of you now is to try to examine the question impartially, to ask yourself whether, as you were mistaken in your former views you may not be mistaken now, and also to ask yourself if you cannot be content to live and die without joining the Church of Rome. If after you have heard from home in reply to your letters telling them what is the case and after having heard whatever may be urged by anyone who has your welfare at heart you are still in the same mind, I will release you from your promise. But at the same time that I do this I will, I must leave you - the fearful gulf that would be placed between us would be more than I could bear, and still live with you, for our children's sakes as well as for mine it will be better for us to part. Of course as a true R.C. you can never consent to their being brought up in the Church of England, I can never consent to their being brought up in the Church of Rome, and a division of religion amongst children of the same parents would be frightful if those children were still to be under the same roof. Do not think my dearest Tom it costs me nothing to feel this, would to God I could look upon it in any other way, but I could not live with you and feel at the same time so wholly separated from you. You tell me to pray to God, I

¹Letter to Julia, 22 June 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

cannot pray, I do not know how and you who might have taught me have placed an insurmountable barrier between us. I love you dearest Tom most deeply, and in separating from you I shall strike my own death blow but as things are now it must be so.

After doubting that he felt any love for her any longer, she brought her tormented letter to an end with one last appeal, which was also an attack :

We are both young to feel that all our happiness is blighted, but you have the fanaticism, the superstition of the Church of Rome to take the place of earthly affections. I have nothing.

Thomas must have received it only two or three days after his own letter of June 22nd for he replied on June 25th. The tone of his reply lends some credence to Julia's bitter cry that he loved and cared for her less than he had done formerly, for his tone throughout was controlled and in an incredibly low key in view of the passionate letter he had received :

I have received your letter and it has given me no slight pain. But how little we can read one another's hearts my dearest wife. You thought my letter the coldest you had ever received from me, and that it showed my altered feelings towards you; while God knows that since I left town I have thought of you more uninterruptedly and more² tenderly than in any former absence since we were married...

The double negative of "no slight pain" betrays a control of emotion, a deliberate understatement which contrasts sharply with the full and positive statements in Julia's letter. After an explanation - or an apology - for his letter, on the grounds that he was afraid to express himself too clearly in case he should give some offence or touch "some painful chord", he gradually came round to clarifying his position in terms which she could not possibly mistake :

¹ Letter to Thomas from Julia, probably 23 June 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to Julia, 25 June 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

I confess before Him (God) and you that you have much, very much, which you can justly charge against me, and that if I act selfishly or unfeelingly towards you, I shall indeed be the vilest wretch that lives. Words cannot express the contempt, the loathing which I should deserve if I were capable of sacrificing the happiness, the moral and religious growth, of the wife whom I love and who has been a true and faithful wife to me, to some morbid caprice or taste for spiritual luxuries, engendered with pride and wilfulness of my own foolish heart ... If I believe that it is my duty, and your duty, and the duty of all of us to submit to the Catholic Church, it is just because I feel most intensely that my whole way of proceeding before was utterly wrong; that instead of being justified in taking my own course in defiance of the counsel and authority of others, I am unfit to be my own guide, and ought to pray daily for true guidance and for grace to follow it in humility and obedience. Well, I firmly believe that Christ did establish such a guide, with a legitimate and an unfailling authority, when He left the earth, and that you, and I, and everyone ought to obey it. That I believe it is indeed nothing at all, but it is a belief of the vast majority of the Christian world, it is the belief which the Catholic Church herself declares to be the true one, and it therefore ought to be accepted. In all this ask yourself, my darling, how I am setting up my own judgement against that of my friends here or at home, or against my father's opinions. I believe my own opinion, as mine, to be not worth the paper on which it is written ... I know also that I am not fit and never shall be to hold a candle to my father in any one way. Yet for all this it is not impossible that I should see a truth which they (i.e. his mother and sisters) from various causes did not or do not see.

The main lines of argument between the two of them are clear: her accusations of his wilfulness, of refusal to take the good advice of others, of mistaken judgements in the past, of the reaction of the rest of the family, and the reaction of Dr. Arnold, had he been alive. Julia used all of them, but Thomas had an answer to them all. He admitted his earlier errors, he was taking the advice of others, he was not being wilful but acting obediently to the instructions of the church, and with the largest part of the Christian world in agreement with him how could he be accused of being mistaken on this

¹ Letter to Julia, 25 June 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

occasion? The more he argued for obedience to the Catholic faith the less Julia could touch him; his concern was almost entirely with the mistaken promise he had made to her earlier in the year.

But she did not give up. Though she was physically still weakened from the birth of their son Theodore in April and worn down with worry about her husband's intentions she wrote an impassioned letter to Newman in an attempt to alter the course of events. But in October, replying to Newman, Thomas apologised for Julia's interference in a strangely cold and unfeeling manner :

My poor wife has written you a letter, which I suppose will reach you; - if it should, forgive I entreat you, its unjust and half-frantic language, and pray for the unhappy writer. An evil spirit, I really believe, at times possesses her, and she does not know what she does or says. When I think of my own and others sins and sorrows it seems as if life ought to be one continual act of prayer.

In the meantime he had written home, not directly to his mother but to his sister Jane. It was not to be the last time he would use an intermediary in difficult matters. Then both he and Julia had to wait. Fortunately Thomas had a long school tour to undertake in November and December and he decided to take Julia part of the way with him, before leaving her for a few weeks with her relatives. Mary was taken to Mrs. Reiby's, William was left at home with the Irish servant, and Theodore went with Julia. It was a good way of using the time, and probably allowed tempers to cool, for Julia never did leave her husband, as she had threatened to do.

They returned home shortly before Christmas to find the reply from Fox How waiting. To Julia's amazement the letter was both understanding

¹ Letter to John Henry Newman, 18 October 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

and conciliatory. Thomas at once dashed off a grateful reply :

I felt an indescribable relief after reading it. However the truth may be as to these questions of religion which perplex and divide mankind, your letter, my own dear mother, breathes the true Catholic spirit, that blessed spirit of peace, which we know, belongs to the children of God, and although I ought not to have doubted for an instant that you would so write and feel, yet experience teaches me that an earnest belief upon almost any subject (but most of all this one) so easily raises feelings of opposition and estrangement in those who do not share it, that it was not unnatural that I should feel anxious. But now I am sure that you will not cast me off from your love.

Either he did not care, or he was equally certain that Julia would not cast him off.

In January 1856 only Julia's opposition stood between him and his submission to the Catholic Bishop in Hobart. Bravely, or stubbornly, she still refused to release him from his promise, despite all his attempts at persuasion. Despairing at the lack of help from Fox How she took a more damaging course, and one which was at least partly to blame for the rumours which later put pressure on him to resign his post: she began to talk openly amongst her friends in Hobart. Whether there was a design in this, or whether she was simply relieving the sufferings of her own heart is difficult to determine, but it served to have the opposite effect to what she hoped: it strengthened Thomas's resolve to settle the matter quickly. He turned to the Catholic Bishop Willson as the gossip began to spread. The Bishop's answer was direct: the promise to Julia would best be broken. And the reason was simple, for since he could find the truth only within the Catholic Church, and only the promise to Julia stood

¹Letter to his Mother, 24 December 1855, Moorman MS., TL.

in his way, he would have to allow the greater need to take precedence over the lesser. His moral dilemma was resolved; the Bishop had taken the responsibility away from him. He was received into the Catholic Church on January 18th 1856.

As a sidelight on the ethics of this decision it is interesting to note some remarks made by J.H. Newman to Lady Chatterton, about the same kind of problem, eight years later :

But then I felt, the question was one of personal duty in the most solemn of matters - and that, if I saw that there was one Church to which the promises were made, and that I as yet was not in it, I must join it, and leave to the Providence of God to overcome all consequences ... and ... if I find a person enquiring, and unsettled, then certainly a (sic) feel it a sacred duty to urge, that Truth is one, and that the Divine Voice must be followed at all hazards...

On the day of Thomas's reception into the Church the local paper carried an article declaring that he had been 'perverted' to the Catholic faith, and calling on him to resign his post as Inspector of Schools. He at once assumed that Julia's gossip had finally spread to the press, but the personal bitterness between them was heavily overshadowed by the external clamour for his resignation. The picture is confused. According to P.A. Howell three or four papers on the island made no immediate reference to the matter, while two actually came to his defence. The attack was not carried along on all fronts. Yet the fact is that in less than four months he formally applied for leave of absence and sailed for England only two weeks afterwards, knowing full well that he had effectively been dismissed. The leave of absence was merely a form of words to disguise the unpleasant truth.

¹ Letters and Diaries of J.H. Newman, ed. Stephen Dessain, London 1970, XX, p.495.

Sections of the press continued the attack on him throughout January and February, and Thomas wryly reported home that the Governor was daily receiving applications for the post of Inspector of Schools from candidates who blandly assumed that if the post was not already vacant it soon would be. The Governor, however, steadily insisted that there was no vacancy, which gave Thomas some degree of comfort. He was also reassured by the fact that the island's education system was now a secular system, so that his own religious opinions ought to have no bearing on his position; but he also realised that in time the opposition might build up sufficient force to remove him :

... it is by no means improbable that the opposition to my continuance in the appointment may become so hot as to interfere with my usefulness as a public servant, and in that case I should be forced to resign.

But he also hoped that with the help of his friends in the Legislative Council he would be offered another post at least as good as the Inspectorship, for they had hinted that they would like to see him in one of the three posts of Under Secretary to the principal Government departments yet to be set up. Such a post would be permanent, so that despite the outcries against him he felt secure enough; there did not seem to be any danger of redundancy.

But there was less security at home. The strife between Thomas and Julia was clearly continuing, and with a history of broken marriages in Julia's family her threat to leave Thomas was not a matter to be taken lightly. But Thomas kept the details away from his family in England. His letters give no real information, only occasional

¹Letter to his Mother, 21 February 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

hints that the struggle was not over. "You will naturally wonder that I have said nothing about Julia, as to how she takes it," he wrote. "My dearest Mother, if I could say anything satisfactory I would; but alas! I cannot. I earnestly pray, and so I trust will you, that God will have mercy upon her, and calm at last the unhappy perturbation of her mind..."¹ That one comment speaks for itself.

External pressures then began to rise more quickly. Two days after he had written to his mother, on March 3, he wrote to his sister: "My future lies in considerable uncertainty before me, because the Ultra-Protestant feeling against me might upon any slight provocation burst out and lead to my ejection from office."² And although he still hoped to be offered an alternative post he clearly realised that this, too, might prove false, so he suggested :

Now if, amongst you, you could assist me to the extent of £150, I think it (a return to England) could be managed. ...if I were empowered to draw upon you to that extent at 30 days' right, next December or January (i.e. 1856-1857) when the ships go home, I think that we might well be able by the³ sale of our furniture etc to come home to dear old England.

He little realised that his departure was much nearer than that.

Three weeks later, at the end of March, he wrote to his brother Willy, who was by then in the Education Service in the Punjab, proposing that a mutual exchange of education documents - reports, recommendations, statements - might well be advantageous to both of them in their work. He did not send the letter immediately, and a note added on May 9th,

¹ Letter to his Mother, 3 March 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to Jane, 5 March 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

³ Ibid.

some five weeks later, indicates the sudden and unexpected end of his career:

Some how or other this letter has been at a standstill all this time, and in the interval hey presto, the cards have been shuffled and a totally new game has commenced. O my Willy what a strange world it is! here am I, about to take 18 months leave of absence ... because I rejoice in the name of Catholic.

But the next sentence reveals why he had to leave his post; his attitudes to education, and the policies which resulted from them, could no longer be neutral. The fears of his Protestant critics were probably justified in theory, even though there had been too little time for any consequences to have worked out in practice :

... neither can a latitudinarian community tolerate that its educational affairs shall be administered by Catholic hands, nor can I feel any longer the smallest satisfaction in promoting any education which does not proceed upon Catholic principles.

This was the root of the matter. A year later he commented to Willy:

the Catholic faith is the source of such inconceivable blessings to the receiver, that he who seeks humbly and sincerely is certain to find it, and he who already has it cannot absolve himself, though he may do it with little hope, from the duty of giving his testimony.²

The only question of any significance, then, in the early months of 1856, was how long would it take for his new bias to become obvious? Converted, and convinced of his new proselytising role he could not have failed to alienate public opinion in due course. The paradox of it was that he had reformed a patchy, Church-based education system into an efficient secular organisation; now it was the secular nature of the system that made his continued presence unacceptable.

¹ Letter to Willy, 5th April - 9th May 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

² Letter to Willy, 19th November 1857, Moorman MS., TL.

On May 21 he was granted eighteen months leave of absence on half salary, on the tacit understanding that he would not return to Tasmania. The house was emptied, the furniture sold, and temporary lodgings taken in Hobart. On July 12th they sailed for England in the William Brown, a rat-infested barque of doubtful sea-worthiness. The prospect of the long voyage was made worse for Julia by the fact that she was carrying their fourth child, destined to be born in England, but Thomas was at last returning home even though the circumstances of that return were less than auspicious. His life in the colonies had lasted a little over eight years.

CHAPTER NINE.

The Catholic University.

The William Brown docked in London on October 17th, 1856, after a voyage of a little over three months, prolonged because of the Captain's decision to steer a wide course round Cape Horn. The cramped quarters, poor food, rolling seas, and the rats made it a miserable time, especially for Julia who was six months pregnant when the ship docked. Almost eleven years earlier Thomas had left England a single man, with confused motives and uncertain prospects, now he returned with a wife and three children, fairly clear motives, but with a future no more certain than when he had left. The boat tied up at St. Katherine's dock and after they had removed their portable belongings they trudged to Lower Thames Street where they had rooms booked at the Vine Inn, which was a somewhat lowly dwelling. The following morning Julia and Mary stayed behind at the Vine while Thomas took the boys back with him to the William Brown to finish sorting the baggage before it was unloaded on to the dock. The first sign of welcome was a letter from Mrs. Arnold, delivered to the ship, but the second was even more affecting for while Thomas was below decks "amidst a great crowd, bustle, noise and heat" a Customs officer elbowed his way through to him and delivered the news that his sister was waiting on deck.

I lost no time, you may believe, in pushing my way out, and up the companion, and there on the deck was dear K, and her William. We had a good hug, without the smallest regard to appearances; even a Frenchman could not have charged us with any 'flegm Brittanique' in this case. And then she took my boys, Willy and Theodore, up to the 'Vine' where Julia was staying, in a cab.

¹Letter to Mrs. Arnold, 19 October 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

This simple welcoming action was typical of the Forsters, to be followed in later years by many more acts of selfless generosity. William's reaction on seeing the Vine was immediate: it was just not good enough, though no doubt any change from the conditions on board ship must have seemed good to Thomas and Julia. He at once advised them to move and the same afternoon they took rooms at the "Four Swans" in Bishopsgate, which was as Thomas remarked "a great change for the better." Though it is not stated as such there is the implication in Thomas's letter home that William Forster gave them some financial help to enable them to make this move. So the introductions of the morning began to strengthen into friendship. "As for William" Thomas wrote, "I like him exceedingly, but I was always sure that I should."¹

The next three days were taken up with immediate practical problems. To his obvious chagrin Thomas found that no despatch from Hobart had yet been received by the Colonial Office in London confirming his agreed leave of absence and half pay. The lack of money to hand was pressing on him but he ruefully admitted: "Not that it matters to me, for I shall have to remit the greatest part of the money to Van Dieman's Land as I get it in order to meet obligations which I was obliged to contract before leaving."² It appears from later comments that Mr. Sorell had already paid off some of his debts and his mother had sent him a bill to draw upon in Hobart, so it is not immediately clear what 'obligations' he was referring to. The sale

¹Letter to his Mother, 19 October 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

²*ibid.*

of the furniture and other household effects had enabled him to settle many of the debts he had incurred at his marriage, which suggests that most of these 'obligations' were the costs of the voyage to England. This would explain both the choice of the William Brown and the Vine, for both were cheap. So Thomas wasted no time in trying to find work. On the second day after they had docked he visited Cardinal Wiseman to see if there was any possibility of work in a Catholic institution. Nothing but the promise of more talks later came out of the meeting, and this strangely affected the future, for he immediately turned to John Henry Newman. With a tight-lipped stoicism he declared to his mother: "I do believe that I have done right and I would not if I could retrace my steps. The future seems clouded now, but God is merciful."¹ The practical consequences of his conversion were beginning to tell, but in a sense he was right: the future was less uncertain than he knew, for his first letter to Newman asking for help with some kind of employment in a Catholic institution, had done its work, indeed it was doing its work even as he wrote home from London in such depressed spirits. Newman was only too ready to make use of a son of Dr. Arnold, especially one whose intellectual powers he already respected highly, for it was a difficult time for Catholic converts, and particularly difficult for any in exposed or vulnerable positions. When Thomas returned to England the Roman Catholic Bishops had been established for a mere five years and were still unpopular. Former priests of the

¹Letter to his Mother, 19 October 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

Anglican Church found it impossible to obtain work after they had joined the Catholic Church, and even lay converts, as Thomas knew from personal experience, were lucky to keep their former occupations.

As Raymond Chapman has commented :

Even one whose profession was not the Church but the Law could set down for his own consideration among reasons for not becoming a Roman Catholic, 'hesitation at separating myself from every relative I have.' ...Hostility became hysterical when a significant number of lay and clerical converts moved to Roman Catholicism around the middle of the century. Hitherto the Papists had been virtually confined to old families which had passed on the faith, foreign denizens and immigrants, and the growing number of Irish settlers. Now it seemed that thoughtful and devout men could pass from one allegiance to another. They did so at the cost of personal anguish as well as private hostilities and public obloquy.

They were difficult times for Newman himself, struggling with the Catholic University in Dublin, the Oratory in Birmingham, and the problem of maintaining his own reputation as a Catholic scholar in the face of Protestants and Catholics alike who seemed to want him discredited and back in the Anglican fold. He had already realised that Dr. Arnold's son could be a valuable ally in the cause of Catholic higher education, and Thomas's experience as Inspector of Schools in Tasmania, added to his Oxford qualifications, was an additional bonus. On the morning of October 19th, of course, Thomas knew nothing of this, instead he was thinking ahead to the approaching family reunion at Fox How and the many difficulties his Catholicism would cause. In Hobart the immediate excitement of his new faith had enabled him to stand out against the arguments of his friends and the desperate entreaties of his wife, and even the loss of his

¹ Raymond Chapman, Faith and Revolt, London 1970, pp.12-13.

post was partly offset by the way in which it brought an unexpectedly early return home to England. As far as Julia was concerned, he consistently and unreasonably hoped for her conversion to Catholicism; but then, he believed in miracles. But with Fox How only a little over two hundred miles away, he began to realise with some pain the kind and nature of the separation from all that he had known before. It manifested itself in an accumulation of little things, of which one was the question of attendance at family prayers, which had always been an important feature of Arnold family life. He decided to forewarn his mother, perhaps to take the edge off the unease he felt at having to raise the matter at all :

Dearest Mother, I have often reflected during the voyage, not without pain - with reference to my being at Fox How - that the Catholic Church forbids her members to hold religious communion with those who do not belong to her. It is a painful reflexion, - and one bitter to flesh and blood, - because I sincerely think that the mere fact of my having become a Catholic is rather an argument against Catholicism than for it, and also feel that those near and dear ones with whom I must not hold religious communion, are morally far superior to myself. Still the Church has so ordained, and her children cannot doubt that it is right since the longer they live, and the more successfully they strive against sin, the dearer becomes their insight into the supernatural light and wisdom which pervades every precept, no less than every doctrine, of the spouse of Christ.

Yet it is clear that he did doubt. To say that "her children cannot doubt" is to put obedience before conviction, and to argue that the 'mere fact' of his having become a Catholic is an argument against Catholicism, suggests that he found the division between Catholic and Protestant arbitrary in its practical manifestations. This contains just a hint of that bridling at Papal authority which later became

¹Letter to his Mother, 19 October 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

so significant; even so soon after his conversion he was finding it difficult to bow the head and accept these limitations on his individual freedom; but accept it he did. In a confused state of apprehension and joy he took his family north on October 22nd to introduce Julia, Mary, William and Theodore to the legendary world of Fox How. For Julia and the children it marked the beginning of an entirely new way of life. There are, of course, no letters describing the arrival and immediate family discussions: conversations replaced writing, but Mary, then a girl of five, who was soon to be sent to boarding school and not live with her parents for the next ten years, wrote down her reactions nearly fifty years later :

My father and mother were young; my mother's eager sympathetic temper brought her many friends; and for us children, Fox How and its dear inmates opened a second home and new joys, which upon myself in particular left impressions never to be effaced or undone.

The grey house stands now, as it stood then, on a 'how' or rising ground in the beautiful Westmoreland valley leading from Ambleside to Rydal. It is a modest building with ten bedrooms and three sitting rooms. Its windows look straight into the heart of Fairfield, the beautiful semi-circular mountain which rears its hollowed front and buttressing scars against the north...

Inside, Fox How was comfortably spacious, and I remember what a place it appeared to my childish eyes, fresh from the tiny cabin of a 400 ton sailing ship, and the rough life of a colony. My grandmother, its mistress, was then sixty one.

Secure refuge though this was Thomas wasted no time. The very next day he wrote a letter to Newman in the hope that his earlier letters, from Hobart, had done their work. Again he was specific in mentioning his hopes for the Catholic University. Whether by luck or by judgement he made exactly the right move: as a fellow convert Newman understood the position he was in and was also able to make a firm offer of a

¹Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1918, pp.23-24.

post in the University, which is more than Thomas had extracted from Cardinal Wiseman. Newman also replied at once, and the exchange of letters marked the beginning of a life-long friendship between them. In a very real sense they became useful to each other as well as becoming compatriots in the cause of Catholic higher education. But this was all in the future as Thomas sat down, on that October day in 1856, to write his letter :

I have arrived in England - much sooner than I expected when I last wrote to you - having after all been unable to obtain permission from the local government to postpone my leave for six months. I am staying for the present with my mother, who, as well as the rest of my family, has behaved most kindly and affectionately with regard to my change of religion. And now - you will excuse my speaking to you about my personal matters, having already sought counsel from you, and so greatly benefitted from it, - I am very anxious to get as soon as I can some employment, and, if it were possible, in the service of the Church. I know well that the difficulties are great, the number of converts being so large, and many of them having such far higher claims and qualifications. But my expectations are not lofty; to do some plain useful work and to live in obedience, is what I most desire, so only that by my work I can support my family. I have seen the Cardinal in London, and if, as was his intention, he should go to Ushaw next week, he has asked me to meet him there, when I should hope to have some conversation with him on the subject. But in the meantime I thought I would ask you whether there was any chance of my getting private pupils in Dublin, to prepare for the lectures at the Catholic University. I am in a state of great ignorance as to the present position of the University, but the above plan had occurred to me as possibly feasible, and I should feel much obliged if you would give me your opinion respecting it. My wife and children are with me. The former still seems to feel as much repugnance as ever to Catholicity; at the same time, mixing in English society is likely to have a generally softening and beneficial effect on her mind and temper; - indeed I think it has begun to have that effect already.

Thomas's remarks about Julia are perhaps best not commented upon in detail; had she seen the letter she would undoubtedly have reacted with her customary vigour. As to his professed 'ignorance' of the

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 23 October 1856, Oratory MS.

state of the Irish University, it was only a lack of recent, detailed information; he understood enough to know that Newman was the very man to approach, and enough to suggest a practical means of attaching himself to the university even if he could not actually become part of it by appointment.

Thomas wrote on October 23rd; he received Newman's reply on the 26th., and by the opening style Newman at once indicated the kind of acquaintanceship he was offering; he followed it with almost exactly the kind of opportunity Thomas was hoping for, despite the small salary :

My dear Arnold,

Will you allow me to call you so? How strange it seems! What a world this is! I knew your father a little, and I really think I never had an unkind feeling towards him. I saw him at Oriel on the Purification before (I think) his death, and was glad to meet him. If I ever said a harsh thing against him, I am sorry for it. In seeing you, I shall have a sort of pledge that he at the moment of his death made it all up with me. Excuse this - I came here last night, and it is so marvellous to have your letter this morning.

I think I could offer you the Professorship of English Literature at £200 - a low remuneration. I could offer you also tuition of any number of youths up to twenty at £10 a head - very low too, and I could not offer the latter permanently, but at present. I write in great haste, as I have much to do today. May all blessings come upon you.

What a strange letter this is, particularly the imputation that Thomas's appeal to him was a compensation for the differences of opinion that had once separated him from Dr. Arnold. But he was obviously anxious to secure Thomas's services even to the extent of offering extra tuition as additional bait. In fact it was never realised. The salary was low, as Newman admitted, for £300 a year was a more common minimum.

¹Letter to Thomas Arnold, from Dublin, 25 October 1856, Oratory MS.

As J.C. Shairp commented to Arthur Clough :

Our St. Andrew's Chairs are only worth, some not more than £300. Mine and Sellars' £400 or a little more ... The Edinburgh Greek and Latin chairs are worth, I suppose, from £500 to £600. And the Glasgow ones upwards of £1,000.

But, even at £200 a year, it was a post and it did carry some status: Thomas replied immediately that he found it attractive but fearing that his stammer would disqualify him from a post of Professor of English Literature he suggested that they should meet in Dublin to discuss the matter. He thought that if Newman still wanted him to take the post, stammer and all, he would have no doubts about accepting it. As to being addressed as "My dear Arnold" he reacted simply : "...it is a real pleasure to me."

There is no record of how the family received the news, but doubtless with concern. The Irish question was soon to become one of the burning issues in English politics, culminating in the move towards Irish Home Rule later in the century. In 1856, when Thomas received the offer of the post of Professor at the Catholic University, a violent and disturbed phase was building up momentum, of which the Arnolds had already become aware from the reports of their friends the Whateleys, in Dublin. As Jane had written to Thomas on March 28th 1848 :

I should think the Whateleys would be glad to leave Ireland for a little while; it is in a terrible state at present ... Every Englishman now in Ireland must feel that he is living in a nation of enemies; the Whateleys say that the most bitter and revolutionary songs are sung nightly under their windows; bonfires on every hill celebrate any rumour of a triumph gained in any shape over military, police or magistracy.²

¹ Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. F.L. Mulhauser, London 1957, II, p.589.

² Letter to Thomas, 28 March 1848, Moorman MS., TL.

Faced with Newman's offer Thomas had no choice but to accept the risks involved. Newman, on the other hand, was enjoying unqualified satisfaction at the prospect of seeing Thomas at the University. On October 30th., probably the very day he received Thomas's second letter, he wrote to Edward Caswall: "Only fancy Arnold's son being our Professor of English Literature! there is a great chance of it."¹ He was obviously delighted at what was a considerable coup for the Catholics and it was not only the Arnold name which weighed heavily with him, perhaps not even the main one, for in writing to Joseph Dixon, Bishop of Armagh a few months later he said: "Mr. Arnold is the son, and (I believe) the cleverest son of the late Dr. Arnold of Rugby."² Allowing for the fact that Newman had to present his new recruit in the best possible light to the ruling Bishops, the remark throws an interesting light on his opinion of Thomas's capabilities. It was not an isolated comment - there are others of a similar nature - Newman had reason to value Thomas highly; he had, after all, graduated with a First from Oxford, and not even Matthew had managed that. So Thomas went to Dublin on November 4th to talk the matter over with Newman, with the result that he accepted the post and agreed to begin at once, even before the official submission of his appointment was placed in front of the University's governing Bishops of Dublin, Armagh and Cashel. Incredibly, it was only a little over two weeks since Thomas had landed in England.

¹ Letters and Diaries of J.H. Newman, ed. Stephen Dessain, London 1967, XVII, p.344.

² Ibid. XVIII, p.545.

The Catholic University that he had so hurriedly joined had been in existence since 1851, following the instructions of the Holy See. It was the Catholic reply to Peel's "godless colleges" established in Cork, Galway and Belfast in 1845, and affiliated into the Queen's University of Ireland in 1850. The setting up of Maynooth College in 1795 as a seminary for Irish Catholic Priests, and its enhanced status after 1845, when Peel raised its annual grant from £8,000 to £26,000 a year, had strengthened the position of the Catholic clergy: the new university in Dublin was a positive assertion of the role they consequently wished to play in Irish education and politics. One of the chief architects of this new role was Dr. Paul Cullen, the recently-appointed Archbishop of Dublin. He was the most influential of the three governing Bishops of the Catholic University, the other two being the Bishops of Armagh and Cashel. John Henry Newman was its first Rector and therefore responsible for the initial planning of the new institution. It opened in 1854 in buildings around the University Church Newman had built in St. Stephen's Green, near to his own university house in Harcourt Street. There were five faculties of Medicine, Science, Arts, Philosophy and Letters, and Theology. By 1858 there were twenty Professors, of whom seven belonged to the Medical Faculty, which was the strongest in the University and, in Newman's view, the one most likely to survive should the University run into difficulties. This, and the fact that there were two Professors of Literature, one Classical and one English, indicate that Newman's conception of the institution was based on the most recent ideas of university design. London University had clearly provided the structural model, hence the importance of the

faculties of Medicine and Science, but Newman had also seen fit to build in a professorial system, probably with the recommendations of the Oxford and Cambridge Commission of 1850 in mind. But in actually establishing a Chair of English Literature Newman was at least thirty years ahead of the English universities, and as Professor of English Literature Thomas took on a pioneering task, for it fell to him to construct a syllabus and design the courses to go with it. McCarthy, the original holder, had been in the office for two years but for some unspecified reason he had resigned. Little had been accomplished during his time and that meant that, with no models in the English universities to guide him, Thomas had to create a new school. There were four university houses, normally presided over by priests, and the total expenditure of the university amounted to about £6,700 a year. The income was derived from collections made in Catholic Churches throughout Ireland. While Newman believed the Medical Faculty to be the strongest faculty he regarded the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters as by far the weakest for it had few students and its courses were the ones most likely to include matters of politics, religion, history and ethics offensive to Irish Catholic opinion. Staffing such a faculty was, therefore, a particularly delicate matter since the men who were qualified to teach in it would almost inevitably be English :

As to the University, first it is only the Faculty of Arts which halts - and recollect that of the London University too Medicine was the sheet anchor for a time. We are prosperous in Medicine. Our Register (the Atlantis magazine) will give our Science Faculty a name - in Philosophy and Letters we are lame - we always have been. We never have had Irish youths except one or two. Barnewall, Errington, White, I suspect are all. The rest are Burses, English, Scotch, foreigners.

Still, looking to the future - first supposing Philosophy and Letters to perish, quite enough for a University remains. The only hitch is that Philosophy and Letters costs twice as much as other Faculties, and is made up in great measure of Englishmen. The English party costs £1300; more than the whole of the other two Faculties. You may suppose I don't say this, (and tell out only my thoughts to you), but I feel unpleasantly that, for what does good to two or three Irish only, I am making a sort of job in favor (sic) of the English of Irish money. I don't say that it really is so - but it is what might be said, and may soon be said.

This it is that makes me so desire that English subscriptions should be given.

But English subscriptions were not given, and control of the University thus lay in the hands of those who provided the cash, namely the Catholic Archbishops. Dr. Cullen was the most powerful of the three, and he regarded the University very differently from the way Newman regarded it. Thomas drew the following portrait of the two of them many years later, and it implies that agreement between them was congenitally impossible :

Cullen was a strong man, and not hostile to learning and culture on principle; and if Newman had been less shrinkingly sensitive, less English, less Oxonian, in short something different from what he was, the two might have worked together to some profitable account. As it was, no one who saw the blunt, sturdy, rugged peasant from the County Meath side by side with the half French banker's son from London and² Oxford, could doubt that cordiality between them was impossible.

Basically the differences between them sprang from their responsibilities: Dr. Cullen felt responsible to the Irish people for whom the University represented a means of lifting the intellectual standards of many who would not otherwise receive any form of higher education, while Newman felt responsible to Catholics in general, looking as they were for a

¹ Letters and Diaries of J.H. Newman, ed. Stephen Dessain, London 1972, XVIII, p.187.

² Letter to Lord Acton, 29 January 1892, Acton Correspondence MS., CUL.

place of Catholic university education to rival those in England which were either seen as 'godless' or tied to the Anglican Church. Newman was horrified at the low intellectual levels which Cullen seemed prepared to accept; Cullen no doubt regarded Newman as elitist. Naturally enough, Thomas agreed fairly happily with Newman's point of view, not only because of his growing friendship with the Rector but also because he, too, was concerned with the problems of Catholic Higher Education and the need for a university to serve them. In practical terms, however, the immediate consequences of this fundamental division of opinion in the university's leadership were only too obvious: there were delays in implementing improvements, there was a steady anti-English feeling, and Newman's appointments were frequently blocked or delayed for months. Newman thought the Irish Bishops simply did not know how to manage the University's affairs; in a letter to Ornsby, the Professor of Classical Literature, he said :

What you say about the University being supported by the lower class not the higher, is obvious and undeniable - and it accounts for the fact why Dr. Cullen does not care for the higher. It accounts for it but it does no more - still, the fact is that he does not care for that class for whom the University is set up ... The sons of bakers do not require a university education - or at least, when they do, then their fathers, the bakers, will be anxious to have some share in the administration of the funds.¹

Newman clearly had a policy, he knew for whom he was organising the University, whereas the Irish Bishops seemed to have no clearly-formulated objectives even though Patrick Leahy, Bishop of Cashel, and Michael Flannery, Bishop of Killaloe, were former members of the University. Newman suspected that there was more to it than this,

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.68.

that the Bishops were in some way deficient, and his ironic remark about Dr. Cullen is indicative of the feeling between them :

Some of the Bishops as the Archbishop of Cashel or the Bishop of Killaloe are very desirous of promoting the interests of the University but they simply do not know how. They are simply helpless with all their sincere desires, - as I should be, if I were made Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Dr. Cullen wishes well to the University, but while he is as ignorant as any one how to do it good, he has not the heart to have perfect confidence in any one - as if I should determine to be a bona fide Chancellor of the Exchequer, but be quite unwilling to take hints from Gladstone and Disraeli as to my measures. Dr. Leahy will trust a man, Dr. Cullen will not. Here is the origo mali - an Archbishop without trust in any one. I wonder he does not cook his own dinners.

But though Newman argued about the future of the University from an English point of view he was not supported by English opinion, which, as far as its public expression was concerned, cared nothing for what was happening in Dublin. In an attempt to provoke interest Newman wrote a series of articles in the Weekly Register under the pseudonym 'Q in the corner'; he eventually commented: "... what it brought out clearly was the English sentiment. Not a word came in advocacy of the University from any English College or centre."²

The Irish press was different; seeing in the development of the University a new national focus it consistently attacked the English elements on the staff, especially the relatively high number of English Professors. The Bishops were acutely sensitive to the general mood and Cullen became increasingly reluctant to confirm English appointments. In November 1857, for example, Newman had to write an apologetic letter to the Very Rev. Dr. Forde, who had been recently appointed Professor of Canon Law, to explain why his appointment had

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit. XIX , p.379.

²Ibid. XVIII, p.200n.

not been confirmed by the Bishops. This being the case, he could not make his profession of faith before the Rector and so could not begin his teaching. In this, as in other instances, Newman took the responsibility of authorising the teaching to start, but it put him in an equivocal position. His letter to Forde sets out the situation exactly :

I wish I could relieve the difficulty which occasions your letter of this morning; but I fear it is out of my power. I have been desirous again and again of administering the oath to the Professors, especially last St. Patrick's day, but have been hindered by the circumstance that up to this time I have had no official notice from any quarter of the formal nomination of the Professors by the Bishops...

Under these circumstances the only Professors I can recognise are the five who were nominated by the Archbishops at Maynooth in June 1854. Anyhow, I am unable to administer the oath to you, and the other Professors, whom I have recommended to the Bishops since June 1854, sorry as I am to decline.

Thomas was caught in the same vacuum, having been appointed by Newman in November 1856. Forde, whose teaching had been arranged to begin two days after Newman's letter was written, replied at once :

... since under the present circumstances the fulfilment of the rule obliging me to the Profession of Faith, previous to teaching is impossible, I shall have no difficulty in considering myself dispensed with, as to its observance.²

Newman quietly wrote a note on this letter: " I mean to send no answer to this - thinking it does not require one."³ It was a delicate touch; Forde went ahead, but Newman had not formally granted permission. What the whole incident illustrates is that the University was shot through with tensions, conflicting interests and policies, jealousies and uncertainties, so that the English Professors in particular

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit. XVIII, p.186.

²Ibid, XVIII, pp.186-87n.

³Idem.

might well have felt that they were 'standing on such slippery ice-pavements' as to make intellectual life almost impossible. From an Irish standpoint the English appointments must have looked like yet another occupation of Irish territory, but the Bishops themselves agreed that without them the University would have been badly understaffed. J.H. Pollen, a contributor to the Atlantis - the University magazine - caught the general mood when he wrote to Newman about the low student numbers, and added :

I must confess I cannot get any solid comfort for the future, there seem to me such great interests vested in the present state of things in Ireland, I mean in the possession of political and social power by the class who now hold it, and the more the objects of the University come out, the stronger will be the fear of the Professors. If I were one of them I dare say I should feel the same.

At Christmas, 1856, Thomas was one of those Professors, in the weakest and most expensive faculty staffed principally by Englishmen and teaching a subject requiring great tact and sensitivity. It is not surprising that Newman had been so delighted to have appointed a son of Dr. Arnold and an Oxford scholar in his own right. But like Dr. Forde, Thomas had the confirmation of his appointment delayed, and at first refused by Dr. Cullen, on the grounds that the University could not afford him. Newman protested that Thomas was a replacement for McCarthy, who had resigned, and was not an additional expense, but it was only after the Archbishop of Cashel intervened in the dispute that agreement on Thomas's appointment was confirmed, by which time it was October 1857. Thomas had been teaching in Dublin for almost a year when it came through.

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XVIII, p.187.

During these first weeks in Dublin, in the late autumn of 1856, Thomas was alone, for the impending birth of another child made it quite impossible for Julia to be with him even if suitable accommodation had been readily available. But there were compensations of a different kind. His earlier friendship with the Whateleys, in Dublin, had occasioned several visits to the city; he knew the area reasonably well. In addition he discovered the truth of the Irish assertion that there were a great many Englishmen on the staff of the University, and some of them were not only approximately his own age but also from Oxford, so that he had already made their acquaintance, however remotely. Thomas Scratton, the University Secretary, had been almost contemporary with Thomas, and knew Willy Arnold well, and Robert Ornsby, the Classical Literature Professor, was also an Oxford man. So Thomas's first letter home took on the tone of a reminiscence rather than a description of a new and alien place :

The Wicklow mountains - the Great and Little Sugar Loaf, and the huge granite mass of the 3 Rock mountain, - all familiar objects in my eyes - were on our right, while on our left, close to us, were the waters of the beautiful Dublin Bay, and the dark hills of Howth beyond it, dotted with white houses, and the light house at the extreme end of it, and across the sandy neck that joins the hill to the mainland, the little rocky island called 'Ireland's Eye'. It was very beautiful, even under a November sky, with a cold wind blowing, and masses of threatening black clouds gathering to the eastward over the sea.

Not long after, in the manner of an ex-colonial settler, he was advising Stewart, the Professor of Greek and Latin, on the advantages of keeping a cow, no doubt with memories of the use Julia had made

¹ Letter to Julia, from Dublin, 13 November 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

of their cows in Hobart. Stewart, it seems, remarked merely that neither he nor his wife understood anything about them, which only served to provoke Thomas into giving them a short lecture on the subject.

On finance, too, he seemed to be optimistic at this time, expecting to make at least £300 a year from the beginning, and since he had learned that Stewart rented his seven bed-roomed house, walled garden and paddock for a rent of £40 a year he had good reason to feel that his new salary might well prove adequate for a comfortable life in Ireland.

It was at the end of November that Newman, making one of his visits to the University from Birmingham, asked Thomas to plan a scheme of literary studies for the faculty of Philosophy and Letters, suggesting that by completing this he could compensate the University for his late start to the term. At the same time Thomas's report to Julia on a dinner he had just attended at Scratton's house indicates the low level of recruitment to the University at that time: it was not merely a trivial social engagement but a disguised recruiting campaign, for Scratton had recently met a rich young Canadian in Dublin and was anxious to attract him, his money and his friends to the University by impressing him over dinner. As Thomas put it, to use him as "a decoy duck". Four days later he wrote home again to report that he had at last received his first draft of half-pay from Hobart some two months late because of the time-lag of the sea-journey. But a letter written nearly two weeks later made an observation which, was of some consequence to the University's affairs in general: Newman was becoming anxious to give up the frustrating work of Rector, and

Thomas added :

... though you will perhaps wonder at my saying so, that there are many who could manage the University affairs equally well, and perhaps some two or three who could manage them better. There is an immense deal of mere business connected with the office, which many could manage as well or better than Newman; his mind is too refined too polished, for such work; it is like cutting blocks with a razor.

There is a gentle irony in that Dr. Arnold had used the same image to describe the dull grind of teaching over thirty years earlier.

At the end of term Thomas returned home to Fox How, still not confirmed in his Professorship and becoming increasingly worried that his stammer, which for all practical purposes was of no consequence, would be used by the Archbishops as an excuse for refusing to confirm his appointment. But he duly sent in to Birmingham his scheme for literary studies as requested by Newman, and turned his attention to his family, glad to see him again after the two months of enforced separation. On December 15th Julia's child, conceived in Tasmania, was born in England, at Fox How, and named Arthur, bringing the number of their children to four, one girl and three boys.

On Christmas Eve 1856 Newman replied to Thomas's proposals for literature courses and his reply, which is sufficiently detailed to indicate what the original proposals had been, throws clear light on the academic and political atmosphere of the University. Both the proposals and Newman's remarks deserve comment. First, the reply:

My dear Arnold,

I hope you won't follow what I say because I say it. This means don't take Addison without conviction. My reasons are such as the following:

1. Periodical literature, and conversational essays are one great portion of English literature down to this day - and

¹Letter to Julia, 25 November 1856, Moorman MS., TL.

he is its patriarch in England. He has founded a school, as much as any English author, but Pope.

2. He has had as much to do in forming our language as Pope (?) I think so. And he has humanized the public, or created a literary taste more than anyone else.

3. His style has very great beauty, e.g. Vision of Mirga (sic). Perhaps Thackeray's "Esmonde" is not a fair specimen of it - but that is to my mind the most beautiful.

4. He is a chief classic, for he is so considered semper, ubique, et ab omnibus.

5. I have been very much struck with the way Thackeray takes him up in his History of English Wits. It is a sort of witness of a day so different from Addison's own - unless you think it a theory of Thackeray's.

6. I can't help recollecting what till Thackeray's book I had forgotten, that he was an author on whom I doted at fifteen. I only say this to show his power still of affecting untaught minds.

I like your introduction of Chaucer, Spenser, and the ballads.

I am not satisfied at the omission of Milton, yet he is of no school. I am puzzled here.

As to Clarendon, he too represents no school - and what is worse, Charles the First is unpopular in Ireland on account of Strafford. Your idea of shewing and mapping is good, but if you go into an English subject matter, in opposition to literature, the Irish will think it hard that the English rebellion or Civil War has the precedence of the raid of Fergus MacDiormid into Munster in revenge for the dun cow which was stolen from the pastures of his great-uncle Thady in the second century before the Christian era.

I have some compunction in leaving out the novelists, yet who can set boys seriously to read them? Perhaps two or three lectures on them without a text book would be best.

And I have great difficulty about Gibbon. No one has had a greater effect on the historical style, even when his followers cannot be called Gibbonian. I trace his influence on nearly every writer.

And now a further difficulty as the subject opens is to adapt it to a two years course. Must not you confine the two years to three to six chief classics? If so, they must be Shakespeare, (Milton?), Pope, Clarendon (?), Addison, Johnson. Or who? - Then for the next two years (sic) you might take Spenser, etc. Bacon, Milton, the novelists, etc., etc.

I don't think you need mind chronology in your course, for your main point is to put the students on a level with others in knowledge, e.g. to stand at Woolwich it would be respectable to be acquainted with Shakespeare, Pope, Addison, and Johnson, and to know about (i.e. by means of professional lectures) Spenser, Bacon, Dryden, Milton, Fielding etc.

This is what strikes me at the moment; take it quantum valeat.¹

¹ Letter to Thomas, 24 December 1856, Oratory MS.

First, it is apparent that Thomas had proposed a basically chronological scheme which set out to relate authors to their social, cultural and historical background. Works were not to be studied in isolation but seen as literary artefacts related to the society in which their authors lived and, by implication, to each other. Second, there were some omissions, the two most obvious to Newman being Addison and Milton. It is interesting that Newman felt it so necessary to separate texts from their related background studies, as if the only way in which English books could be studied in Ireland was by almost ignoring their cultural origins and treating them as independent entities, i.e. "literature", hence the theoretical opposition of "subject matter" and "literature". A note about the amount of time which should be devoted to each of these two aspects would have been sound and practical, but that Newman saw the two as being in opposition indicates the extent of his respect for Irish sensitivity, and the necessity of sounding a warning in Thomas's ear, for a combination of Irish nationalism and Catholic principles put great limits on intellectual freedom and argument in the University. Unlike the Professors of Medicine, Mathematics, and Architecture, Thomas, as Professor of English Literature, had to deal with ideas, values and concepts touching upon ethics, aesthetics, morals and politics, and his basic subject-matter was English. Newman was trying to suggest ways of defusing these literary studies by reducing them to the level of mere acquisition of knowledge, partly in deference to the Irish situation and perhaps partly to the educational level of many of the students. Nowhere is the problem better illustrated than in his ironic suggestion that Thomas should

balance the English elements in the course with corresponding Irish elements, so equating, for example, the English Civil War with a second century raid for the loss of a dun cow. Though the point was humorously treated the underlying need was serious enough: Thomas's position was delicate, it required tact, and it called for considerable ingenuity to create a course of English Literature which would not cause offence to Irish students.

His omission of Milton, however, is puzzling for when he had earlier been asked to write an article for the University magazine Atlantis, in October 1856, he had replied that he would choose either Chaucer or Milton. The omission could have been a simple mistake, but this is unlikely. It is more probable that he had already begun to sense that a free study of literature, such as he might envisage being offered in an English university if the chance were available, would raise many issues dangerous in an Irish university of Catholic origin. He came to recognise that Protestant hymns, for example, also carried the same dangers if used in Catholic contexts, and Milton's Paradise Lost or Samson Agonistes by their very nature could raise issues which he might have preferred to avoid. He was, after all, a new and still unsure Catholic, often referring to Newman for guidance on practical matters to do with his daily conduct as a Catholic. It is interesting that Newman put Milton into the course, but commented that he "was of no school." This suggests that he thought of literature in terms of "style", and that literary studies would be chiefly concerned with style; this made it possible for him to suggest lectures about novels, rather than on novels. Similarly, the advice that chronological sequence could be disregarded is a further indication

of his inclination to treat literature as "knowledge", in which authors and their works become packages of information to be learned, so that the young men who imbibe the information can then be regarded as the equals of educated young men in England in proportion to the amount they know, rather than what they understand. This was in accord with Newman's intention of helping Catholics to acquire an education which would "put them on a level with others", and avoids the dangers accruing to a system which tries to develop free-thinking and critical minds, and it was in this light he recommended that students should merely "know about Spenser, Bacon, Dryden, Milton, Fielding, and hear lectures about novelists but have no texts." It is very revealing of the kind of intellectual climate in which Thomas was to work in Dublin.

One point of detail illustrates the situation very clearly. Thomas had mentioned Gibbon, about whom Newman had admitted "great difficulty" without giving the precise reason for his difficulty. But the correspondence reveals that although Newman himself regarded Gibbon highly some Catholics regarded him with suspicion. Perhaps it was because Newman had just such a suspicion that he consulted his Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Edmund O'Reilly, handing over the whole of the correspondence with Thomas for the purpose. O'Reilly in turn consulted Dr. Cullen, who felt that "some decidedly dangerous books, such as Gibbon, should be avoided."¹ In the meantime Newman had also conferred with the Professor of Mathematics, Edward Butler,

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit. XVIII, p.235.

as an additional precaution. Everyone had to be careful. It is doubtful that Thomas knew how much cautious cross-referencing his proposals had caused, but the affair illustrates the difficulties of trying to reconcile the demands of a free and untrammelled higher education with the dictates of Catholic teaching when there were reserved or prohibited subjects to consider. Thomas was to meet it very directly seven years later when the Rambler magazine was forced to close down.

In these early days in the University, however, he was naturally more concerned with his personal problems, not only to do with his family but also with his stammering, and a sense of being completely inadequate for the tasks facing him. The two were probably linked, for as his confidence grew his references to the stammer decreased. His answer to the problem of inadequacy was typically Arnoldian: he resolved to work hard until it was overcome :

Though my knowledge is meagre enough now, of course I can be constantly adding to it. I think I see my way in the course of a year or two to the production of a text book on the subject of my Professorship - a thing which seems to me to be much wanted.

That book turned out to be his Manual of English Literature, but it did not come out for another five years.

There was no part of his life that was untouched by his new situation. Professionally he was unsure of the University and his own capabilities within it, he was beginning to realise the appalling complexity of the Irish situation, and was still grappling with the immediate and practical consequences of change of faith, which

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 28 July 1857, Oratory MS.

separated him from his wife and the rest of the Arnold family. There is nothing in the correspondence anywhere to suggest the slightest strain in the behaviour of his mother and sisters towards him, and though he did have a slight brush with Willy in December 1856 there is no evidence of any other conflicts. But it would have been quite out of character for Julia to suddenly become quiet and sweet about the matter, indeed family stories about her fits of temper even into the 1870's suggest that the pattern of conflict over Catholicism continued throughout the period. Financially, of course, they were much worse off than they had been in Tasmania, even allowing for differences in currency value, for his salary there had been in excess of £750 a year while in Ireland he was receiving a little over £200 a year, depending on how much extra tuition he could find to do. The fact that he left debts in Tasmania, which Mr. Sorell paid off in the first instance, and thereafter received occasional loans from his Mother, suggests that he brought little or no capital home with him, and yet he knew he would soon have to furnish a house in Ireland. Although he always hoped that tuition fees, articles, examining or extra lectures would boost his basic salary there is nothing to suggest that he ever actually grossed a significant amount, in fact he was later constantly grateful that he was paid promptly for his articles for Sir John Acton's magazines, Rambler and Home and Foreign Review. As far as his family was concerned, the move to Ireland in January 1857 symbolised the gulf that existed between him and his sons, who were to be brought up as Catholics, and Julia and Mary, both of whom remained Protestants. Mary was left behind in England and did not live with her parents again for nearly ten years. During

the Tasmanian years she had often been left with the Reibeys for periods of two or three weeks; this time the separation was complete, except for holiday reunions. She was left at Fox How in the care of Mrs. Arnold, and Frances, the youngest aunt, always affectionately known as "Aunt Fan", and there she learned to moderate her wild temper. In a way keeping Mary at Fox How was a disguised subsidy from the family, but it also served to insulate the five-year-old girl from the stresses of a totally new life in Dublin at a time when her mother also had William, Theodore, and the new baby, Arthur, to look after. There is just the possibility that Julia preferred to have Mary brought up in Protestant surroundings, or perhaps the child's own happiness had been the chief consideration, for Thomas and Julia had often noticed how happy Mary had been when she stayed with the Reibeys at Entally, in Tasmania, in sharp contrast with the sulky, wilful and disobedient child they saw at home in Hobart. And there is no doubt that despite her natural longing for her parents and brothers who had gone away to Dublin, she was happy. In the first place she had several family homes to go to: Wharfeside, near Ilkley, home of Jane Forster, the home of Susan Cropper, near Liverpool, and Mary Hiley's new home in Woodhouse, near Loughborough, Leicestershire. Her book, A Writer's Recollections, written sixty years later, pays ample testimony to the contentment of these years, despite the pangs of loss of family, and all because of the unfailing kindness of the aunts who rapidly made the little girl from Tasmania feel that she was, and always had been, part of the Arnold family. But the pains of separation should not be underestimated and it is clear from the few remaining letters that whatever Mary made of it all her mother felt it keenly.

In January 1857 Thomas and Julia settled into temporary accomodation in Kingstown, Dublin, while they searched for a better permanent home. Of course they were looking for furnished rooms for they could not yet afford to buy new furniture. They were reasonably successful: at the end of January they moved into Eaton Hall, Sandy Mount, Dublin, which suited them for a year or so.

One harmonious note in a welter of discord was sounded, surprisingly, by the Whateleys. Despite the Archbishop's angry rejection of all those "brought up under the system" who then defected to Catholicism, his temper softened when Thomas and Julia landed in Ireland, and during the next few months friendship between them was re-affirmed, though how frequently the Arnolds and the Whateleys met is not clear. They saw each other enough, however, for Frances Arnold to remark in June 1857: "It is always interesting hearing about the Whateleys."¹ Though Thomas's close friendship with Edward Whateley in the 1840's and his ill-fated love-affair with Henrietta Whateley in 1846-47 had endeared him to the Archbishop his conversion to Catholicism made a reunion in Dublin a very difficult matter. It requires but little imagination to envisage the hesitancy with which Thomas must have faced the first reunion with them in Dublin across the dividing line of faith, for the Archbishop was a man of strong opinions and "his dictatorial manner" (Newman's remark) was well known throughout Ireland.

At the end of July, shortly before he left for England at the conclusion of the academic year, Thomas was glad to welcome his first

¹Letter to Thomas, 18 June 1857, Moorman MS., TL.

private pupil, Francis Barron, thanks to Newman's help. In October he was relieved when his appointment was confirmed, and in the same month he was asked by Newman to write an article, on a subject of his own choice, for the university magazine Atlantis. Though not particularly significant in itself it was the first step in a long association with Catholic journals for which he wrote articles well into the mid 1860's. His first thoughts were that he would choose something on Chaucer or Milton, but he eventually settled on Alcibiades, with the intention of writing in "the style of those in the Spectator." The Atlantis was, at this time, still a new and uncertain project of Newman's for publicising the University and he was trying to recruit his professors for the task. The article on Alcibiades however, was not what he had expected, it seemed to him to lack point. Sir John Acton, who was also involved in the journal, agreed. But Newman understood why, for he knew the depressed and anxious state of mind Thomas was in, and remarked to Scott in November 1857 :

I assure you I had been feeling very much for Arnold's anxieties and (if I may say it) had only been this morning praying for him. He has a great many troubles of various kinds, I doubt not, which he alone can know. I think it affects his spirits, if I judge by his manner. I heartily wish it was more in my power to aid him than I can - There is no reason, in default of an Intern Tutor, why he should not have University youths to cram - but that does not depend on me. I suppose Mr. Flannery does not like to have him, or he would have asked him. I do not know what you are alluding to in the case of externs. If Externs make themselves quasi-interns by attaching themselves to a House, then indeed we provide tuition - and if our House had five or six such, Arnold could, with your consent, have them, but we have none.

In other words Newman hoped Thomas would acquire more than just one pupil to boost his salary and the best way to do it was to become an

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit. XVIII, p.188.

external tutor for one of the University Houses. Normally the tutors combined academic and residential duties but since it was possible for external students to attach themselves to a House for tuition purposes occasions might arise where an external tutor could be appointed. Unfortunately, at the end of 1857 there were few students in this external category. Resident numbers were also still low though the enrolments for evening classes were rising steadily.

But these private worries were only a part of the general malaise in which Thomas was caught. In 1856 Patrick Leahy, the Vice-Rector, had resigned to become Bishop of Cashel; when Newman announced his impending resignation, in 1857, the University was both headless and directionless, and though he did not actually withdraw until October 1858 a mood of uncertainty and apprehension swept through the University. The appointment of a new Vice-Rector became urgent and created a kind of unity of purpose for a time. In a fit of frustration Thomas cast around for some way of taking matters into his own hands, instead of having to wait upon the goodwill or agency of someone else. Drifting along with the tide of affairs was nettling to a man who, only a year or two before, had had a considerable degree of independence over the educational affairs of Tasmania. Since his services as external tutor seemed not to be wanted he decided to try to open a University house of his own. It meant finding a suitable house and opening a residential hostel in which to train students for the University examinations - and it could easily mean an increase in salary of £100 a year.¹ He wrote to Newman about it in November 1857 and received a very encouraging reply :

¹For the evidence see J.H. Newman, op.cit. XIX, p.5.

I have received with the greatest pleasure the announcement of your intention to open a house for the reception of students attending lectures at the Catholic University, under the existing regulations provided in that case by the University Constitution. I have only to assure you that I am glad to hear it, and trust that you will soon succeed in filling your house with pupils. For their intellectual progress and the formation of their minds your name is in various ways a guarantee as far as I am in a position to speak without the appearance of interference. From what I know of you, I am confident that you will watch over the moral interest and personal conduct of any young men who may be entrusted to your care, with yet greater vigilance than that which you would employ to further their intellectual progress.

Curiously, this letter, which is in the Oratory in Birmingham, is only a draft, and is in Thomas's own handwriting. This, coupled with the formal tone and balanced sentences suggests that it was really a draft testimonial, agreed between the two of them, by the publication of which Thomas hoped to attract students into his house. It might also have been used to persuade the University authorities in Dublin to sanction the move, though by this time Newman's authority had weakened considerably in view of his resignation. Whether the first Dublin house was just not satisfactory, or whether Thomas was anxious enough to push ahead with his plan, despite the financial burden a larger house would bring with it, is not clear, but in March 1858 he moved into new premises, number 10 Leinster Square, Rathmines, Dublin. Presumably he had managed to make some savings out of his salary, or else the family had once again come to his aid, but as later correspondence shows he was very conscious of how much it had cost him to furnish the house. His daughter, Lucy, was born in the house later in the same year. Then, in a manner so typical of his life as a whole this decision turned against him. Almost

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit. XVIII, p.190.

within days of completing the move he received a letter from Newman offering him a post in the new school to be established at the Oratory in Birmingham. Poor Thomas! His decisions were always complicated by matters outside his control. In this case he was being offered a chance to return to England, with a salary increase of about £100 a year, which co-incided with a new and further drain on his existing salary because he had just sent his daughter Mary away to boarding school. Yet because he would certainly lose on the sale of the furniture he had only just bought he dared not accept Newman's offer. At least, that was the explanation he gave; one wonders whether he was so determined not to appear unstable that he resolved on keeping to his stated line of action almost at all cost - and if he had used Newman's letter of recommendation for his house he had clearly advertised his line of action - though it is possible, of course, that he really believed the University had an assured future, despite all the signs to the contrary. And perhaps, too, the prospect of teaching children in a school, rather than young men in a university, really was a dismal one to him, in which case he would only be taking after his father who, after two or three years of teaching in Laleham decided to leave the younger boys to Buckland while he concentrated on the work he liked best - the preparation of young men for Oxford. But in 1858 Thomas was turning down an increase equivalent to half his existing salary. Julia's reaction can be imagined. However, Thomas wrote to Newman :

I could not speak quite decisively before, so I put off writing until today. While feeling most grateful to you for making the proposal to me, I feel that I could not in justice to my family accept the Mastership at £300 a year. It is true my Professorship is much less; still it leaves much of my time free, which I can

use to some advantage, however small it may be. Again I might hear of a private pupil any day, which would better my position materially. Another consideration is that I have lately furnished a house, and to sell the furniture as I should probably have to do if I came over to England, would involve a great sacrifice. Lastly I feel that the University may come to something after all, if we all put our shoulders to the wheel; that it is a "carriere ouverte" and that it is worth submitting to much privation even on the mere chance that our hope may one day be realised. Whereas I see no future, no likelihood of promotion, in any sense, if I were to engage in the school, even though it were to succeed as thoroughly as I wish it may.

There is a certain amount of contradiction in the sentiments expressed here: the final comments on promotion have a tone of self-interest which is not in accord with the acceptance of 'privation' for the sake of the University. Of the two the latter fits in more with his hopes of creating a new Catholic centre of intellectual discovery, while the former is somewhat out of character. The problem of the furniture could hardly have been a central issue, and the hope that he might 'hear of a private pupil any day' went right against the run of his experience to that date. But, as he added at the end, he was writing hurriedly, and in any case he could hardly be expected to be able to rationalise satisfactorily a situation which was so complicated. That was not the end of the matter, however, for a fortnight later he raised the matter again. It was not easy to refuse such an increase in salary so hurriedly :

I suppose you got my letter explaining why I felt myself obliged to decline the proposal or semi-proposal you made me about the school. The difference in salary was certainly considerable, but on the other side there were stronger inducements to remain. With regard to salary I feel myself forced to ask, though reluctant to trouble you on such matters, whether there is no

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 1 May 1858, Oratory MS.

possibility of my getting some increase in mine, so as to make life a little less of a struggle to me. Individually I believe I could live on as little as most men, but my family has to be provided for and it is hard matter to do it. But I should not have made any request in the matter, had I not learnt lately that one of the Professors in our Faculty has lately received an increase of salary, without as far as I know any addition to his duties, which makes his salary half as large again as mine. I feel that I work hard for the University, as I have been enabled, latterly in particular, to be of some service, and therefore I think it is not unreasonable to ask that in this its incipient stage I should get enough from it to keep me from absolute want. If there were more students I could get pupils enough to support me, (I have now two, reading with me) and then the present salary of the professorship would be sufficient. If there were a difficulty in raising the salary, could not some temporary appointment be conferred on me? if it were only something that would give me £50 a year more income it would put me on the right side of the account instead of the wrong...

It was no use, of course, because Newman had no authority to raise salaries, that was entirely in the hands of the governing Bishops, and he had little influence which he could bring to bear on Thomas's behalf. But there was a happier corollary to this letter, for at the same time he received it Newman also received a letter from Flannery asking for advice about engaging an external tutor for the students in his House. Newman suggested that he should choose one of the Professors in the University. He asked Thomas, who accepted and at once wrote to Newman to tell him and thank him for "this piece of good fortune, which will be the greatest possible assistance and relief to me."² He evidently believed Newman had arranged it, though there is scant evidence to support the idea, unless it is assumed that by suggesting to Scratton that he should choose a University Professor as a tutor he had implied that the choice should

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 14 May 1858, Oratory MS.

² J.H. Newman, op.cit. XVIII, p.346.

be Thomas. It could well have been so - there was only one Professor of English Literature, and that was presumably the academic specialism required. And if it was not, Newman's personal support for Thomas was obviously well known in the University. Suffice it to say that Newman did not shrug off the thanks; he accepted them.

While these financial discussions were taking place a matter of much greater long-term significance came to the surface, though at this stage it passed off harmlessly enough. Edward Butler, the Mathematics Professor, disclosed to Thomas that he had been consulted by Newman about the scheme for English Literature courses. Thomas wrote to Newman about it :

Butler showed me your letter to him, relating to English Literature and the Index; indeed he read it to the Faculty. Nothing I think could be more satisfactory. What the Archbishop (Cullen) says about Gibbon quite chimes in with my own feelings. Using such a book oneself is one thing, but putting it into the hands of young men of 18 or 20 years of age is another.

Whether he had in the back of his mind the memory of the effect of his own undergraduate reading at Oxford, or whether his respect for authority made it a simple matter to adopt the orthodox Catholic line as propounded by the Archbishop is a matter for conjecture, but a second letter written a few weeks later elaborated his view somewhat, and the final remark suggests that he could not accept the easy distinction Newman had made between subject matter and style :

Taking for my guidance the plan which you adopted for the 'Literature of Religion', I have arranged the subject of English Literature under various divisions and sub-divisions, with a

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, undated but probably March 1858, Oratory MS.

view to the convenience of candidates who may at any time wish to take up the subject and now enclose you my scheme for your consideration. The thing is beset with many difficulties, on account of the questionable aspect (to a Catholic) which so much of English Literature presents. However I suppose that even if a scheme of the kind were fixed upon, it need not go beyond the precincts of the University, being merely employed for the guidance of students, who in all their reading, so far at least as it pointed to examination, would be under the control of the examiners, and the surveillance of tutors. The main difference between the scheme I submit and that for the literature of Religion, turns upon the fact that it is possible for students to take up particular English books, which is I suppose very rarely possible in the case of the Fathers, on account of their bulk, and the want of suitable editions; nor again, even if possible, would it, I suppose, be very desirable, owing to the immensity of the subject dwarfing by comparison the literary importance of any particular work.

Newman was too busy to reply. Having decided to give up the University he spent most of 1858 immersed in his work at the Oratory, amongst other things planning the new buildings that were needed for the school. As he had remarked to Flannery, he left the conduct of the University in the hands of the heads of Houses; he increasingly withdrew from the academic organisation as well. So Thomas was left to resolve these difficulties on his own. He had, by his own argument, placed himself in an untenable position by implying that whereas undergraduates of 18 or 20 years of age were not in a fit condition to read 'dangerous' books the Professors were, and should be free to do so; indeed he makes it clear that someone has to select which books are to be allowed and which not. This at once raises the question of how and when a student crosses the dividing line between the two conditions. How had Thomas himself qualified for the superior state? Did he envisage that courses at the Catholic University should be designed to develop the minds of undergraduates

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 14 May 1858, Oratory MS.

until they reached the transitional point and crossed over into freedom of thought? In that case the University was a revolutionary institution effectively working to create a growing body of men for whom the Index would have no meaning. If that was not the case then the University was a sham institution, a fossilising agency aimed at perpetuating the intellectual status quo and maintaining the Index. This, in turn, implied the superiority of the Church authorities on all matters of intellectual concern. Far from being a satisfactory statement of his position this letter actually enshrined an ambiguity which Thomas would clearly be forced to resolve, either by revolt or by forever sacrificing his intellectual independence. Yet such a sacrifice was clearly beyond him, as it was beyond Newman; they were both possessed with the idea of developing the Catholic position, not merely, and weakly, consolidating it. Thomas would undoubtedly have agreed with Newman's remark: "Catholics did not make us Catholics; Oxford made us Catholics."¹ To concede that intellectual freedom was something neither of them could do. In any case, Thomas's letter clearly hints at the unsatisfactory nature of this compromise philosophy in the suggestion that the scheme he proposed "would not go beyond the precincts of the University." Yet he admitted that English books were easily available and students could not be denied access to them. For the time being, however, he left the matter as it was. Meanwhile he took on external tutorial duties for a second University House, and became one of the four evening class examiners, so that his salary position improved a little.

¹Quoted by Stephen Dessain, J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.xv.

But in the autumn he suddenly lost his post as external tutor to St. Patrick's House. In July one of the students of the house had gained his Licentiate of the University, and immediately applied for a tutorial post in St. Patrick's. At the time no such post was available, but the application co-incided with the appointment of a new Dean who was faced with the responsibility of looking after the welfare of the students in the house, in the absence of a fully residential, internal tutor. He naturally wanted to appoint someone who would act in a full tutorial capacity, and relieve him of the pastoral responsibility. He accordingly suggested that Thomas should give up his post as external tutor, to clear the way for a fully residential tutor. He had the young applicant, Augustus Keane, in mind. Obviously Thomas was dismayed; he appealed to Newman, who proposed a compromise - that the work and the salary should be shared between Thomas and Keane - but the decision was left to the Dean. He appointed Keane. There was nothing Thomas could do. Sadly he wrote to Newman: "... it is rather afflicting to find the ground thus sinking from under one, but God's will be done."¹ It was symptomatic of the uncertainty of University life in Dublin: salaries could be raised for no apparent reason and posts could be lost without regard to the quality of the work of the tutor concerned. Obviously, for the new Dean the appointment of a residential tutor was more satisfactory than to have half the work done by an external academic while he had all the residential care to do himself, but the incident also indicates the general tendency towards a totally Irish institution. With the

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 3 December 1858, Oratory MS.

appointment of James Gartland D.D. as Vice-Rector in November 1858 Newman's phase of influence was completely ended. Power shifted entirely into Irish hands. New policies were being formulated, vital decisions about the nature of the institution were pending, and the debates raged fiercely both within and without Dublin. The fact was that the University had no Charter, it could not confer degrees, and it was not being well supported by students from Ireland. In January 1859 Newman was pessimistic about the whole progress of the discussions :

We are looking for a charter for our university just now - but I am not sanguine it will be more than to enable us to hold property, or go so far as to give us the power to grant degrees, unless there is some negotiation (sic) going on at Rome, or the Irish members make a great effort. I cannot help feeling that we have been left in the lurch by those parties in England, who might have helped us - ... What has now begun, cannot stop - and the University will proceed - but, had the Catholics in England looked upon it as the beginning of a great University move in these Islands, which would make them independent of London University, they would have helped what perhaps they did not indeed desire, but they would not have been in those difficulties which, I think, their connexion with the London University will sooner or later bring upon them.

And a little later he wrote to John Flanagan :

Dr. Cullen gave me a hint ... that extensive alterations would be made in the University, when the Bishops met - so that it is not my going, but no students coming, which is the real cause, if they make a College of it.

I cannot conceive how the Holy See can suffer the University to perish, considering it represents the principal (sic) of unmixed Education against the Queen's Colleges etc etc. It is practically giving up Ireland to Liberalism. Will it forbid any Higher Education? or withdraw the ban from the Queen's Colleges? Will Cork and Galway be given up to Catholics, and Dublin made a third College? but how will they get Catholic Professors for three such establishments, even though the Government were willing? Meanwhile the London University is, with its anti-Catholic alterations of

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.30.

system, so pressing on the Stonyhurst, Downside etc people, that they are half looking towards us in Dublin, when apparently it is too late.

In the growing clamour and increasingly Irish-orientated mood of the debates Thomas not unnaturally felt his isolated position more keenly, but when he unexpectedly received a letter in the handwriting of Arthur Clough it went some way towards repairing the damage. Since he had returned to England he had seen Clough once, in Westmoreland for a short time but beyond that brief encounter their friendship had not been renewed. Clough's letter could hardly have come at a better time :

You do not know what a strangely pleasant feeling it gives me again to receive letters addressed in your familiar hand-writing. By expatriating myself, I became separated, permanently I fear, from most of those friends whom I, like other men, gradually and naturally made in the course of school and college life, and I have not since found others to supply their places. It is some comfort to have retained at least one old friendship, and that not the least valued. Heartily did I enjoy meeting with you in Westmoreland, and I have some hope of seeing you at Christmas; for if all goes well I am going to take my wife into Leicestershire then to stay with the Hileys, and from thence I shall probably go up to London for two or three days...²

He did not choose the term 'expatriate' lightly: the Irish press, and the magazine Irishman in particular, kept up a steady attack on the English elements in the University and its arguments were not always easily or successfully rebutted. In December a successful counterblast did appear in the Nation, which defended the Catholic University from an accusation of being anti-national by pointing out how many Irish professors there were and how indispensable were the English professors. But this indicates the strong nationalist feeling

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.40.

² The Correspondence of A.H. Clough, ed. F.L. Mulhauser, London 1957, II, p.558.

running even amongst University supporters. Occasionally individual members were singled out for attack, as Scratton was in the following January. It all made for additional unease at a time of considerable uncertainty. Shortly before the end of the autumn term Newman wrote to Thomas yet again, repeating his offer of a place in the proposed Oratory school, and hinting at the same time that there might well be some rationalisation of University staff as a result of the auditor's scrutiny of the accounts. It was just the kind of worry to precipitate Thomas into a rapid decision. But, as always, there was a complication: he had recently applied for a post of Inspector at the National Board of Education in Ireland; on December 3rd. 1858 he wrote to Newman :

... the report from the Auditors is another matter; their suggestions, I suppose, you cannot disregard, even if so disposed. I must therefore prepare to give up duties, which I had begun to hope might turn one day to some fruit for my fellow men, and for the great cause of Catholicity. So be it then; - the school at Birmingham would certainly have many attractions for me; but I must ask you, if you can, to give me one week before giving you an answer. My reason is that on this day week an appointment will be made of a Catholic under a National Board, for which, though my chance of getting it is faint in the extreme, I think I ought in justice to my family to make an attempt.

He still protested that a difficulty which would make him hesitate to accept was that he was "encumbered in respect of houses here".

He was not appointed and Newman waited just long enough - twelve days - before writing again, on December 15th 1858, stating exact terms :

As I said I would give you the refusal, before I wrote to any one else on the subject of the Mastership, I send this to you, not

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 3 December 1858, Oratory MS.

expecting I am sorry to say, to change your decision, but having been strongly urged to make the attempt by friends who are interested in our plan.

I have not a little compunction, at aiming to withdraw from the University so zealous and able a member of the Professorial body - but I can truly say that my fears for the stability of your position there are simply prior to, and independent of, my wish to gain you for the school - and, if they are not fulfilled in the event and you stay in Dublin, it will be a great rejoicing to me, both for the sake of the University and your own, that I have been instrumental in settling you there.

Also I can say, that I had given you up - till my friends in London urged me on again. I say all this, lest I should seem to any one to be shabby to the University; but I do not forget that you are otherwise looking about for a more lucrative situation, and I reflect that the University might lose you still, without our gaining you.

Now for my terms.

I offer you £50 down, for the expense of moving etc., And £300 a year With (sic) an increase of £5 per annum on each boy over the number of 20 lasting for a year, and I offer this arrangement for 3 years certain from next Lady Day - at the end of which time we are both free for a fresh arrangement.

Your work would be a little more than *Musa, musae - amo, amavi*. And, say, six hours a day. You would have no duties whatever towards the boys out of school hours - except indeed looking over exercises etc.

Take a week to think over this.¹

Newman certainly understood Thomas's mind. The financial terms were crisp, attractive, and went a good part of the way towards overcoming his constant plea that he was encumbered with a house and furniture the removal or sale of which would incur a significant loss. The lifting of the moral burden - that he was looking for a post anyway - reinforced by the comment that both the University and the school might lose him, absolved him from any guilt he might have felt at leaving the Catholic cause so soon, and the suggestion that the work would not be mere drudgery, all indicate that this was a very carefully worded letter, not too enticing but very attractive. In the nicest

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XVIII, pp.543-44.

possible way Thomas was being played like a prize salmon; but Newman had not landed him yet. When he realised that he would not be appointed to the post with the National Board of Education he wrote to Newman, not accepting the terms offered, but suggesting that it would be useful if he came over to Birmingham to discuss the matter. He arrived on December 29th and remained for two days, while Julia stayed in Woodhouse with Thomas's sister, Mrs. Hiley, and her husband.

Despite Newman's efforts of persuasion Thomas was not to be deflected from his course: he still believed in the future of the University and his own part in it. After he had left the Oratory to rejoin his family he went down to London to see what pressures he might exert on Government ministers on the University's behalf. Newman, meanwhile sadly reflected on his lack of success in detaching Thomas from Dublin: "I have tried to get Arnold away " he wrote to Ornsby, "not that he would not be a great loss, but wishing not to imperil the whole. I cannot quarrel with his zeal for the University in wishing to stay. I wish we had more such zealous people."¹ And on the same day, 16 January 1859, he remarked to Edward Bellasis that he was thinking of Thomas as Second Master: "... we shall try to keep the place open for Arnold, giving him a chance a year hence. He has been here for a few hours and seemed to like us - but he does not like to give up the University till the University gives up him..."²

In London Thomas saw the Prime Minister at India House and impressed on him the need for a University Charter providing for the

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.19.

² Ibid. p.18.

awarding of degrees. This was the next and obvious step if the University was to make any forward progress. On January 12th 1859 he wrote to Newman to report on the interview :

I saw Lord Stanley at the India House by appointment, to speak to him about the charter. He heard all that I had to say, asked a question or two, and then said that it was a matter on which it was impossible for him to pronounce an individual opinion, as it would have to come before the whole Cabinet, but that he was much obliged for the information. The line I took - a good deal suggested by what I had heard from you - was to endeavour to show the probability there was of the University, in case of its failing to receive Government recognition, falling into the hands of the extreme or Celtic party, and being converted into machinery for promoting disunity and alienation between the two countries. I said that I did not think there was the least chance of its being given up, on his asking the question, and that matters, I thought, were just now at a crisis; - if the Government recognised it, they would, so to speak, take a powerful weapon, or what might easily be made such, - out of the hands of the enemies of England and imperial interests, - secure Dublin and so on; while if they refused the recognition, two results above mentioned would probably follow. To an English statesman I think this line might be considered a good line of argument; but the young Irelanders of course would not thank me if they knew that I had taken up such a line.

How Newman reacted to this report is not recorded but it is not likely that he rejoiced at it. Thomas's 'line' was somewhat naive, and too simple even for 'an English statesman'. Newman's approach to Disraeli some months earlier had been quite different, and much more of a testimonial to the achievements of the University, pointing out its academic claims to the right to confer its own degrees.² It was in an altogether lower key, completely avoiding the political machinations that Thomas wove - somewhat unsuccessfully on this evidence - into his argument. Later in January Newman heard through Ornsby that Hennessey, one of the University committee working for the granting

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 12 January 1859, Oratory MS.

² For the whole text of the letter see J.H. Newman, op.cit., XVIII, p.415.

of a charter, expected that the best offer that might be made was that they should become 'a fourth Queen's College.'¹ At all events, Newman was right when he declared that the University "is at a crisis at which it must choose one of two things," by which he meant one of two quite different courses of action. The first was to accept a subsidiary role to Trinity College, Dublin and Queen's University, Belfast, by taking their degrees, but, after, say five years of such academic respectability to take the further step of agitating for the right to confer their own degrees. With a five year demonstration of the University's degree capability behind it he concluded that the agitations would succeed and the full charter would be conferred. This was his preferred plan and Thomas agreed with it. The second course was quite different :

It is ... to throw themselves (the University members) upon the country, and to call up poor scholars in shoals, as in Scotland, whose coming will be the pledge that it is a national benefit, and the sure stimulus of national subscriptions. Another part of this plan would be to give degrees boldly, not caring what the state said, or the terror of prosecution. A third part would be simply to get rid of Englishmen, leaving them for the present as a necessary evil ...
 Either plan is good - I prefer the former - but neither, I fear, will succeed, from the discordance of Irish opinion.²

Discussions in the Irishman continued and Thomas decided to join in by publishing a letter designed "to dissipate the notion that there is such a thing as an 'English party' in the University itself, with interests and designs antagonistic to those of the supposed 'Irish party.'³ Newman saw and approved of it, but warned Thomas against going too far, presumably because he was afraid that too

¹For the whole text of the letter see J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.22n.

²J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.23.

³Letter to J.H. Newman, 28 January 1859, Oratory MS.

much debate might be stirred up in the process. But more disturbing was his belief that some of the professors would very shortly lose their posts, and that Thomas would be one of them. To Robert Ornsby he wrote:

I suppose your and Stewart's Professorships are two of the safest under the change. Renouf, Robertson and Arnold will suffer - the Divinity Professors would go, and of course, Preachers. The Medical Professors will be reduced in salary. Perhaps they will destroy the Science School.

This was not entirely guess-work on Newman's part: Dr. Cullen had dropped some hints earlier. But he was wrong. In March 1860 the Bishops actually raised the salaries of Peter Renouf and Thomas Arnold to £300 a year, and promoted W.G. Penny to Professor of Mathematics. Newman was puzzled; all three were English.

Restlessly, Thomas moved house twice during 1859, in April to 4, Leinster Road West and in September to Catholic University House, 86, St. Stephen's Green. In the meantime Newman opened the Oratory School in Edgbaston, Birmingham.

In November 1859 the first of Thomas's Rambler articles was published. His subject, "Mill, On Liberty", was fitting for a journal whose main editorial policy was to reach out to Catholics of liberal opinion, especially the converts, and help to create an enlightened, independent Catholic laity. Originally owned and edited by John Moore Capes, who guided it from its first appearance in January 1848 until 1857, it was gradually taken over by Richard Simpson, sub-editor with T.F. Wetherell, and then editor, until Sir John Acton took charge in 1858. Newman became associated with it,

1 J.H. Newman, op. cit., XIX, p.41.

at one stage as editor, but found himself embarrassed by the provocative tone of some of the articles, those written by Simpson in particular, and the hostile reaction of the Catholic bishops. When Thomas began to submit articles Sir John Acton had just taken over as owner and editor.

The second part of Thomas's article on Mill appeared in March 1860. It was a subject close to his heart, grappling as he was with the problem of obedience to his Catholic mentors and it brought to his attention the larger, philosophical question of whether a spiritual authority can legitimately exercise temporal power. It was becoming one of the most controversial issues of the decade. Newman wrote a congratulatory letter after the appearance of the first part of the article, to which Thomas replied:

What you say about my article is exceedingly cheering to me. I will be very guarded and careful in the remaining portion of it, but I should like to be quite sure that I clearly understand you when you say that "a temporal penalty may be inflicted by a spiritual power." If you refer to the Pope, of course it is so; but then he inflicts temporal penalties not qua he is a spiritual but qua he is a temporal power. If you mean that spiritual censures carry with them, indirectly, temporal penalties, (such as aversion and avoidance on the part of the others, and so on), I can also understand it. But can a spiritual power inflict, directly, a temporal penalty? Was not the formula always, in the old times, when a spiritual tribunal had adjudged a man to be a heretic or otherwise deserving of censure, that the Church "abandoned him to the secular arm," as having no power herself over his body, but only over his soul? Again, does not the right of inflicting temporal penalties involve, as an essential condition to its due execution, the right of compelling evidence? and involve also the existence of a police, charged with executing the penalties; and does not the conception of these points really create "an imperium in imperio" which an enlightened state would be most reluctant to concede? If you could find time to answer this question it would be a great satisfaction to me, for my object is to clear up my own thoughts more than to write an article.

Newman's reply has not survived but later letters hint that he too felt

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 7 November 1859, Oratory MS.

uncomfortable about this problem. He gave the standard reply in suggesting that Thomas should read some authoritative works on the question, and this temporarily settled matters:

Many thanks for your last letter. I shall have no occasion, as you remark, to go into the question of the right of the Church to inflict temporal penalties, and therefore, whatever one's own leanings may be, it would be foolish to irritate the susceptibilities of the lovers of persecution without cause.¹

In the succeeding pages of his letter he sketched out a general philosophical plan which throws light on his reasons for remaining in the University. It was not for personal gain or status but because of the extent of the need for a centre of Catholic higher education and a body of Catholic writings which would enshrine and spell out Catholic philosophy. As John Capes had argued in the

Rambler in April 1849:

Our education, clerical and secular, is universally felt, and generally admitted to be still in its infancy ... Add to this the mournful truth, that we have as yet no Catholic literature.²

Thomas apparently hoped that his position as Professor of English in Dublin could be used to help provide that Catholic literature. In such a way he could reach out beyond the students in the University to make a contribution to Catholic thought as a whole. His Manual of English Literature was a means of beginning to survey the field and fill in some of his admitted inadequacies.

The rest of his letter reveals both the great respect which he had for Newman and the rare value of the Oxford education they had both enjoyed. It is interesting but

¹ Letter to J.H.Newman, 25 November 1859, Oratory MS.

² John Capes, The Rambler, April 1849, quoted in The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, ed.W.E.Houghton, Toronto & London, 1966, II, p.733

paradoxical that the education that had once caused him to know the misery of social alienation and loss of faith now, within a rigid Catholic system, appeared as a period of intellectual freedom and emancipation. Though he felt a mere disciple at Newman's feet, they were equal in their common experience of Oxford :

Your writings form the one locus standi which enable a thinking English Catholic amidst the torrent of argument, satire, scoff, banter, lofty comparison, and honest disapproval, which the strong free-spoken race to which we belong is for ever heaping in these days upon the Catholic Church, still to feel that his cause is not in all respects intellectually overmatched, that there is a view of things, which has not yet even been seriously grappled with by the Protestant and Infidel side, much less answered; - hence that, since no great truth ever fails to fight its way at last, there is hope in the future, in spite of the perplexities, and discouragements of the present ... There are other departments too of human life and thought, in which Catholics will have, I think, to take up an analogous position, as in politics, (sic) should heartily work with our fellow men, and learn from them all the political wisdom which they have to teach us, so in literature and philosophy, we must first do complete justice to all that non-Catholic genius has produced of true or beautiful, first assimilate and benefit by all that before even dreaming of a "Catholic Literature" which shall have so wide a sweep as to embrace and reconcile all truth and beauty heretofore disclosed. But after all I am only saying what you have said a thousand times better in your book of the Idea of a University, together with reservations and caveats perhaps which I in my haste have forgotten. My general meaning is that I do not like sectarianism, and yet far (sic) I see a strong tendency towards it among our English and Irish Catholics of the present day. The sectarian spirit gives a present strength and compactness indeed, but it is at the expense of the future, because it is essentially unjust, and injustice does not thrive for ever in this world. It is because what you wish is so utterly free from that spirit, that some minds may especially value it... this quality is that which makes it accord so well with the feelings of a certain class of minds, which have a pure and high ambition for the Church of God, while conscious of possessing power too feeble and limited to do her much service themselves in the field of thought.

The last phrase summarises his opinion of Newman's great contribution to the Catholic cause, and indicates his own ambition: to "do her

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 25 November 1859, Oratory MS.

much service ... in the field of thought."

Thomas had been quick to recognise the fundamental importance of the Catholic University to the liberal cause for on his appointment he had stumbled into a long-continuing argument between the intellectual liberals associated with the Rambler and the established Church. In his editorial for December 1848 the founder-editor, John Capes, had aroused the wrath of Bishop Ullathorne by writing:

We are convinced that the scanty ranks of our clergy continue as they are, chiefly because we are still, to so great an extent, without a sound and complete system of ecclesiastical education. ¹

As a son of Dr. Arnold, a First-class man in his own right and a Professor at the Catholic University Thomas was well-placed to make a useful contribution to the debate precipitated by the Rambler. Wiseman and Ullathorne had already recruited W.G. Ward, Frederick Faber and H.E. Manning to their side; with his third article Thomas was entering the lists as a supporter of Acton and Newman. Undoubtedly Newman had had this possibility in mind when he had first welcomed Thomas to the Catholic fold and then swiftly secured his services in Dublin. By 1861 he was enjoying a certain satisfaction in view of the part Thomas had chosen to play. Writing to William Monsell he noted that Thomas was "a zealous Catholic and an able large-minded man - he is, you know, the son of Dr. Arnold. He is full of good schemes for the University ..." ²

But the mid-century was a difficult time for the whole Catholic body, not just for the intellectuals and priests. Theoretical questions became practical problems in which the issues could not be smudged by rhetoric. A good example was the Mortara case, which smouldered for twenty years. In 1851 a son was born to a Jewish family in

¹ John Capes, The Rambler, December 1848, quoted in The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, ed. W.E. Houghton, London 1966, II, p.733.

² J.H. Newman, *op.cit.*, XIX, p.468.

Bologna; when she thought the child was too ill to live a Catholic maid-servant secretly baptised the child. Eventually the Bishop of Bologna heard of the baptism and ordered the child to be removed from its parents, taken to a monastery and brought up as a Catholic. This was done, with the Pope's knowledge and assent. Despite frantic and repeated attempts by the parents to recover the child nothing could be done, despite an outcry throughout Europe which included many Catholic voices. Ardent Catholics argued, with the Pope, that the nature of baptism made it a duty for the Church to bring up the child. (He was eventually ordained in 1873, took the name Pius, and died in Belgium in 1940 after a lifetime devoted to the Church.) But the whole case illustrated the practical nature of Thomas's question to Newman: does the Church have a right to exercise temporal power?

This was taken further in 1860, when Pius IX lost all his dominions except the small patrimony of St. Peter. As Stephen Dessain has commented :

Catholics, from the Bishop downward, rallied to his support, and even Acton and Dollinger came out in favour of the restoration of the lost territories. Many spoke as though the temporal power were an essential part of the Papacy. This was not Newman's view. He thought the Papacy would be healthier without it.

They were both difficult questions and Newman and Thomas were alike in being troubled by them; but while Newman opposed the restoration of land he still believed in the authority of the Papacy, without defining the relationship between spiritual and temporal authority.

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XIX, p.xv. (Introduction).

If in public affairs Thomas had the consolation of a growing confidence with Newman he still had private family worries to contend with. No clear records remain of exactly how Julia reacted to life in Dublin, but letters exchanged between Frances, Mrs. Arnold, and Julia suggest that she fretted at Mary's absence from home, and later stories about her, handed down within the family, make it clear that her anti-Catholic fits of anger continued to the end of their married life. And there were the many small, practical matters, like the question of the 'lawfulness' of attending family prayers at Fox How - about which he consulted Newman in 1860 - which indicates the way in which ripples from his Catholicism washed into the private reaches of family life. In the case of the family prayers Thomas was still as obedient as ever to his Catholic teachers, being prepared, if his Confessor required it, to leave off prayers with his family even though "it would be a painful trial to me to have to be absent."¹ It was a small matter; but family life is made up of such small matters. At the same time he had begun to identify a little more clearly the particular attraction some Catholic literature had for him :

Next to greater care and regularity in frequenting the Sacraments, I think the chief cause of this alteration of mood (a sense of contentment) is the habit, which continually grows on me, of preferring the Lives of the Saints, especially the modern saints, to all other reading. I cannot find the true hero - the true sage such as even this natural mind represents these characters to itself - anywhere else depicted. People speak of Wordsworth as a sage; but he was only in words. I, who knew him well, remember that in the daily walk of life, he was far from having that calmness, that mastery over self and outward things, which

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 20 July 1860, Oratory MS.

are involved in the idea that the word conveys.¹

In other words, what he most sought after and admired was the effect of this sagacity on deeds and actions. The lives of the Saints became for him a catalogue of the triumphant deeds of men and women over the limitations of self, actual demonstrations of the spirit at work, beside which Wordsworth's poetry, for example, was a mere exhortation not borne out in the daily life of the poet. The saints, on the other hand, were examples of self-mastery in action, and in daily life. As such their lives were to religion what biography is to literature: the living fact behind the artefact. Mrs. Reiby had given him a glimpse of this quality of living five years earlier. Naturally, the saints of more recent times appealed to him most because their lives were more accessible than those who had lived in culturally remote ages.

Unfortunately, Thomas was not able to benefit greatly in practice from their example; his restlessness continued. In April he moved house yet again, to 2A Kenilworth Sq., East Dublin. Theodore was sent temporarily to Fox How, much to Mary's delight. Later in the year their sixth child was born and called Francis.

In that same year two deaths outside the family affected them in some measure. The first was Mrs. Whateley's, and her death meant the closing of one welcoming house in Dublin for the Archbishop was grievously affected and lasted little more than two years after her. The second death caused Anne Clough to close her school in Ambleside. Her mother, who had lived with her in the school house since 1858,

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 20 July 1860, Oratory MS.

died in June 1860, and Anne decided to close the school down rather than live alone in the school house. It was unfortunate for Mary, Thomas's daughter, who had to be unsettled all over again. She had been one of two boarders, with Sophy Bellasis :

It was a small day-school for Ambleside children of all ranks, and I was one of two boarders, spending my Sundays at Fox How. I can recall one or two golden days, at long intervals, when my father came for me, with 'Mr. Clough'...

When the school closed, in the later summer of 1860, she returned temporarily to Fox How before being sent off to a somewhat forbidding school with the Dickensian title of The Rock Terrace School for Young Ladies, at Shifnall, in Shropshire. Thomas sent her there largely because he was offered reduced fees, though he later changed his mind and took Mary away from the school. She found it a fairly useless time :

As far as intellectual training was concerned, my nine years from seven to sixteen were practically wasted. I learnt nothing thoroughly or accurately ... What I learnt during those years was learnt from personalities; from contact with a nature so simple, sincere and strong as that of Miss Clough; from the kindly old German governess, whose affection for me helped me through some hard and lonely years spent at a school in Shropshire; and from a gentle and high-minded woman, an ardent Evangelical, with whom a little later, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, I fell headlong in love...²

But a deeper tragedy hit the family at this time: William Arnold's wife died in the Himalayas of a fever. William, fearing more, sent his sons home by sea and set off by land himself. The climate was oppressive, he was depressed, and soon took ill. Walter, hearing of the troubles, set off from England to meet his brother, but they

¹ Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1919, p.87.

² Mrs. H. Ward, *op.cit.* p.96.

missed each other at Alexandria, and again at Malta. By this time William was seriously ill and died in Gibraltar. Days later the four orphaned children arrived in England, to be met by Jane and William Forster, who, being childless, at once adopted them.

They became the Arnold-Forsters.

The rest of the family had been enjoying happier times, however. Matthew had been Professor of Poetry at Oxford three years, Edward had left All Souls' to become Inspector of Schools in Cornwall, Susan had become Mrs. Cropper and was living in Liverpool.

It is unfortunate that no correspondence between Matthew and Thomas has survived from this period. There are occasional references in Matthew's letters to suggest that the two of them met fairly frequently but the absence of any correspondence between them is perhaps an indication of the care with which the family suppressed any letters which they considered unsuitable for the public gaze. G.W.E. Russell, who edited the two-volume edition of Matthew's letters wrote in the preface :

It was Matthew Arnold's express wish that he might not be made the subject of a Biography. His family, however, felt that a selection from his Letters was not prohibited... It will be seen that they (the letters) are essentially familiar and domestic, and were evidently written without a thought that they would ever be read beyond the circle of his family.

Such was the extent of the editing out, from the selection made available, that not one letter between Matthew and Thomas appears in the first volume and only occasional - and very short - letters seem to have survived in manuscript. The exact course of the relationship between the two brothers thus remains shrouded.

¹G.W.E. Russell, Letters of Matthew Arnold, London 1895, 1, vii.

Despite the dramatic increase in his salary in March 1860, Thomas still could not manage without difficulty, though he tried to conceal the fact from his family in England. But when he approached his uncle, Trevenen Penrose, for some kind of help later in the year Mrs. Arnold soon got to know of it, as he might have guessed she would. She wrote to remind him that as head of the family she had a right to know all that was going on: "I can understand your desire to keep from me what you know must trouble me - yet while life and faculty are yet spared to me, I must desire to share in all that befalls my dear children."¹

He still kept it to himself. Whether he received any financial help as a result we cannot know, but he did receive a stream of helpful letters from his sister Mary, advising on suitable economies in the house, but perhaps these were really aimed at Julia, who had always found domestic management difficult.

Once again Thomas proposed opening a University house of his own, largely because of the closing of Newman's original house in Harcourt Street, which he wanted to take over. He drafted a prospectus, and asked Newman to write a letter of recommendation to go with it, to attract pupils. He was inspired by the acquisition of his first residential pupil, a young Portugese nobleman, who had come to live with him at the end of 1859. "I am getting to like the young fellow, and I hope he will turn out well," he wrote, "He comes of a diplomatic family and I have been trying to turn his thoughts towards that career, I think, with some success." In the same letter he

¹Letter to Thomas, 26 November 1860, Moorman MS., TL.

thanked Newman for writing the letter of recommendation, though he felt it necessary to excuse the motives for asking: "You must pardon a little innocent exploitation of the said letter on my part, should it ever fall under your eyes. I have considerable hopes that in a little time I shall get as many pupils as I want." ¹

But optimistic as he was about his private situation he was beginning to see the University situation in a more pessimistic light. Though a Vice-Rector had been appointed some months earlier no attempt had been made to appoint a Rector, so that the University still lacked a strong administrative structure of its own. It was limping along under the control of the Bishops and looked to Thomas to have all the appearance of a disorganised institution:

The only thing which would lead me to despair is the apathy of the Bishops. I do not see how we can go on as we are more than a certain time. And if the Bishops fancy that their general education policy will be ever given way to by the present or any other government - that the course which they are taking has the remotest tendency to obtain a separate grant for Catholic primary schools, and a charter for us, - why it seems to me that they miscalculate the chances utterly. They may have possible sources of political strength which I do not understand, but judging from all the obvious sources of information, one is disposed to think that their game is hopeless ... As it is the grievances grow daily worse and worse, as Catholic influence is more feebly felt at the Board, and the Protestant bureaucracy is left freer to act ...²

But Newman was in no position to exert any influence at that time for he was himself under suspicion of being a liberal. In May 1859 he had reluctantly accepted the editorship of the Rambler on the insistence of Bishops Wiseman, Errington and Ullathorne who had decided on the move as the only way to remove Richard Simpson.

¹ Letter to J.H.Newman, 24 January 1860, Oratory MS.

² Ibid.

Newman's first edition stirred up trouble, however, and principally because of sentiments expressed in two of his own letters in the Correspondence. It was not long before Ullathorne was calling for his resignation. It came in July after an editorship of a mere three months, but his last shot was to print an article in the July edition advocating more consultation with the laity in matters of Church doctrine. As Stephen Dessain has said: "... he had a common conviction of the miserable deficiencies within the church, especially in England, where it was behind-hand and out of touch with the world." But he expressed views which were "...solemnly expounded a hundred years later in the decrees of the second Vatican Council."¹ But in 1860 the Catholic Church still had a hundred years of adjustment to carry out before it could adopt Newman's position.

From Dublin Thomas gloomily reported:

The Bishops of the new Board, which was to have met monthly, commenced to take the affairs of the University into consideration at 7 p.m. on the 26th June, and at the end of about an hour, or an hour and a half, adjourned to the 26th October.²

Newman, of course, kept in touch with events in Dublin and wrote to Ornsby about Thomas: "How he stays I cannot comprehend ... but it seems wonderful to me with his connections that he does not get something better."³ The lack of a Rector's firm, decisive leadership was daily felt more keenly and in gloom Thomas plunged back into his

¹ J.H.Newman, op.cit., XIX, Introduction p. xiii.

² Letter to J.H.Newman, 20 July 1860, Oratory MS.

³ J.H.Newman, op. cit., XX, p.62.

work. While he was pondering the problem of finding suitable books for Catholic students he reflected on the persuasive power of nineteenth century Protestant hymns which, rich in imagery as they were, seemed to him to reach the feelings of young and old alike, in contrast to Catholic hymns which seemed deficient in this respect. He was particularly concerned to find suitable hymns for children, and wrote to Newman :

The extreme unsuitableness of most English Catholic hymns to this capacity - and their powerlessness to reach the feelings - of young children, are matters of which I have long been convinced... Now there are many hymns by Protestants, Miss Taylor's for instance, which seem to be in the main just what hymns ought to be. Of many of them the spirit is so pure, - so full of sweet religious naiveté and naturalness, that it is hard to imagine that the writers were not, in God's sight, members of the Catholic Church. The practical question is: is it allowable... so to convert to Catholic uses, in the instruction of children, the hymns to which I refer?¹

What Newman replied is not preserved.

In the summer of 1861 the presiding Bishops of the University appointed Dr. Bartholomew Woodlock as Rector of the University, but Thomas did not stay in Dublin long enough to enjoy the benefits of the new administration: in December 1861 he was still teaching in Dublin; in January he was teaching in the Oratory School, Birmingham, as he thought, on a temporary basis. The reasons were simple and dramatic.

In May 1859 Newman had established his Oratory School in new buildings attached to the Oratory itself, with Father Nicholas Darnell as Headmaster and a staff consisting of the Abbé Rougemont, Mr. Oxenham, Mr. Moody and Mr. Marshall. The matron was Mrs. Wootten.

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 19 February 1861, Oratory MS.

At first there were only seven children in the school, but it attracted the attention of English Catholic families, and it prospered. Unfortunately Newman and Darnell had different conceptions of what the school should be. Darnell saw it as an embryonic public school; Newman planned it as a more child-centred institution, in which the matrons were to play a significant part :

If we have one point which we lay stress on, more than other schools, it is in the quality of our matrons. They are ladies, who do not make a livelihood by their places, but have means of their own - and they take peculiar care of the boys. Need I say more than this?

It was over the matron, Mrs. Wootten, that Newman and Darnell clashed in December 1861. Darnell asserted that she was a servant of the Headmaster, she refuted his claim and appealed to Newman, whereupon Darnell objected that she had no right to go directly to Newman, but should have appealed through him, the Headmaster. This trivial issue immediately exposed the divided leadership of Newman and Darnell, and raised the question of who held ultimate authority. In an attempt to resolve the matter Newman proposed dividing the school into an upper and a lower, with Darnell as Headmaster of the upper school, taking Moody and Oxenham with him. Newman was himself to be Headmaster of the lower school, with Marshall as a teacher, until a permanent Headmaster could be appointed. The matron, naturally, was to belong to the lower school. Darnell rejected the idea and threatened to resign unless Newman asked Mrs. Wootten to go. This he refused to do. On December 27th, 1861, Darnell resigned, and the other staff resigned with him, partly at his suggestion that they

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.68.

should set up a school of their own with some help from the Brompton Oratory, which had been in conflict with Newman for over a year. At the end of 1861 Newman was left with a school, a matron, and no staff. Immediately he applied to the Catholic University for Thomas Arnold, Stewart, Ornsby or Renouf to be seconded to the school for a term, while he tried to hold on to the pupils and recruit more staff. This was on January 6th. Of all the possibilities he regarded Thomas's coming as the most satisfactory, for several reasons, of which the most obvious was the commercial attraction of the Arnold name in a school context. When he feared he might not be able to persuade Thomas to come he remarked in January 1862: "I am sorry to lose the advertising of so great a gun as the son of Dr. Arnold."¹ And he played the situation carefully. Not risking the rejection of a purely written appeal he sent Ambrose St. John from the Oratory to Dublin to make a personal appeal; and it worked. Thomas agreed to join the school for three months, though Newman clearly hoped that having won so far he might well be able to turn it into a more permanent appointment, to which end he was prepared to increase his original salary proposal :

... what if Dr. Woodlock were to hint to Arnold "You may go for good if you will; and then it would be intelligible, and we could fill up your place at once?" I would offer Arnold £350 per annum... My deliberate opinion is it is worth trying for, after all you say, that we had better not have Ornsby, or Stewart, or Renouf. Arnold is the only one it is worth while trying for."²

Of course that latter remark could imply that Thomas was the only one likely to be prised away from the University, though the attraction

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.114.

²Ibid. p.116.

of the Arnold name, Thomas's intellectual ability, and his clear loyalty to Newman all affected the decision. It was a Machiavellian manoeuvre. Even Newman confessed in this letter "I don't relish these precipitant acts", but he was desperate, and he knew that Thomas might just be induced to come. "Precipitant" could simply mean 'hasty', but it could also betray the truth that "if Dr. Woodlock were to hint" was an instruction to Ambrose St. John to make sure that Dr. Woodlock did drop such a hint. In any case, Newman had clearly been thinking of offering Thomas an annual salary, which suggests that he was thinking of an appointment more permanent than just a few months, whatever his formal offer might say.

The only snag was that Thomas had a private pupil, and Renouf made it quite clear that he would not take over that responsibility without extra pay. And there was the problem of Thomas's other lectures. They were solved by the simple expedient of a substitute, to be paid by Thomas out of the salary Newman offered.

It was all decided quickly. On January 10 Newman reported that it was settled: Thomas was to come to Birmingham until Easter.

He wrote to Dublin :

Let me thank, not only you (as I do most sincerely) but Mrs. Arnold, for so readily acceding to my wishes.

What I proposed to you was £150 altogether, for from January 24th to April 14th - that is £50 a month, you paying your substitute to Dublin.

I inclose a cheque for £50.

We have a small house in which the boys used to be, in thorough repair, furnished, and with a garden (say, four bedrooms) which is at your service, without rent, if you would like to bring Mrs. Arnold and your children with you. It is a pretty place. The difficulty in this is that you would lose your own board, which I promised you.

Of course our school is at your service, if you like to send your boy there.

I will add that the sooner you come the better - I mean, if Mrs.

Arnold comes. The house is quite ready, all but a large bed - which should be put in at once.

If you come by yourself, I certainly should be glad to have you several days before the 24th in order to talk over arrangements with you. I know this is a change of mind in me. Never mind if you can't.

It was kind, thoughtful, and persuasive. He arrived on January 21, 1862, for a term's stay. He little realised that it was to last, not three months but three years.

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.120.

CHAPTER TEN.

The Oratory.

The Oratory stands on the Hagley road, in the Edgbaston district of Birmingham; the house which Newman had prepared for Thomas was number 7, Vicarage Road, which runs off the main road and flanks the rear garden of the Oratory. On January 21, 1862, Thomas arrived accompanied by his two eldest boys, William, who was nearly 10, and Theodore, who was nearly 7 and it was soon agreed that they should be taught in the Oratory school free of charge, so that in terms of school fees and rent saved the move to Birmingham had its attractions. Thomas wasted no time in plunging into his work to salvage something from the wreckage of what had been a school: only two days later Newman wrote: "Mr. Arnold has arrived, and is at work; and we are very glad to have him."¹ Julia followed a day or two later with the three other children: Arthur, who was 5, Lucy, nearly 4, and Francis who was 2. So Julia, who was in her 36th year, settled into the house in Vicarage Road with five of her children. Mary was still at boarding school. Thomas did not record his wife's side of their story, and if Julia wrote letters hardly any of them have been preserved, but her feelings at this time can be fairly accurately guessed at as she surveyed the new family home. Only six years earlier she had written an impassioned letter to Newman in the futile hope that Thomas's conversion would somehow be prevented; Newman had received it and formed his first impressions of her only yards away from where she now stood, in the final humiliation of her defeat. It is clear

¹ Letters and Diaries of J.H. Newman, ed. Stephen Dessain, London 1972, XX, p.133.

from Newman's treatment of the school matrons that he was thoughtful and considerate towards them, and the way in which he had included Julia in his letter of thanks to Thomas for agreeing to move to Birmingham suggests that in this case too he was aware of the anxieties and frustrations she was suffering. How they reacted to each other when they finally met is not recorded. But elsewhere her attitudes can be discerned more clearly. She shared the family's disgust at the prospect of William and Theodore being taught at the Oratory School by Newman. There is no doubt that Julia and Mrs. Arnold established an axis of opinion, they became allies, so that later in the year, writing from Fox How to Thomas in Birmingham she confessed that though she was glad to hear that Willy had done well in his recent examinations "the thought of our son being examined by Dr. Newman had carried a pang to my heart. Your mother I found felt it in the same way: she said (when I read out to her that part of your letter) with her eyes full of tears, 'Oh! to think of his grandson, dearest Tom's son, being examined by Dr. Newman!"¹ Though they had different reasons for disliking Newman the two women were united in their opposition. Almost paradoxically Julia had become almost more a member of the family than Thomas himself. A more distant observation is given by Janet Trevelyan, Thomas's granddaughter, who had family conversations and private confidences to draw upon when she described his conversion as "a terrible trial" to the family, and in an unintentionally revealing aside described it as "his lapse to Catholicism."² The Arnold women, at least, were sure and consistent in their opinions,

¹J.P. Trevelyan, The life of Mrs. H. Ward, London 1923, p.13.

²Ibid. p.7.

and Julia had become one of them.

But Thomas's arrival in Birmingham was a great relief to Newman. Together with Father Ambrose St. John he had two teachers as the core of a new staff, so the school would not have to be closed down. And Thomas's value cannot be over-estimated: he was a man of high intellectual calibre, a proved colleague, an able administrator, a zealous Catholic, and possessed of a name which was so widely respected in educational circles that his mere presence at the school was a recommendation to all parents who wanted a good education for their sons. The Arnold name was virtually a guarantee of high academic and moral standards. Newman certainly felt that these factors made Thomas's value outweigh the loss of many of his former staff: "We have, I am thankful to say," he wrote at the end of January, "weathered this great storm, and hope that in having the son of Dr. Arnold for our first master we shall have gained more than we have lost."¹ The defecting staff were outflanked by this manoeuvre. The school they had so peremptorily dismissed looked suddenly to be more desirable. Only ten days after Thomas and his family settled into the school house two of them, the Abbé Rougemont and Mr. Marshall, returned and were re-appointed to the staff. To Newman's further relief every single boy returned at the beginning of term on January 25th. A mere month had elapsed since Father Darnell had led the walk-out. As Newman confided to Ornsby, at the Catholic University, "In our sudden and frightful difficulty Arnold's name did wonders for us."² By the

¹J.H. Newman, *op.cit.*, XX, p.132.

²*Ibid.* p.143.

end of the year he was able to report that the school was "more orderly, more religious, more cheerful and more studious."¹

It was not only a reputation that Thomas brought with him, however; that by itself would not have served Newman's need. In characteristic fashion Thomas hurled himself into his tasks at once, without hesitation, as he had done successively in New Zealand, Tasmania, and Ireland. Dr. Arnold had always preached that work is man's appointed calling on earth, and Thomas exemplified that view. On January 26th Newman noted to Fr. St. John that "Arnold is throwing himself into his work famously. I hope we shall be able to keep him."² That latter remark, made only five days after Thomas's arrival, betrays two things: his respect for his young protégé, and the hidden design of using the temporary arrangement to secure Thomas permanently for the school. Of this Thomas was innocently unaware; he was still thinking in terms of three months.

Before the end of the month a fifth master, Mr. Pope, was appointed, and incredibly the school gathered momentum as if no disruption had occurred at all. Before the troubles it had consisted of sixty boys in all, including the sons of both Irish and English families. The most significant, from a prestige point of view, was the son of the Duke of Norfolk. In February 1862 the numbers actually increased, and this encouraged Newman to press on with the new buildings and enlargements which had been started in the previous year. He remarked: "Arnold and Pope promise very well - and Fr. St. John. But we have a vast deal to do ... there is everything to do in the way of order,

¹J.H. Newman, *op.cit.*, XX, p.371.

²*Ibid.* p.136.

and we shall have a great deal to do before we get it into shape."¹
 But an almost miraculous recovery had been mounted in little more than a month.

Unfortunately Thomas and Julia found the Birmingham air uncongenial; it was cold and the prevailing winds carried a dampness that troubled them, especially after the climate they had known in Tasmania. "The worst wind" Thomas wrote, "was that from the north-west, which blew perseveringly for a great part of spring and early summer, and not only was exceedingly cold, but brought smoke and abominable vapours from the neighbouring "Black Country" over the unhappy suburb... for one born in the Thames Valley there is a harsh feeling in the air to which he cannot easily reconcile himself."² The house too was damp and badly drained, and these conditions were to catch up with Thomas quite quickly, prone as he was to rheumatic illnesses. But he enjoyed the community life of the Oratory itself, which Newman had organised on monastic lines after the fashion of his settlement at Littlemore, near Oxford, to which he withdrew between resigning as Vicar of St. Mary's and joining the Catholic Church. Father Ambrose St. John had been with him then, and was with him still, in the Oratory. Newman was relaxed and at ease and Thomas began to enjoy "the power and depth of that extraordinary mind"³ He was so impressed by the ritual of a monastic order that even thirty years later he was able to give a two-page description of it in his autobiography, describing with care the tables ranged round three

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.148.

² Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.167.

³ Ibid., p.168.

sides of the hall, the readings of the lives of the saints which went on during the meal, the after-dinner debate, and the final gathering in the recreation room "just as in an Oxford common-room". There were other compensations, too, of which the general improvement in their finances was second only to their greater proximity to Fox How. In the summer of their first year in Birmingham they took a long holiday in Westmoreland, with obvious pleasure:

Everyone here knows me, or of me, and I know almost everybody; and old maids ask one to tea, and brothers, sisters, aunts, nephews, neices, in short every sprig on the tree of consanguinity are always forming plans for walks on Loughrigg, or picnics on Windermere, or this or that expedition, and it is vain to think of not being drawn into the vortex. On Wednesday, however, we return to Birmingham, and there will be an entire change of scene...

But the new salary was still not enough to provide comfortably for a large family and pay for Mary's boarding school, in fact Janet Trevelyan reveals that "if it had not been for the help freely given during these years by W.E. Forster, the struggling pair must almost have gone down under their difficulties."² This is partly the reason for Thomas's work for Sir John Acton and the Rambler, as he noted at the end of his letter quoted above :

Would you think me very troublesome if I asked you to send me a portion of what will be coming to me for the article. The trip to Westmoreland was an expensive one and my numerous children keep me in the normal condition of an "exhausted receiver."

Sir John was prompt: Thomas received his cheque by return of post.

No-one could have struggled harder than Thomas did to supplement his ordinary income. Although he was plunged headlong into the work of the school in January 1862, he was still busily engaged with his

¹ Letter to Sir J. Acton, 24 August 1862, Acton Correspondence MS., CUL.

² Janet Trevelyan, Life of Mrs. Humphry Ward, London 1923, p.13.

Manual of English Literature, which was nearly finished, with occasional work for the Civil Service Commission - as examiner - and with articles for Acton's Rambler magazine. As his daughter, Mrs. Humphry Ward, later remarked: "To look at the endless piles of his notebooks is to realise how hard, how incessantly he worked. Historical scholarship was his destined field."¹ She was, of course, writing of him at Oxford, ten years later, but in those dark January days of 1862 in Edgbaston he was beginning that apprenticeship to Anglo-Saxon studies which later gave him a place among the scholars of his day. Writing for the Rambler not only gave him a supplementary income it turned his mind towards writing and helped to shape his areas of interest. In January, however, he put such matters out of mind and turned to the more practical problems of his Manual and his school work.

He was useful in other ways too, for Newman was busy trying to create an image for the school and consulted his friends - Thomas among them - on sundry practical details which affected it. How to attract the right pupils in sufficient numbers was a basic problem, as he indicated to W.T. Allies in February :

What is done at Eton and Harrow in the way of introduction of the parents of boys, candidates for admission, to the Headmaster? Does he admit the son of anyone who presents himself? At Oxford, a father applies to the Head of a House through some common friend.

By the middle of that month he had decided which of his new staff were up to standard: Pope and Marshall were proving unsatisfactory but Thomas was too good to be lost back to the University in Dublin.

¹ Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1919, p.100.

² J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.151.

He accordingly proposed that Thomas should take on a permanent contract, but it was refused. Shortly afterwards, however, Thomas went up to Fox How for a long week-end, leaving Julia and the children in Birmingham, returning early on the following Monday. Three days later, on March 1, Newman wrote a private note to Edward Bellasis: "I have secured Arnold, if the Catholic University consents."¹ It seems that family counsels had persuaded Thomas to accept Newman's offer for without doubt Mrs. Arnold would have been glad to have her son settled once more in England even though it meant accepting his position in the Oratory School with Newman. In addition there were two possible compensations in the terms offered to Thomas. The first was that Newman hoped to strengthen the links between the school and the Catholic University so that it would become normal for a boy to proceed from the school to Dublin; the other was that Thomas could perhaps become an honorary professor delivering a series of occasional lectures in Dublin. Both made it seem possible that Thomas would not entirely lose his connection with the University. In fact Newman raised the question of the honorary professorship with Dr. Woodlock a week later, but it came to nothing.

It was at this time that Sir John Acton proposed that Thomas should not only write for the Rambler magazine, which was being re-shaped, but also take on sub-editorial duties. He hesitated, but finally agreed in July when his Manual was at last off his hands :

I think I can undertake the department you offer me, (which I

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.160.

understand to be 'the literary and political history of the Greek and Roman world, including French and German works on the subject') if it be understood that the 20 or 24 works which I am to review during the year, need not be all solid digested publications, but may include occasional monographs or 'opuscules' of a less formidable character, such for instance as the treatise on Lycia which you sent me the other day ... I quite understand that I should have the responsibility of the department, and I would discharge this to, the best of my power; but you see how much my time is cut up...

It was a decision of some consequence for it subsequently pulled him into controversial matters simply because he became close to Sir John who regarded the Rambler as a means of countering the reactionary forces in Catholic politics, led by the Dublin Review. Newman privately supported Acton's general objectives but could give no public support to the magazine for his Catholic allegiance was under close scrutiny at this time by the very forces of the right - Manning and W.G. Ward in particular - that Acton hoped to attack. By June 1862 the rumours that he was about to return to the Anglican Church reached such a pitch that he was forced into a public defence in the Globe newspaper. But the real problem of the Rambler lay in the person of Richard Simpson, the proprietor, who delighted in writing controversial articles. Even Newman regarded them as subversive and potentially anti-Catholic in attitude and tone and protested to Acton that they took too much pleasure in anti-Catholic satire to be tolerated with their

reckless expression of unusual opinions ... about scientific difficulties etc., interference in matters which did not concern them, as the education of the clergy, or flippant ipse dixit off-hand Protestant review-like statements of new views, as the article on Dollinger ... last month, a wanton going out of the

¹ Letter to Sir John Acton, 9 July 1862, Acton Correspondence, MS., CUL.

way to have a fling at things or persons who are sacred or venerable.

To the Catholic establishment the Rambler was quite simply subversive. Bishop Ullathorne distrusted the content as well as the tone of Simpson's articles citing as evidence one in the edition of March 1862 which seemed to argue that

science without God is infallible, whilst the Catholic religion is encrusted with errors. On the Church they incessantly inculcate the duty of reforming her teaching; whilst science is treated like Fate, as something irresistible and irreformable.²

As early as June 1861 Newman had warned Acton that the Pope might well retaliate with an official rebuke through the Propaganda :

The Rambler certainly does seem to me ever nibbling at theological questions. It seems to me in its discussions to come under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical power: and therefore I think the ecclesiastical power ought to be deferred to ... It has been sufficiently theological and ecclesiastical to impress the world with the idea that it comes under an ecclesiastical ensor...³

Acton was too liberal and too committed to the cause of intellectual freedom to accept the warning. In a long exchange of letters he and Newman examined the whole situation from the principle of free speech to the political repercussions which could follow, and he remained convinced that the real purpose of the Rambler was "the encouragement of the true scientific spirit" and "the disinterested love of truth." While conceding that the magazine did not always rise to this high level he took it as a sign of merit that it attempted it at all. "It does not admit the authority of science or the sanctity of truth for its own sake" he declared, but re-asserted his conviction that Catholicism needed a journal in which the major issues of the day

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.353.

² Ibid. p.374n.

³ Ibid. p.4.

could be openly discussed.¹ Those issues were the very problems Thomas had already tried to face: the nature of Papal jurisdiction, the relationship between temporal and spiritual authority, Bible scholarship, doctrinal development, the emergence of scientific objectivity and its revelations about the origins of man. In a sense Acton was right in thinking that with such complex and fundamental problems before them Catholic readers needed guidance, which he believed the Rambler could provide, but he combined it with a reforming role, implying that traditional attitudes and beliefs were in need of revision "therefore it is in the nature of the Rambler that each number should offend some people, until all its readers are partisans."² It was on this point that Newman parted company with him for he was keenly aware of the dangers to ordinary Catholics of the erosion of faith, and he saw that the Church could hardly stand idly by while it was happening. From his middle position he could understand both Acton's liberal intentions and the probable reactions of the Church establishment.

It is worth a passing note that Acton was of a similar mind to Matthew Arnold who commented privately in January 1865 :

I am convinced that as Science ... meaning a true knowledge of things as the basis of our operations, becomes, as it does become, more of a power in the world, the weight of the nations and men who have carried the intellectual life farthest will be more and more felt.³

But by the time Matthew made that remark Acton had lost the battle

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.6.

² Idem.

³ Matthew Arnold, Letters of Matthew Arnold, ed.G.W.E.Russell, London 1895, II, p.246.

against the forces of reaction and authoritarianism within the Catholic Church.

Bishop Ullathorne, however, took a reasoned and moderate line when he suggested to Newman that Acton's educative mission with the Rambler should be allowed to continue provided that "not above one article in a number should be given to matters of this kind (i.e. contentious religious issues), not more than one or two points taken, and those thoroughly gone into and elucidated with all the information that could be brought to bear."¹ It was a brave defence of the principle that lay Catholics should be involved in the discussion of delicate theological matters, but it was not typical. The mid-century was a period of ultra-montane or reactionary predominance of which Acton was well aware, which is why he argued that the Rambler would be "the only organ among English Catholics of opinions in which it is possible for reasonable Protestants to sympathise..."² But in October 1861 Simpson took a further hand in the affairs of the Rambler while Acton was in Munich. On learning that the publisher had decided to cease publishing the journal he negotiated with Williams and Norgate who were apparently less reputable, in Catholic terms, than was desirable. They were Catholic, on Simpson's own admission "only in the sense of excluding nothing, true or false, provided only that it is 'scholarly' and 'respectable.'"³ Whether Acton agreed or not Simpson declared that he wanted to establish an "independent opposition" to Catholic authority rather

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.383.

² Ibid. p.5.

³ Ibid. p.50.

than one of "critical friendship", and while he would not make "a declaration of war" at least he would assert the right of the journal to "speak on mixed questions of politics, education and the like... in the teeth of all contradictors."¹ Newman was profoundly disturbed by Simpson's attitude and warned him he was "making electioneering cries like some Protestant candidate,"² but to no effect. Only Acton could deflect Simpson from his provocative course. Readership began to decline, official resentment began to mount and Acton decided to end the Rambler, combine it with another journal, or re-title it and begin again. It was then, early in 1862, that he appointed a new staff of contributors, including Thomas Arnold, Stokes, Ornsby, Paley, Renouf and Monsell, all of the Catholic University. In May the first edition of the new journal was issued, under the title of the Home and Foreign Review. In it Acton tried to explain the past history of the journal and the future policy, so as to spike the guns of the opposition. Having admitted that the recent past had been stormy he went on :

Its aim was to unite an intelligent and hearty acceptance of the Catholic dogma with free inquiry and discussion on questions which the church has left open to debate; and while avoiding, as far as possible, the domain of technical theology, to provide a medium for the expression of independent opinion on subjects of the day, whether interesting to the general public, or specially affecting Catholics ... we at first endeavoured to restrict it to topics of social and literary interest without entering directly into the graver problems of moral or political philosophy. But the events of the time, and the circumstances of English Catholicism gradually modified our position in this respect, compelling us more and more to open our pages to investigations of a deeper and more complex nature... In its new form it will abstain from direct theological discussion, as far as external

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p,50.

² Ibid. p.52.

circumstances will allow ... its aim will still be to reconcile freedom of inquiry with implicit faith.

It was a heavily qualified statement of intent, keeping the initiative firmly in the hands of the editor; but he did try to avoid one potentially controversial issue - the question of a Catholic Hall at Oxford - by putting it on one side for a future edition.

These reforms were too late, however. In January of that year Manning had tried to have the Rambler listed on the Index; his plea was dismissed on the grounds that only books could be prohibited. But his objection bore fruit simultaneously with the first edition of the Home and Foreign Review for in May the Propaganda sent a letter from Rome to all the English Bishops requiring them to warn their congregations "of the danger the Rambler was to faith and religion."² Newman's position was impossible: Wiseman, Ullathorne and Manning looked to him to declare his opposition to the journal, Acton hoped for his sympathy. He decided on silence. And even this was misinterpreted, so that he was forced to defend himself in the press - to affirm his Catholicism - and then begin the longer defence, his Apologia. Acton replied by announcing that in the future "a secular sphere alone remains" for the Review, which meant that it would not "enter on the domains of ecclesiastical government or of faith,"³ but the damage was done all round.

Thomas's reaction to the censure from the Propaganda was confused. While he instinctively reacted against it he also subdued that instinct in what he no doubt considered a proper Catholic manner,

¹ Sir J. Acton, The Home and Foreign Review, May 1862, CUL.

² J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.230.

³ Sir J. Acton, Home and Foreign Review, October 1862, CUL.

but the unease remained :

As far as we laymen are concerned, no doubt the cause of free speech and freedom of intellectual movement is too sacred, and has been too shamefully trodden underfoot in Catholic countries in times past, to allow of our being debarred from the prosecution of legitimate inquiries under any circumstances likely to arise. Still I must say that these episcopal censures make a very painful impression on me - as I am sure they must on you - and I do most earnestly hope that for the future no just occasion for them will be afforded. The Home and Foreign has declared that 'a secular sphere alone remains' for it, - that it cannot enter on the domains of ecclesiastical government or of faith; and if these self-imposed prohibitions are observed one cannot see how any serious difficulty can arise.

Again Thomas had accepted an equivocal standpoint - as he had done in Dublin over the problem of freedom in university studies - and he could not go on in such a manner without eventually having to make a resolution one way or the other. In this case he was accepting the right of the Church to pass such a censure, and even hoping that by circumspection the Review could avoid others in the future; yet if, as he claimed, free speech and the freedom of intellectual movement were really 'sacred' he could not accept their arbitrary restriction even by the Church. The episcopal censure had made a 'painful impression' which at that time was still within what he could endure, but it was becoming increasingly clear to him that his position as a Catholic was ambiguous and that before long he would either have to bow the head completely, and surrender his independence - or revolt. In this respect Bishop Ullathorne's concern was well-placed when he commented to Newman, in January 1863, about the Home and Foreign Review articles :

I find that they sap the very foundation, as well of faith as of

¹ Letter to Sir J. Acton, October 1862, Acton Correspondence, MS., CUL.

human reason ... I find a great deal more in Mr. Simpson's articles than appears on the surface ... I find the root of his mind to be at one time Kantian at another pantheistic. I need only to refer to the 18th page of his recent pamphlet in confirmation of what I am saying. That exposition you will, I think, find leaves nothing but the God of Hegel. An impersonal deity or law in a world of phenomena is all he permits the understanding to see.

The connection between this and Thomas's former state of unbelief is obvious, and even though there is no evidence left which allows the exact state of his mind in 1862 to be plotted the results in 1865 indicate that Ullathorne's observations were shrewd: the corrosion set in unseen and unnoticed until the damage was too extensive to be repaired. Though he did not realise it at this stage he was beginning to find it difficult to submit to a Church whose creed he had reason to doubt.

Though the Home and Foreign Review was largely devoted to articles of a literary and historical nature - such as Thomas's own - it represented a particular shade of Catholic opinion. Its political and intellectual philosophy could not be ignored. The fact that it appeared at all was surprising to many Protestants, who expected that in time it would be closed down by the Church. So when articles on Church matters appeared in its pages (e.g. Dollinger on "The Church and the Churches," Simpson on "Virgil," Acton on "The Munich Congress") they immediately assumed an unusual significance because they raised otherwise subdued matters of concern to a great many Catholic intellectuals. Whether Thomas wanted to read them or not he had little choice in view of his attachment to the Review and his proximity to Newman, who thrust them into his hands for comment. It is itself a

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.383.

tribute that Newman engaged Thomas in such discussions on an equal level, forgetting that only six years earlier his protégé had stumbled into the faith. There is a striking contrast between the kind of questions Thomas was asking in 1858 and 1859 - for example about the lawfulness of using Protestant hymns - and the complex philosophical arguments Newman engaged him in 1862 and 1863. Paradoxically, though Newman unwittingly took no regard of the possible dangers of this he was quick to warn Thomas of the dangers of 'intellectualism'; that is, treating religion as an academic study and therefore assuming that answers could be found by reason alone. But Newman had come to believe in a divine counterpart of faith and reason; man could only go part of the way with his own faith and reason, the rest had to be provided by God. When God granted the gift of divine reason a man acquired 'wisdom'. And wisdom could only be granted by God. This concept allowed Newman to accept imperfection: it was innate in the nature of man, but with due obedience and humility it might be translated into something nearer to perfection by the grace of God. Intellectualism, on the other hand, denied the divine counterpart and tried to find the whole truth, and perfection, through reason alone. As Newman saw, this being impossible, the only consequence of intellectualism was scepticism. He propounded his theory at some length in a letter to W.G. Ward in June 1862, in which he explained his theory of incomplete perfection :

As then there is a sense of the word 'perfection' which excludes heroism, so there is a sense (and it is the same sense) which excludes intellectualism; and as there is nevertheless another sense according to which heroism is the standard, so there may be a sense in which the intellectual gifts may be the standard; and, as the Saint according to this sense is more perfect than a holy religious, so in a parallel sense a Doctor is more perfect

than a holy religious also. A Thomas a Kempis is perfect; but he might be perfect, yet not a hero, as St. Gregory vii, or a Doctor like St. Gregory.

The crucial problem, which Newman overlooked, was how someone new to the faith, like Thomas, was to arrive at a similar conviction, in which faults, errors and even past crimes could be accepted patiently in the belief that in time wisdom would be granted. (This attitude emerged later, in March 1864, over the closure of the Home and Foreign Review). If Thomas could be argued into it he could also be argued out of it for he was still young in the faith, and Newman perhaps took too little account of it. Between Acton's confident grasping of ecclesiastical controversies and Newman's patiently studied examination of faith Thomas slowly began to shrink into scepticism. His greater acquaintance with the workings of the Church did not solve his difficulties, it multiplied them silently.

Acton too, was a puzzling personality, simultaneously liberal and yet orthodox, widely read, highly intelligent and of independent mind. Thomas came to know him well and remained in close contact with him for the rest of his life. His daughter, Mrs. Humphry Ward, also found Acton an attractive personality, and has left this comment on him :

The perpetual attraction for me, as for many others, lay in the contrast between Lord Acton's Catholicism and the universality of his learning... He was a Catholic, yet he fought Ultramontanism and the Papal Curia to the end; he never lost his full communion with the Church of Rome, yet he could never forgive the Papacy for the things it had done, and suffered to be done; and he would have nothing to do with the excuse that the moral standards of one age are different from those of another, and therefore the crimes of a Borgia weigh more lightly and claim more indulgence than

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.172.

similar acts done in the 19th century...² Acton was the lifelong friend of Dr. Dollinger and fought side by side with the Bavarian scholar the promulgation of Papal infallibility, at the Vatican Council of 1870. But while Dollinger broke with the Church Acton never did... he died a devout member of the Roman Church ... All his friends, except the very few who knew him most intimately must, I think, have been perpetually puzzled by this apparent paradox in his life and thought.

Immersed in controversy and pulled between these two influential men Thomas was not allowed to consolidate his Catholicism. If, as Matthew said, 'he hath not a still, considerate mind' Birmingham was not the place to acquire it. His autobiography studiously avoids all detailed reference to his friends, colleagues and members of his family, but one short paragraph - before the chapter describing his loss of faith - drops out a hint of his feeling of insignificance which goes beyond his customary humility :

But there were other movements - movements of mind - in which I was to some extent concerned, or, at any rate, deeply interested. Sir John Acton, for whose review, the *Home and Foreign*, I had written several articles ... and Newman ... bringing out, in parts, his famous 'Apologia'. After naming these₃ giants of controversy, I am reluctant to refer to myself...

Problems of faith were not the only consequences of his connection with Acton and the Home and Foreign Review, and in the longer term were not even the most important. He had the mind of a scholar, but his rapid movements from one place to another during the previous ten years and the diverse matters to which he had been required to give his attention had fragmented his thinking. While he was in

¹ Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1918, p.218.

² It is worth a passing note that Thomas disagreed with Acton on this point: he was more concerned with matters as they stood, not as they might have stood had political history been different.

³ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.178.

New Zealand he was restricted to the stock of books in his own luggage; in Tasmania he was slightly better off, but his return to England came as a kind of emancipation, despite the theoretical limitations of the Index, and he began to enjoy the opportunity to read widely once again. Since the return also marked a shift in his work from that of administrator to that of university teacher his professional reading and private interests came together. To some extent this is reflected in the articles he published in the Rambler between November 1859 and March 1861. There were seven in all, those on Mill and on the Negro Races being printed in two parts, ranging over topics as far apart as the writing of Sir Walter Scott to the ills of the Catholic University. Between July 1862, when he became formally attached to the Home and Foreign Review, and its closure in March 1864 he published a further five articles on Hayti, Venn's Life of St. Francis Xavier, Albania, The formation of the English Counties, and The colonisation of Northumbria. In addition, if he fulfilled the terms of his contract, he was engaged in writing up to thirty reviews and six of these are mentioned in his correspondence with Sir John Acton: Ampere's Roman History, Clark's Comparative Grammar, Worsley's translation of The Odyssey, Hughe's Geography of British History, Davis's Ruined Cities of Africa, and Mackay's The Tubingen School and its Antecedents.

Not all his articles were published: the letters mention five which he was working upon, or projected, which seem not to have appeared in print. Of these the suggestion of an article on

Gibbon could well have been turned down by Acton on political grounds: he was not deliberately looking for material that would provoke the hostility of the Catholic bishops. The remaining four articles, however, were harmless enough, being on Kemble's Anglo-Saxon studies, Beowulf, Raleigh, and Tennyson.

In all, whether published or not, the subjects Thomas chose give a clue to the direction of his interests during these crowded years for despite the seeming confusion of topics, that is among those he chose for himself, two faint threads can be seen to partly link them together: one is religion, the other is mediaeval history. The choice of Kemble is a useful starting point, for J.M.Kemble contributed to the growing interest in Anglo-Saxon studies by editing the Anglo-Saxon Poems of Beowulf (1833-37) and in 1849 published Saxons in England. Apart from his work for the Rolls series, Thomas himself published a translation of Beowulf, with notes and an appendix, in 1876, and it is this Anglo-Saxon thread which relates to the political geography of the English Counties, and The colonisation of Northumbria. This was the beginning of his interest in the subject which led him to seek the election for the Chair of Anglo-Saxon in Oxford in 1876.

Somehow he managed to see his Manual of English Literature through the proof stages in the Autumn of 1862 up to its publication in November. It was apparently well-received. Acton certainly approved of it, but more to the point is the fact that over twenty years later, in 1884, Longmans were still bringing it out, in a sixth and revised edition which Thomas prepared together with the

help of his son W.T. Arnold, and his daughters Julia and Ethel. It was designed as a handbook, not as a critical study, and was given an appropriate layout: authors' names in heavy type followed by a paragraph of biographical and bibliographical information, with the occasional critical comment added. It ran to over 600 pages covering the period A.D.449 to Thomas's own day, and was both comprehensive and detailed. With characteristic candour Thomas added a footnote to the page on which his brother's name appeared declaring that in view of his kinship he would refrain from making any critical remarks.

It was not always possible to keep up this work, his teaching, and his writing for Sir John Acton, to whom he directed a stream of letters asking for books, acknowledging books received, suggesting future articles and commenting on editorial policy. He was constantly fighting to meet publication deadlines - and often missing them, though he was prepared to work at all hours. His financial pressures led him to accept any reasonable commission, as for example, in September 1862 when Acton asked him to review a recent edition of Browning's poems :

I am very sorry for being so tardy, but I am subject to all sorts of botherations and interruptions. I really doubt whether I could write anything readable on Browning, but if you will send me the book I shall be better able to judge. You shall certainly have a notice on Manning's¹; it is partly written; Stahr, if I can possibly manage it.

He posted his article on St. Francis Xavier on the afternoon of Christmas Eve, and took time out on Christmas Day to write a covering

¹ Letter to Sir J. Acton, 22 September 1862, Acton Letters, CUL.

letter to Sir John. On that Christmas he had yet another member of the family, for Julia had given birth to a daughter, Julia, in the week before Christmas. So ended a hectic year during which he had once complained: "my brains have gone into a cross-grained condition this last month, I think..."¹

The New Year opened in its usual crowded fashion as the school half year got under way. The Albanian article dragged on, not being disposed of until March, by which time he had two more ventures in mind: an article, or series of articles, on political and geographical boundaries, in which he planned to "deal with the dynamics" of county boundaries, and an application to the Civil Service Commission for a post of examiner. He was appointed in April and quickly set about preparing examination papers for the Indian Civil Service examination, which consequently loaded him with a heavy burden of marking in the summer. In the autumn he began his researches into the colonisation of Northumbria, and these ran on until the end of the year, by which time the days of the Home and Foreign Review were numbered. In his crowded life there was hardly any leisure for reflecting upon religious matters, but situated as he was they were frequently forced on his attention. The sudden closure of the Review was a dramatic illustration of the point.

Up to the end of 1863 the liberal cause seemed to be gaining ground. The Home and Foreign Review steadily gathered readers and reputation until Newman remarked that "It had gained a high place among the periodicals of the day, and that in a singularly short time.

¹Letter to Sir J. Acton, 17 July 1862, Acton Letters, CUL.

Protestants prophesied that it was too able to last..."¹ At the same time the movement to set up a Catholic Hall at Oxford, which was another advance in the cause of liberal Catholic education, received a boost when Newman bought a few acres of land in Oxford, from private subscriptions, and made plans for setting up some kind of Catholic institution on it. He ultimately settled on the idea of a second Oratory from which the priests would be able to look after the welfare of Catholic men in the existing colleges. In such company as Newman and Acton Thomas had good reason to feel the truth of his brother's remark that he was working with 'the main movement of mind'. Certainly, up to the beginning of 1864, there is nothing to suggest any wavering in his faith, indeed, he probably had little cause for personal introspection in such promising times. But in the autumn of the year Manning and Wiseman put a stop to Newman's Oxford plans by persuading the majority of English Bishops, and Rome, that such a move would be against the Catholic interest. Newman was obliged to sell the site; but with a longer term hope in his mind he invested in some houses nearby in case, in the future, the reactionary policy should be reversed. In the autumn, too, came the major event, which had considerable repercussions for the whole Catholic Church: Dr. Dollinger called a Congress in Munich.

It was attended by Catholic scholars, authors, Doctors of Divinity, and more than a hundred professors from colleges all over Europe. Acton was there too, and his report of the proceedings appeared as

¹J.H. Newman, op.cit., XX, p.83.

an article in the Home and Foreign Review when he returned. Dollinger's intention was to unite the intellectual élite of the Church in working out means of assimilating the new knowledge without destroying the traditions of the faith. He was alarmed - in much the same way that Newman had been alarmed in the 1830's with reference to the Anglican Church - at the weakening power of the Church in the face of humanism, the growth of the physical sciences, and the agnosticism of certain political creeds. "Unbelief is visibly advancing" he argued at the opening session, "and can be arrested only by positive science, which flourishes only in Catholic soil..."¹ He then divided society into three categories: the scholars pushing out the boundaries of knowledge, the church which should interpret that knowledge in the light of faith, and the laity who accept it. It argued for a high degree of plasticity in Church attitudes for new knowledge "must compel a revision of opinions."² The discussions went on for four days, but one extract from Acton's report of Dollinger's lecture will sufficiently indicate both the nature of the debate and the reason for the official censure which subsequently followed from Rome. Dollinger described the existing situation as he saw it :

A Catholic scholar will often be the first to ascertain a fact unknown to Protestants, and hostile to some view adopted among Catholics: he will disprove some cherished claim or assertion, weaken the force of some popular or conventional argument, and multiply problems as fast as he advances knowledge. The spirit which enables him to do this is widely different from that of the more purely practical and official functions of the priesthood...

¹ Sir J. Acton, "The Munich Congress", Home and Foreign Review, Vol. IV., January 1864.

² Ibid.

There is naturally a close alliance between the episcopate and the divines of the second or practical class - those who, in order to shelter faith, seek to dispense and qualify the truth to the faithful. It generally happens that these men, while they uphold the liberties of the Church ... proceed ... to depress intellectual freedom. For it is in the learned literature of their country that they see the worst adversary of religion and morality; and therefore even Catholics who help to promote it are obnoxious to them. The obvious way to make it harmless, they conceive, is to bring it as much as possible under the control of ecclesiastical authority ... They desire to arrest the uncertain movement of human thought ... The outward expression of these ideas is a demonstrative zeal for the spiritual and temporal claims of the Holy See, an unqualified reliance on the efficacy of the Index, and a predilection for scholastic theology... the great problem of the day is the definition of the rights of reason and science among Catholics. ¹

Later in the conference Dollinger introduced the delicate matter of ecclesiastical education in France and, by implication, throughout the rest of Europe. It was a central question linking the other problems of Catholic education, the relationship between spiritual, temporal and intellectual authority, the interpretation of scripture, and the Church's fight against the growing tide of scientific scepticism:

The seminaries produce excellent priests but no scholars; and if nothing is done to establish a university it is to be feared that the French clergy will lose all influence over the male part of the population and will fall into scholastic seclusion ... (in the interim Catholic scholars must) present Catholic doctrine in all its organic completeness, and in its connection with religious life, rigidly separating that which is permanent and essential from whatever is accidental and foreign. ²

It was not a solely Catholic problem in its general results; even though the Anglican Church did have universities from which to draw its future priests the decline in church authority was a general phenomenon.

¹ Sir J. Acton, "The Munich Congress", Home and Foreign Review, Vol. IV, December 1863.

² Idem.

Change was moving through all levels of political, intellectual, artistic and religious life so that not even the ancient universities were proof against it. The 1854 university reforms began three decades of change. Mrs. Humphry Ward described Oxford in the late 1860's in terms of contending armies poised to fall upon each other:

Balliol, Christ Church, Lincoln: - the Liberal and utilitarian camp, the Church camp, the researching and pure scholarship camp - with Science and the Museum hovering in the background, as the growing aggressive powers of the future seeking whom they might devour: - they were the signs and symbols of mighty hosts, of great forces still visibly incarnate, and in marching array. Balliol versus Christ Church - Jowett versus Pusey and Liddon - while Lincoln despised both, and the new scientific forces watched and waited: - that was how we saw the field of battle, and the various alarms and excursions it was always providing. ¹

Dollinger's conference closed after four days of debate with a resolution calling for future conferences to be held annually so that the work of the inaugural session could be continued. Acton was delighted with the outcome for the conference had in every respect endorsed the policies he had been pursuing in the Rambler and in the Home and Foreign Review. He returned to England to prepare an article on the conference for the Home and Foreign Review; it appeared in December 1863 and was eagerly read, particularly by the members of the Catholic University in Dublin, as Thomas was happy to report. For the Catholic hierarchy, however, both the conference and its consequences were alarming and opposition to such liberal views, as well as the means by which they were disseminated, began to mount in Rome. Acton decided that obedience to ecclesiastical authority demanded the closure of the Home & Foreign Review, as he

¹ Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1918, pp. 131-32.

indicated to Newman in March 1864 :

I have to give you the important news of the suppression of the H. & F. The Pope has issued a Rescript to the Archbishop of Munich on the late Conferences in which he virtually approves their tone and purpose, but adds several propositions on the submission due to the Congregations (by which the Index is meant), on the authority belonging to received opinions in the schools, and to the *vetus schola*, which are directly and flagrantly opposed to the principles of the Review. The intention thus expressed seems to promise further measures if opportunity be given by resistance or contradiction. A conflict with the authorities would not only be a grievous scandal, but would destroy the efficiency and use of the Review, and I have determined not to risk a censure, but to take the significant warning of this document and put an end to the Review after the appearance of the next number.

The Rescription was made public in March 1864; the last edition of the Review appeared at the same time. Thomas's letters for the first quarter of 1864 make no reference to the imminent closure of the journal, in fact right up to the middle of March he was preparing his Northumbria article and planning another on "The legend of Durham" for the July edition. The publication of the Rescription clearly forced Acton's hand; the decision was quite sudden and until then totally unexpected. Newman was depressed for Manning had made a complete victory and now no Catholic publication remained to assert liberal views against the reactionary Dublin Review, edited by W.G. Ward. In a mood of tight-lipped stoicism Newman replied :

You are the best judge whether you should bring it to an end... there are serious grounds for apprehension, lest there may be some ultimate intention of proceeding against you, and that more easily because we are in England under the military regime of Propaganda... But good may come of this disappointment. There is life, and increasing life in the English Catholic body; and,

¹J.H. Newman, *op.cit.*, XXI, p.83.

if there is life there must be reaction. It seems impossible that active and sensible men¹ can remain still under the dull tyranny of Manning and Ward.

But he was right; the 'military regime' had temporarily gained the upper hand so that authoritarian views were consolidated and received their most obvious declaration in the promulgation of Papal infallibility six years later, in 1870. Thomas knew that the main movement of mind had suddenly been halted, and enlightened, intelligent Catholicism was stilled under the hand of official censure. Almost overnight he had lost his part, however small and insignificant, in the progress of Catholic intellectual development and, even worse, saw that the 'giants' too had been shackled. He was back in the frustrated state he was in when he had left Oxford in 1846, disillusioned with the institutions of his day.

How deeply this began to trouble him cannot be precisely determined, but it is a fact that at the end of 1863 his health suffered, and worsened in 1864. He took on a private pupil - a teacher reading for his London B.A. - in order to supplement his suddenly diminished income, and worked long hours with him, to the irritation of some Oratorians. A combination of the damp house, the Birmingham climate, overwork, the depressing Catholic situation, and the obvious cares of his large family reduced him in mind and body. In June he was unusually depressed; in October he suffered a severe attack of lumbago, and in December he contracted scarlet fever, of which there were one or two cases in the school, though it was an open question whether he caught it or took it there. Julia took on the burden of nursing him while the children were sent to Fox How, partly to ease

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XXI, p.83.

her load and partly to escape the infection. Then one of the servants showed signs of the fever and was sent to hospital, the other stayed away, so Julia took on the whole task: "... and in that bitter winter my wife, who all the time was nursing me most carefully, rose on several mornings before dawn, lighted the kitchen fire, and met all the household calls of the day."¹ He recovered, but was weak and almost immediately began to suffer from rheumatism - again an old enemy - so that the doctor advised a change to a warmer region. With finance as it was the best they could manage was an escape to Bristol in January 1865 and this it was that brought on the final clash between Thomas and the Oratory. The arguments that passed back and forward were symptoms of the accumulated depression and frustration rather than causes of the breach which came three months later.

Throughout the previous year the Oratorians had taken Thomas's classes for him while he was ill, but in January they faced the prospect of being without him for a term. Newman proposed that a substitute should be appointed until Thomas should return and be paid £50 out of his salary. He reacted angrily, rejecting the suggestion that a long absence was needed, and asserting the right to appoint his own substitute. It was an exaggerated response, quite out of proportion to the situation, but indicative of his general state of mind and health. He was further angered because Newman refused to take his sons William, Arthur and Theodore as boarders while he was away. Newman had good reason for this: he was

¹Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.207.

afraid that the boys would carry the fever into the school and cause an epidemic. On the contrary, Thomas protested that it was the school that had passed the fever on to him. His anger was thoroughly aroused, and perhaps his old fear that he was employed not for his intrinsic value but only because of his father's name, but whatever it was he went on to make an assertion which he later regretted :

I am afraid that there is some further meaning behind it. I am told that even in the case of lawyer's or merchant's clerks, who may happen to fall ill, their employers never think of relieving them of any portion of their salary, unless in the case of individuals whom they think not worth keeping, and to whom they intimate in this way their estimate of the value of their services. If such is the opinion which the Father of the Oratory entertains respecting my services at the school I only beg that I may be distinctly informed of it, and I will take the most effectual steps I can to relieve them of my presence at the earliest possible period. In all sole seriousness I have formed a totally different estimate myself of the value of those services, and people outside, I have reason to think, would generally agree with me. However if, to put the matter very plainly, it is thought at the Oratory that I am a bad bargain, and get more salary than I am worth, I have only to beg that this may be intimated to me, and I shall then know what to do.

Newman replied immediately in a gentle tone, clearly recognising the strain under which Thomas had written to him, agreeing to accept William, Theodore and Arthur since they were to proceed to Birmingham from Fox How and not from the house in Vicarage Road, and offering Thomas his full salary, with the right to find his own substitute teacher if he so wished. His anger collapsed, and he realised that he had been rather foolish. He left the whole matter of the substitute in Newman's hands and departed for Bristol with Julia. (As a matter of passing interest, Newman himself took many

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 2 January 1864, Oratory MS.

of Thomas's classes while he was away). But he had left behind a threat to remove himself from the school "at the earliest possible period" if necessary, and this was not so easily erased.

He returned to Birmingham in May, and promptly caught measles, which was sweeping through the school, and in July decided to move out of the house in Vicarage Road in favour of a better-drained establishment in Harborne, some two miles away.

In the autumn the final phase began. On October 6th he asked Newman for an increase in salary. He mentioned the rising cost of living, and his large family, but grounded his claim on a more objective criterion: the report of the Public Schools Commission, which had been published that summer. His letter was long and very detailed, but concluded with a comparison between his own work and salary, of £400, and that of a Rugby master, who would be earning between £840 and £897. While he did not claim an upward adjustment of such a large amount, though he argued that his university career entitled him to equal rank with most, if not all, of the assistant masters at Rugby, he did ask for "a considerable addition" to his salary from the beginning of the following year and a kind of 'threshold' arrangement whereby his salary would rise in relation to the numbers of boys in the school.

Newman replied at once, pointing out that the school was already running at a loss. He was at pains to indicate how much they appreciated his services and the just ground on which the claim had been made. But it was the final paragraph that carried the sting:

Moreover, your letter suggests to us (the Congregation of the Oratory) that you have an idea of relinquishing your connection with us, an idea to which you gave expression in a letter which

you wrote to me last Christmas. I assure you, my dear Arnold, that we have the utmost delicacy in asking you to remain with us after two such intimations, and, since you seem to have turned your thoughts elsewhere, we are desirous to do everything in our power to facilitate in a pecuniary point of view any plan which you may on consideration adopt.

This was not just, or completely accurate, for Thomas had made no such 'intimation' though with his previous threat in mind Newman might have inferred the second intimation. Thomas replied carelessly, having failed to recognise the significance of Newman's words. He casually remarked: "As I find there is no prospect of a rise in my salary I must look forward to the close of my connexion with the school..."² He clearly intended that this should be taken as an indication of a general intention. Newman took it as a resignation :

It would be a great shame if with such qualifications as yours, you did not bring them to the best market, nor can we fairly complain of losing you, if we cannot rise to that scale of remuneration which you can secure elsewhere. It is a duty therefore for us to acquiesce in your decision, with whatever sorrow.

Thomas did not reply, assuming none was needed, but he was startled when he received a further letter some three weeks later, written as a result of a meeting of the Oratory Congregation; after a brief restatement of the former letter it added :

The event of your leaving us is so serious that you will not be surprised that, in order to meet it, we wish very much to fix the date of it. Shall we say Easter next, that is, Palm Sunday, April 9th?⁴

Thomas was shaken, and with some justification concluded that he really was not wanted. He protested that his letter had been misinterpreted,

¹ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XXI, p.254.

² Letter to J.H. Newman, 10 October 1864, Oratory MS.

³ J.H. Newman, op.cit., XXI, p.256.

⁴ Ibid. p.284.

but being unable to force a change of decision settled instead for the end of the summer term as the time for his departure. In fact he left in April, as Newman intended, but he was paid his full salary for the half-year which indicates that relations were still good despite the abruptness of his going.

These simple events, and the salary negotiations which preceded them, are not enough to explain Newman's interpretation of Thomas's letter, or his willingness to leave. After all, when he left the Oratory he also left the Catholic Church, which could hardly have been a coincidence; the one did not necessarily mean the other. He could have left the Oratory without leaving the Church, though not the reverse. On the other hand, once he had left the Oratory he had no other employment open to him as a Catholic. Certainly he could not have gone back to Oxford, which is in fact what he did do. Similarly, though he was always mindful of his financial situation his Catholic faith must have been dangerously near to extinction if he was nudged into apostasy by mere financial considerations, large family or no. It is much more likely that if his allegiance to the Church had been stronger he would have accepted his lot at the Oratory and supplemented his salary by taking on extra pupils, as he had already been doing since the closure of the Home and Foreign Review. That had closed off only one of his extra financial resources, though it is not possible now to estimate just how large an income he derived from it. This suggests that the financial considerations which provoked his removal from the Oratory to Oxford in the summer of 1865 were made important because he was already out of harmony with his colleagues. Subject as he had been

to the echoes of controversy ever since he had joined Newman's school it is not surprising that he had found the events of those three years damaging to his whole faith in the Catholic Church. The confusion of Catholic politics, the clear indication that for the time being there was no future for Catholic liberals, and the multiple strains of teaching, writing, and his large family gradually reduced him to poor health and depression. Then his old doubts returned. In "Passages" he claims to have regarded science, at this time, as the only area of human thought where any certainty could be found, and this corresponds with the warnings Newman had given him of the dangers of relying too heavily on intellectualism. He stopped going to Mass, and gave up private prayer. A spirit of "disgust and weariness of existence" came over him¹ and this reinforces a remark he had made late in 1863, to Lord Acton, long before he began to avoid Mass :

To my mind there is something far grander and more attractive in the desultory scepticism of Schopenhauer than in the self-satisfied atheism of the Positivists. If there be no God, I should say with Schopenhauer that unlimited scorn of life, of man,² of nature, is the only refuge for a mind of any nobleness.

These are desperate words for a professing Catholic; they argue the loss of faith. Not even Dr. Arnold at his most sceptical put the possibility so starkly: "If there be no God". It was not merely an academic question; the force of those words, as distinct from "If there were no God", or "If God did not exist", is particularly important coming from a man who chose his words carefully. He could

¹ Thomas Arnold, *op.cit.*, p.185.

² Letter to Sir J. Acton, 13 September 1863, Acton Letters, CUL.

admit the possibility of there being no God. Then, in 1864 and early 1865 he began to avoid Mass; rumours circulated in Birmingham. In the summer of 1864 he made a calculated and defiant gesture: he gave Dollinger's book The Church and the Churches as a prize to one of his pupils. He knew Dollinger's reputation, he knew Dollinger's work; this book was critical of the Christian Church in general and the Roman Church in particular. It implied the validity of the theory of Doctrinal Development. It was hardly a good choice for a boy in any case. Newman ruled that the prize was not to be given and Thomas had no choice but to accept it. It was a personal instance of the restriction of freedom he had come to expect from the Catholic Church.

Three months later his frustration began to manifest itself. First, during an unexpected visit from A.P. Stanley, he raised the question of whether he could ever hope to return to Oxford, and his former tutor and friend encouraged him in every respect. Second, and immediately after this meeting, he began to argue with Newman for an increase in his salary; he made that the deciding factor. It can perhaps be regarded as an evasion, as a gesture to the gods to take matters out of his hands; but then, major decisions such as this are seldom wholly rational and never simple. The parallels between his state of mind in 1865 and that of 1847 are obvious, so obvious that whole sections of the "Equator letters" could be applied equally fittingly to his situation in each case. As before he had come to doubt the church that had once given him a promise of certainty. He saw Acton blocked, Newman patiently suffering a regime he believed to be wrong in principle, and even faith itself

a matter of opinion. It was all a matter of personal understanding, in which case there was no reason for remaining in the Church at all. And this passive state was the most marked feature of his letters to Newman in 1865, as the two men parted company. Just as he allowed financial matters to tip the scales, so he drifted out of Catholicism. It was not a planned withdrawal, or a strong protest, and the incident over Dr. Dollinger's book was merely a minor event of little significance on its own. Though he gives it some attention in his book it is worth remembering that he also gives other insignificant matters similarly lengthy treatment (for example the bush murders in Tasmania in the 1850's) while he frequently ignores his wife and family, for example, in a quite extraordinary way. Newman's correspondence makes no mention of the incident at all, and yet he tended to keep a record of everything, not merely a selection.

His letters to Newman in the spring of the year make the situation clear. In April it was rumoured that he was ready to return to the Anglican church; he wrote to Newman: "The report about me which you mention is false, and you have my authority to contradict it. But I fear I must pain you by saying that I cannot guarantee where, or in what form of opinion, the course of thought may eventually land me."¹ Two months later he wrote again, from Oxford :

Yes, it is true that I can no longer believe in a permanent and living infallibility in the Church. I tried hard to believe it for a long time, in spite of the objections that constantly presented themselves, but at last I broke down. And in connexion

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 24 April 1865, Oratory MS.

with this I must say that I have never been able to understand or appropriate a sentence of yours in the Apologia, to the effect that "all the difficulties in the world do not amount to one doubt." I cannot see that what can be the use of difficulties if no accumulation of them, and no amount of ill means in the attempt to resolve them, is to make one doubt the truth of the propositions in connexion with which they arise. I suppose it was the multiple difficulties in the way of the reception of the Ptolemaic system that led men, first to doubt of it and afterwards to give it up. I dare say all this is very weak, and I know that I am speaking to one by the side of whom I am a mere child in intelligence and knowledge; still I cannot help regarding the matter so.

He was a child of his times, both in the attempt to look at life, society, morality and belief in a 'scientifically' objective way, and in his filial attachment to those set above him, in this case Newman, as he had been to his father, Dr. Arnold. His method of coming to a conclusion, as revealed in this letter to Newman, bears all the marks of nineteenth century scientific method: the gathering of information, the forming of a hypothesis, the resolution of the difficulties till all the facts seem to accord with the hypothesis, or it is changed, and, of course, the historical perspective which applies the experience of the past - in this case the Ptolemaic/Copernican debate - to the problems of the present. In 1865 Thomas was applying the methods of mid-nineteenth scientific thinking to Catholicism, and found it wanting. About the same time T.H. Huxley was jotting in his notebooks :

Religions arise because they satisfy the many and fall because they cease to satisfy the few.
They have become the day-dreams of mankind and each in turn has become a nightmare from which the gleam of knowledge has waked the dreamer.
The religion which will endure is such a day-dream as may still be dreamed in the noon-tide glare of science.

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 13 June 1865, Oratory MS.

² Quoted by Cyril Bibby, T.H. Huxley. Scientist, Humanist and Educator, London 1959, p.48.

By the mid-summer his ability to accept the Catholic position had dissolved completely and he found himself in an indeterminate state. Being uncomfortable in this situation he decided that for want of any other he would rejoin the Anglican Church, and this he did. In any case, he wanted to take his M.A. at Oxford; this alone was enough in his evenly balanced state of mind to weigh in favour of a return to his former church. It was not so much a decision as a recognition of the facts as they stood; his "day-dream" had not withstood the "noon-tide glare of science" :

I gave admission slowly, sadly, and unwillingly to the doubts respecting Catholicism which assailed my mind. Why, what greater happiness can there be for a man to believe, if he can believe it? what does the cold shade of this world's science or sentiment offer that can be weighed in the balance for one moment against those glorious imaginings, if we can firmly convince ourselves that they correspond to realities? This conviction has, at any rate in large part, failed me; and if I return to the national church in which I was born, it is only because such is the natural, and obvious course; there is in fact nothing else to be done.

It was a sad but logical rejection of the security of the Catholic faith, in that sense it was a negative decision affording him no pleasure and little comfort. But his family rejoiced. The division between his sons and his daughters was removed, Mary looked forward to being reunited with her parents once more, and Julia began to hope that at last she would taste the life she had hoped would be hers when she became an Arnold in 1850.

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 15 October 1865, Oratory MS.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.The return to Oxford.

The return to Oxford in the spring of 1865 was a calculated gamble. Thomas had no university position, no college affiliations and no regular source of income. He risked the open market in offering his tutorial services to Oxford undergraduates, with the further possibility of taking some of them as boarders. Of course he knew that he had considerable advantages of name, reputation and family connections, so that the long-term risks were slight indeed, but in the short-term he faced a financially difficult time unless he could attract pupils almost immediately. Stanley was still in a position to help in this respect, even though he had given up his post as Professor of Ecclesiastical History to become Dean of Westminster, in 1864, for he still knew two years of undergraduates whom he could direct to Thomas's house, while his widespread influence in Oxford could naturally be used in the same cause. And then there was Matthew, still Professor of Poetry, with two more years to go before his term expired. His lectures, delivered in English, not Latin, had begun a new era in literary studies in the university and were in tune with the spirit of reform moving through the university, while his reputation in the country at large was growing daily both as a result of his poetry and his prose. 1865 itself was the year of the first series of Essays in Criticism. Obviously some of Matthew's reputation reflected on Thomas, and worked to his advantage. It would have been odd if it had not done so. But he had his own reputation: his Manual of English Literature was coming up for its second edition by this time, and his authorship

of Home and Foreign Review articles was hardly a secret. His personal reputation, though not to be compared with Matthew's should not be underestimated. The editor of the Times, for example, had deemed Thomas's disenchantment with the Roman Church sufficiently important to print a report of it on the morning of June 13 1865 even though the only real foundation he had for it was a similar assertion in a Bristol local paper and occasional rumours around Birmingham and Oxford. Since a change of religion was not entirely a novel event in England in this period it is interesting that Thomas's change of direction was thus singled out for notice. Between them, in other words, the two brothers commanded quite a lot of interest, though Matthew's was the greater, and this was Thomas's guarantee of tutorial work when he settled in Oxford once again.

Not surprisingly, he at once revelled in the bustle and activity of the old university city; he belonged to it, it was part of his past life, it was almost a homecoming and, like the past, it brought him closer to Matthew. They had spent some time together during Thomas's stay in Birmingham, which in itself had been a comfort, and in the summer of 1864 they had been on holiday together in Llandudno - where they had no doubt conferred together on the question of Thomas's future - but from 1865 they came together more often in Oxford and in London. Matthew's visits to Oxford to deliver his poetry lectures were special occasions when the two of them re-lived their undergraduate days, visiting their old haunts, boating, strolling by the Cherwell, no doubt putting the world to rights as they went. Their pleasure in this infected the whole of Thomas's family, and no one more so than Mary, his eldest daughter, who was

captivated by the romance of the city, of eight races seen from Christ Church meadow, of the Fellows garden at Lincoln

lying cool and shaded between grey college walls, (and) the carnival of summer in that enchanting place. The chestnuts were all out, and splendour from top to toe; the laburnums, the lilacs, the hawthorne red and white, the new-mown grass spreading its smooth and silky carpet round the college walls... and through the trees, glimpses of towers and spires in the sparkling summer air.

In true Arnold fashion she, too, had been caught by the spell of Oxford.

But for all this it was not the same Oxford that Thomas had left nearly twenty years before, for all the apparent similarities. It obviously looked very much the same, and the marks of the Tractarian controversy were still evident in Oxford society, for there was still a High Church party led by Pusey and Liddon at Christ Church, and they were still capable of flashes of the old temper: for years they deprived Jowett - later Master of Balliol - of his Professorial salary which happened to be derived from Christ Church funds which they controlled, and they did so because they disapproved of his liberal religious opinions, even though he was, nonetheless, a member of the Anglican Church to which they belonged. But in other ways reform had changed the structure and nature of university life. As early as 1839 Tait, later Archbishop of Canterbury, had advocated fundamental reforms aimed at improving the value of degrees and the quality of Oxford teaching. His main proposals were never adopted, but he argued that specialisation in the more 'vocational' subjects such as physical science, which had no link with the older classical

¹Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1919, p.109.

and humanities studies, should be preceded by a general education; that degrees should be awarded at the end of three years but not be conferred until the end of a fourth year of study.¹ The effect of the proposals was to add significantly to the growing opinion in favour of reforms in the light of the general rise in academic standards in German universities. Stanley and Tait together toured Germany in 1839, studying the organisation of university life and embodied their impressions in the reform proposals which followed. Stanley, in particular, grew to favour an enlarged professorial system, partly because it would cut across inter-collegiate barriers by making the professors and their staffs available to all undergraduates and partly because such professors would have a university as distinct from a college responsibility. Resident professors would, in any case, exercise a more useful influence than the usual professors, who lectured in the university on an occasional basis, for Stanley believed strongly that a university is "less a system of education than a particular sphere of English life."² Actual reforms came after the Royal Commission's report in 1852. Tait was one of the members of the Commission, Stanley was its Secretary. Lord Aberdeen's Government acted on the Report in 1854, and the changes it made were important. The number of scholars at each college was to be increased and entry determined by examination; certain hereditary restrictions on Fellows were removed, as was the obligation to take Orders; the professorial

¹The exact proposals are set out in R.E. Prothero's Life and Letters of Dean Stanley, Vol. 1.

²Quoted in R.E. Prothero, Life and Letters of Dean Stanley, 2 vols. London 1893, I, p.418.

system was revived, and added to it was a plan for a staff of lecturers under the professor. Undergraduates were given the right to live in lodgings and to be unattached (i.e. not belonging to a college) if they wished, and Boards of Studies were set up to co-ordinate and evaluate their courses of study. The total effect of the 1854 Act was to open up the universities - for Cambridge was included in the Commission's survey - to a wider range of undergraduates, to create a university structure as distinct from a college structure, and to weaken the hold of the Anglican Church. The subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles, however, was still obligatory for M.A.'s and for Fellows and was not removed until further reforms in 1871. The right of undergraduates to be unattached cleared the way for a great many men to take advantage of university life by forming themselves into associated bodies which eventually became known in Oxford as St. Catherine's Society, and in Cambridge as Fitzwilliam Hall.

So the Oxford to which Thomas returned in 1865, over ten years after the Reform Act, was a very different place from that which he had left in 1846; and the changes were all in his favour. He could confidently expect a good number of undergraduates for tuition, and many looking also for lodgings. The reforms had made it possible for him to live an academic life, with a reasonable income, without actually belonging to the university teaching staff. No doubt Stanley had pointed all this out in Birmingham for as one of the architects of the reforms he knew full well what the effects of the changes had been. And his advice was sound: the return to Oxford was a happy solution to Thomas's problems in the spring of 1865.

With Julia and their seven children he moved into 77 George Street, and there they stayed for a few months before moving again to 26, St. Giles while they made plans for a house of their own. An indication of the financial success of the move can be gleaned from the fact that in 1867, only two years later, they did move into a larger house of their own planning and called it 'Laleham'. Matthew referred to it as 'the Barrack!'. Although Thomas was never very well off such evidence suggests that at least his finances were sounder than they had been at any time since he married Julia in 1850. Temporarily he was settled in his old surroundings apparently convinced that his conversion to Catholicism had been a mistake. He revelled in Oxford life, commenting cheerfully to Newman in June, only two months after he had left the Oratory: "In this bustling time it is difficult to find time to write ... Oxford is still, as ever, a most interesting place."¹ What was true for Thomas was even more true for Julia, for Oxford was a release from the strife and humiliation of their former life in Dublin and Birmingham, during which they had depended so much on the other members of the Arnold family. When they moved into their own house she had finally escaped from family charities, which she had come to regard almost as a permanent feature of their existence, and nonetheless difficult to accept even though they were both necessary and kindly given. In one rare letter of 1865 - rare because it has escaped later family censorship - she reveals something of the strain of being the poor relation, of having to accept family help, and of

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, 13 June 1865, Oratory MS.

taking Mary from house to house for the duration of the school holidays, for the sad fact was that Julia and her daughter were unable to tolerate each other easily. First Mrs. Reibey in Tasmania and then successive members of the Arnold family in England had taken Mary for weeks at a time to save Julia the strain of trying to cope with her quick-tempered daughter. Though she was glad of this family help she wrongly suspected an air of condescension where none was intended. Writing from Fox How, where she had been trying to make arrangements for the forthcoming school holidays she wrote to Thomas :

I think it will end in her (Mary) doing as she likes. I cannot say that I shall be sorry when she is well off, she is very hard to bear with. I am so heartily tired of this kind of life ... I am not feeling well or in good spirits, I quite long to be with you again, you are worth your whole family put together, in my eyes at all events ... Do not think me ill-natured or that there has been anything in the slightest degree disagreeable, but I must unburden myself to you or I should explode...

The move to Oxford gave her a refreshing independence of the Arnold family and her first real chance to repay their many kindnesses by receiving other Arnold children into her house in St. Giles. Matthew's children, for instance, became frequent visitors especially up to 1867 while he was Professor of Poetry. The family was united as it had never been for the barrier of religion no longer stood between the sons, William, Theodore, Arthur and Francis, and the daughters, Mary, Lucy, Julia and Ethel. When Mary came home for good in 1867, and left boarding school behind her, the family was complete. For the first time since 1856 a degree of harmony crept into Thomas's family life and it was not coincidence that this period marked the

¹Letter to Thomas, January 1865, Moorman MS.

beginning of nearly thirty years of successful academic work, even though its later continuation became a matter of necessity rather than choice. In the summer of 1865 Thomas took his Oxford M.A. degree, which required his subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles, and so confirmed his return to the Anglican fold. Pupils presented themselves for tuition, three or four were usually taken in as boarders, and he settled into his work. It was during this first summer vacation that he picked up the old practice of vacation reading-parties, taking a number of young men up to Keswick. One of them was Lord Jersey, afterwards Governor of New South Wales. In 1866 he took a party of Merton men, all reading Modern History, to Linton in North Devon, and in this party one of his pupils was Mandell Creighton, later Bishop of London and a good friend of Thomas's daughter, Mrs. H. Ward. In 1867 he took another party to Whitchurch on Thames, and one of the group was F.J. Jaynes who later became Bishop of Chester. Clearly, Thomas's fairly brief membership of the Catholic Church had not seriously damaged his reputation, though it is interesting to note that despite the various university reforms Oxford undergraduates - at least those who came to Thomas - seemed to have a clerical tinge, or inclination, suggesting that the intention of the reforms was taking some time to work through. But whatever the conjecture the fact was that he was very quickly accepted by Oxford men, and he thoroughly enjoyed being caught up in a life which, but for his earlier idealism, he need never have lost. By November he had so fully joined in the spirit of Oxford that he sent Newman a long letter describing university life; it deserves a fairly full transcription :

Last Thursday week was the gaudy-day at New College, to which as a Wykehamist I had an invitation. The occasion was extraordinary being the celebration of the opening of the hall since the alterations as well as the annual gaudy. A fine oak roof has been put in; stained glass in the windows; and the whole room furnished and brightened up; the effect, when the tables were crowded with some five hundred guests, was very good; a considerable addition having been obtained to the height. The old Bishop of Winchester was there looking extremely well; he spoke also in a manly and sensible way. Moberley also spoke well. Christopher Wordsworth made a sad mess of it; after saying that now (poor Lord Palmerston being dead) there might be some hope of his friend Dr. Moberley receiving that promotion to the Bench which he so well deserved, he called upon us all to form ardent wishes that the Doctor might speedily arrive at the 'otium eum dignitate' of that exalted position...

The Bishop of Winchester has just given one of the best livings in his diocese to his son-in-law Milford. This man with no prospects before him but those of a poor curate came one day to present himself for examination. During the three or four days of his stay an attachment sprang up between him and Miss Summer; they married; the bridegroom had either no home or a poor one; till a living fell, they lived under the episcopal roof; and the joke was that Farnham Palace was turned into Milford Haven...

The music at New College is as good as ever, if not better. To my ear it is as near perfection as well can be; the organ powerful but not overpowering, filling the whole of that vast chapel (for including the ante-chapel it is vast) with volumes of delicious sound; every note, whether from organ pipe or lip of chorister or chaplain, reverberated with a peculiar depth and mellowness of tone among the lofty pillars and up along the vaulting; and the whole performance harmonised in a wonderful way, yet so as to betray no effort, such are one's impressions... the building, music, and all, force on you the thought that after all there is a grandeur in the human soul; the great-hearted founder's conceptions proceeding from a noble and princely nature, seem to have never failed to call forth in any of the subsequent generations some responsiveness of soul; the spirit of utilitarianism, one might say, stands rebuked and flees howling out of the temple. Dr. Hawkins is till at Oxford, as of course you know, and is far from having lost his vigour. I hear that some defect of temper prevents him from getting on well with the tutors of the College and that a decline in its popularity and academical reputation has been the result. I think there must be some amount of truth in this, though possibly not much...

There has been a contest in Congregation this term, and has just been avoided in Convocation. The former was about the appointment of a new member of the Hebdomadal Council; the Conservatives carried their nominee, Worth of Balliol, by 104 votes, against 84 for Rawlinson the Liberal nominee. The cry against Rawlinson was that he was for the abolition of tests; which I believe is not

true. The balance is turned at present in Congregation in favour of the Conservatives by the votes of about twenty curates and college chaplains, resident in Oxford, to whom a clause, proposed with great fore-sight by Sir William Heathcote, and accepted by the Liberals on the vague notion that it had a democratic look about it, has ---- votes...

Payne Smith's appointment to the Regius Professorship is not favourably canvassed. It is said to have been Lord Shaftesbury's doing, who some time ago, when there was talk of Jacobson's being made a bishop, looking far into the future, wrote to Christopher, who has the parish of St. Aldgates, inquiring who was the fittest man in Oxford to be Regius Professor when Jacobson should vacate the Chair. Christopher, a Low Churchman, replied that Payne Smith was the man... Scott of Balliol would have been a more obvious choice, but it is said that Pusey, Jeune and Lord Shaftesbury together resolved that this should not be, lest it should lead to Jowett's being elected Master of Balliol.

A piece of fierce and brilliant declaration was uttered yesterday by Meyrick in the University pulpit, levelled against the Rationalists, and the Professors of the "higher criticism"... A sort of memoir of A.H. Clough, containing many letters and an extra-ordinary poem called 'Dipsychus' has been privately printed...

The project for extending the university is being seriously debated. But there are other things which will have to be changed before a very sensible increase can take place in the number of undergraduates. If a class of men at all resembling those who crowd the lecture halls of the Scottish universities is ever to be attracted, the vacations will have to be, if not curtailed, at any rate re-distributed. One of the proctors told me that on visiting Tübingen this year he found the students hard at work well on into August. But as it is here the terms are so short, and the principle of leaving at least half the day to muscular exercises and athletic sports so firmly established, that the professors have to resort, they say, at the beginning of each term, to a system of dove-tailing, demanding an astonishing amount of ingenuity. Men say, after visiting the German universities, that the extravagant and preposterous devotion of the English to these ridiculous gymnastic displays, which the newspapers think such a fine thing seems excessively absurd and even humiliating.¹

Apart from the picture it gives of Oxford of the time it also conveys Thomas's enjoyment of his surroundings and the extent to which he had become part of them in less than eight months. By January 1866 he could write to a former acquaintance at Winchester: "Now I am

¹Letter to Newman, November 1865, Oratory MS.

again settled at Oxford, taking pupils, and, as far as appearances go, with a fair prospect of success."¹ And his success was not simply a matter of having enough pupils for he had come to the attention of the Delegates of the Oxford Press who approached him in March 1866 to undertake some work for them on an edition of the works of John Wyclif. The manner of the approach was recorded in his introduction to volume one :

At a meeting of the Delegates of the Press, held on the 23rd of March 1866, a resolution was passed, and recorded in a minute, of which the material portion is as follows:
'Dr. Shirley's proposal to prepare for publication selected English works of Wyclif in 3 vols 8vo ... was accepted; and he was authorised to negotiate with Mr. T. Arnold ... for the editing of the same under his own superintendence.'²

Dr. Shirley died shortly after and Thomas took on the entire work himself. In sorting the papers, of 96 Latin works and 65 English, Thomas began a difficult task of academic detective work, trying to define with accuracy which works were genuinely by Wyclif and which had been mistakenly attributed to his name. He worked from the original manuscripts in the Bodleian, the British Museum, the Cambridge University Library, and elsewhere, and further in his introduction described how he tried to develop a formula which could be used to differentiate between false and genuine works. He concluded, naturally enough, that such a formula could not be adduced, but his method was exact: starting from the manuscripts he gradually related known historical facts to the content of the works, their style and tone, and this enabled him to separate the

¹ Letter to 'Algar', 3 January 1865, Oratory MS.

² Select English Works of John Wyclif, ed. Thomas Arnold, 2 vols. London 1869, I, p.1.

false from the genuine in order to prepare his edition. An extract from the introduction to volume one will indicate sufficiently the manner of his working :

Bale names the several divisions of the sermons (of Wyclif) in his catalogue, though not always in a way sufficient to identify them with certainty. For instance, his 'In Evangelia Dominicalia', with incipit 'Homo quidam erat dives', might just as well refer to the spurious collection of sermons described on the previous page as to those in the present collection... But with regard to the sermons for the Commune and Proprium Sanctorum, and those on the Ferial Gospels, it may be held as certain that the works which he has catalogued are the same as those now printed. The authority of Bale indeed, - Bale, who sets down Wyclif's death in 1387, who takes him on a journey into Bohemia, who assigns to him a score of works which it is certain he never wrote; moreover, who in his article on Chaucer, omits from the list of his works the Canterbury Tales and includes Lydgate's Falls of Princes, - is, if uncorroborated, of almost no value. Happily in the present case the weight of internal evidence tends strongly in the same direction; the authoritative tone, the proneness to subtle and recondite distinctions, so completely in harmony with what we know of Wyclif's fame in the schools, the special hostility to friars, the allusions to contemporary events, such as the crusade of Bishop Spencer, and the grant of papal indulgences to those who engaged in it... all these converging proofs, taken in connection with the unbroken tradition surrounding the MSS which has already been referred to, appear to establish Wyclif, in the authorship of these sermons beyond all reasonable doubt.¹

The first volume appeared in 1869, to be followed by volumes two and three in 1871, and these began to establish for him that reputation for scholarship which later played an important part in his candidature for the Anglo-Saxon Chair in Oxford.

In every respect these early years in Oxford were happy years in which he felt a contentment almost new to his experience. Matthew felt it clearly sensing that his younger brother had an inward calm which he had not enjoyed previously. Writing to his mother

¹The Select English Works of John Wyclif, ed. Thomas Arnold, 2 vols. London 1869, I, p.xiv.

after his visit to Oxford in February 1866 to give a poetry

lecture he said :

Tom was all right, dear old boy, and we had an hour's walk by the Cherwell, which did me more good than any walk I have had for a long time. If I had Tom near me he would be the greatest possible solace and refreshment to me.

At this time, of course, Thomas was still convinced that his decision to leave Birmingham and Catholicism had been right, and when Mary came home for good he met her with a carriage so that he could drive her home and point out Oxford landmarks at the same time. "When he first showed me Oxford" she wrote, "he was in the ardour of what seemed a permanent severance from an admitted mistake."² Yet this did not impair his friendship with Newman and Acton: he remained in contact with them for the rest of his life. Sometimes his presence in Oxford was useful to his friends, as in 1866 when Newman asked him to discover how an Oxford tutor could be appointed examiner for the Oratory School. The system still depended heavily on the schools concerned having appropriate contacts within the university, despite the general move since the 1854 reforms to set up an Examinations Board, which resulted in a rise in the number of matriculations in the 1860's and the admission of women to the Board's examinations in 1870. This extension of the university's influence was part of the countrywide development of higher education and the subsequent establishment of other university - and university examining - bodies. In the 1870's colleges, later universities, were founded in Leeds (1874), Bristol (1876), Newcastle (1877), Sheffield

¹ Letter to Mrs. Arnold, Letters of Matthew Arnold, ed. G.W.E. Russell, 2 vols., London 1895, I, p.319.

² Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1919, p.101.

(1879), followed by Birmingham (1880) and Liverpool (1881), and men from the two ancient universities went out to staff them.

Thomas's reply to Newman's enquiry, in 1866, indicates the manner in which examiners were arranged for schools before the new procedures had been universally adopted :

I have made various enquiries respecting the means by which the school could be supplied with an examiner from here, I am told that the cases in which such examiners are appointed by public academical authority are quite exceptional; Rugby of course is an instance, and perhaps there may be one or two more; but the general practice is for the school authorities to make private enquiries among their friends here or at Cambridge, and so arrange the whole matter for themselves. Even Marlborough gets its examiners only in this way, as I learnt from Wickham of New College whom Bradley has asked to go down there and examine this midsummer. Wickham, (who is an exceedingly nice fellow, and if he could undertake it would suit your purpose admirably) said that he did not think you would find much difficulty if you set about the thing in this way. In fact just at this time one hears of negotiations of this kind as going on between the schools and Oxford men. Perhaps all this is superfluous, and you have already completed your arrangements, but if not, it is not too late to effect it, and if I could be of any use in the matter I should be most happy.

In February 1868, now settled into his new house, 'Laleham', with all his family under one roof, he received an unexpected and welcome gift from Birmingham: the recently-published volume of Newman's verse. He replied only after he had had time to read the poems through and observed: "I feel that there are so many of its pages to which I shall often recur in days to come, if these are given."² He already had a copy of The Dream of Gerontius. In the same letter he remarked upon one or two Catholic undergraduates in Oxford, and in so doing touched on a problem still near to his own heart: that of the unsettling effect of intellectual life in the university in

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 9 June 1866, Oratory MS.

² Letter to J.H. Newman, 2 February 1868, Oratory MS.

times when great changes were taking place both in knowledge and in attitudes to it, when the truths of the past were being seen to be supplanted by the discoveries of the present. Faith based upon the conclusions of oecumenical councils in the fifth, sixth, sixteenth or seventeenth centuries was not sufficient for the best educated nineteenth century minds. In a sharply critical essay T.S. Gregory has made the claim that nineteenth century Anglicanism was basically a seventeenth century faith which had since fossilised:

It was as if at the touch of 'pure reason' English religion suddenly withered or ceased to grow. Its dogma did not develop: the development was all outside the sphere of religious thinking, in politics, economics, science, literature, art. Religious thought either simply surrendered to the secular common sense which ignored everything in it specifically religious or theologically Christian, or else in a spirit of reaction reverted to the 'old fashion'... The Evangelical movement was literally a revival and it never captured the intellectual classes. In fact the Church of England had stood still, looking backwards.¹

But the Roman Church too had similar and no less difficult problems, and nowhere were they more acutely observed than in university life. Thomas saw young men, both Anglicans and Catholics, finding out that their religious beliefs did not equate satisfactorily with the intellectual concepts created by their university education. The teachings of the fathers, the dogmas of the councils of the past could no longer be wholly accepted; and it was the most able men, those who thought most deeply about their work, who were the most affected, precisely as Dollinger had argued at Munich. Thomas wrote to Newman :

With regard to Oratory boys coming up here, the true state of things seems to me to be this. In proportion as they take to

¹T.S. Gregory, "Newman and Liberalism", A Tribute to Newman, Dublin, 1945, p.88.

hard reading, and aim at honours, in that proportion they will be brought into contact with minds, and come under influences, which will tend to sap their faith, not in their own creed merely but in Christianity itself. A very good and clever fellow of the name of Jayne, a first-class man in 'Greats', who was reading with me last summer, assured me that he had known all, or nearly all, the high honour men for two or three years past, and that with rare exceptions their belief in Christianity was completely unsettled. At the Union, in common-room talk, and everywhere, one meets with indications more or less veiled, of this being the state of the more active minds. But looking at the question as a practical one, it is probably the case that few, if any, of the Oratory boys or other young Catholics who may come up, will enter into the full swing of the intellectual race. If they do not, but still keep steady, they will probably see a good deal of the ultra High-Church or Ritualistic set. From these, with their ridiculous inconsistencies, and bare-faced yet blundering plagiarisms, I cannot conceive that their faith could possibly receive attainment; the very notion appears ridiculous. No: but what does strike me as the chief mischief, and the real one, is the discontinuity in their education which is involved in capping the edifice begun at home and carried on at the Oratory, with a Christ Church coping stone. At the Oratory all was work, order and duty; at Christ Church all is play, license and amusement. It is not the Protestantism but idleness of Oxford that is to be dreaded for them. Here is Towneley (an ex-Oratory boy now at Oxford) for instance, playing tennis, pigeon-shooting, etc., etc., all very harmless amusements no doubt, but if Oxford is to give him no more than that (and I don't believe it will) why should he ever have gone to the Oratory? At real reading colleges, such as Balliol, things are very different no doubt; the general tone is intellectual and grave; but there is the other danger which I spoke of first.

Clearly, from Thomas's standpoint Catholic men were in an impossible position: either they learnt nothing, but so kept their faith, or learnt a great deal, and lost it. Whatever happened they were losers. And his own equivocal position is exposed, for his Catholic sympathies are obvious. He still regarded the Catholic faith as a set of glorious imaginings which were desirable but untenable for a man of any degree of intellectual attainment. It is tempting to conjecture what Newman's reaction might have been to the assertion

¹ Letter to J.H. Newman, 2 February 1868, Oratory MS.

that of the Oratory boys who went up to Oxford few would 'enter into the full swing of the intellectual race', and so keep their valuable faith. By implying that Catholicism was necessarily a sub-intellectual belief which had its domain, perhaps, in the realms of the imagination, to which intellectual analysis should not be applied, he had indicated, albeit unknowingly, that despite his affinity with Newman it was an aesthetic sympathy and not an intellectual one. When Meriol Trevor argues that 'Tom Arnold ... did not fully comprehend the issues,'¹ she is grasping only a half truth, for the two men did not recognise the same issues or require the same answers. The difference of opinion they had had earlier over the acceptance of difficulties is an indication that they looked at evidence differently from each other, but the simplest demonstration of their respective temperaments is to set the careful, patient reasoning of the Apologia against Thomas's ecstatic description of New College music, with its "volumes of delicious sound... peculiar depth and mellowness of tone among the lofty pillars... the building, music and all which ... force on you the thought that after all there is a grandeur in the human soul." Newman was spending his life patiently evolving his faith, keeping difficulties in suspension until such time as they could be resolved; Thomas needed to take it whole, on trust, or not at all. When he read this letter from Oxford no doubt Newman regarded the intellectual threat to Oratory boys with less fear than his imaginative friend had done. But Thomas's sympathies were

¹Meriol Trevor, The Arnolds, London 1973, p.148.

unmistakably with the Catholics, which suggests that either his daughter Mary had over-estimated the "ardour" of his "admitted mistake" or that in the few months between her arrival, in 1867, and the writing of the letter, in 1868, he had begun to nurture a new inclination to Catholicism. Certainly, all the references to him in later biographies, including the works of Mrs. H. Ward, Mrs. G.M. Trevelyan, the biography of T.H. Huxley and that of Aldous Huxley, make some reference to his muttering of Catholic prayers in church, or Julia pausing melodramatically outside her husband's study to catch the sound of Roman incantations murmured quietly on the other side of the door. Julian Huxley has it that on one occasion Julia returned home to find her husband entertaining two Jesuit priests, whereupon she hurled dinner plates at the intruders causing such a scene that the gathering quickly broke up in disarray.¹ Whatever the truth about the matter, and many of these anecdotes have survived only as memories within the family, it is true that Thomas's mind dwelt continually on the old questions: he did not give up speculation the day he left Birmingham. A good illustration of this is his reaction to Mark Pattison's criticism of Catholicism in 1868. Pattison, the Rector of Lincoln College and a friend of the Arnold family, was known in Oxford for the extreme liberalism of his religious opinions. On one occasion, in the summer of 1865, Thomas had heard Pattison preach and his comment on it was :

I could have sat another half hour under him with pleasure. But

¹Julian Huxley, Memories, London 1970, p.7.

he has much more of the philosopher than the divine about him, and the discourse had the effect of an able article in the National or Edinburgh Review, read to a cultivated audience in the academical theatre, much more than of a sermon. In fact the name either of Jesus Christ or of one of the Apostles was not mentioned once throughout... It was an extremely powerful sermon.

In 1868 in a book on Academical Organisations Pattison argued that a university education implies unlimited opportunity for study and the complete freedom to follow the logical paths that such studies reveal, neither of which he thought compatible with Catholic attitudes. Since Thomas had himself been battling with this very problem, both in Dublin for his students and ever since on his own behalf, it would be reasonable to expect that he would have some sympathy with Pattison's view, or at least an understanding of it. He had declared in January 1866 that no fixed dogma or view of the world was tenable since change was an implicit part of God's plan for the world because "the moulds and grooves in which we would fain make the Divine thought and operation run, are all destined to be broken up and fired and recast, as human reason advances on its predestined way."² It was not an unreasonable integration of evolutionary theory and church doctrine for his day, allowing change to be compatible with predestination. But this grand view did not hold good in the face of Pattison's criticism of Catholic limitations: Thomas's support for the institution of the Catholic Church was thoroughly roused and he at once sprang to its defence. Unfortunately he could not dispute the logic of Pattison's argument

¹ Quoted in Janet Trevelyan, Life of Mrs. H. Ward, London 1923, p.20.

² Letter to 'Algar', 3 January 1866, Oratory MS.

and in frustration he turned to Sir John Acton, in the hope that an answer might be found. Though it was written in April 1868 the letter has the tone and feeling of the 1856-1865 period :

I do not know whether you have read Mark Pattison's "Suggestions on Academical Organisation", but if not, there is a passage in it to which I should much like to draw your attention. It is at p.301, and runs as follows: "In the Catholic system then, as understood by the modern authorities of the Church, there can really be no higher education. Catholic schools there may be, but a Catholic university there cannot be. Catholic education may be excellent in regard to all the accomplishments, and may embrace many important branches of useful knowledge. It may comprise mathematics, mechanics, the rules and graces of composition and style, taste in literature and art. It cannot really embrace science and philosophy. The "philosophy" course in a Catholic seminary is in fact only logic and rhetoric - the deduction of consequences from premisses furnished by authority, or the collection of probable arguments for the defence of those premisses. They appear before the public as teaching science and philosophy, but it is sham science and a mockery of philosophy. Propositions in science and philosophy may be inculcated in their classes - possibly true propositions But (sic) the learning of true propositions, dogmatically delivered, is not science... The Catholic authorities, therefore, cannot allow their youth to share our universities. They demand a separate university, not that they may conduct education in it, but that they may stop education at a certain stage".

Two difficulties occur to me in regard to this passage. In the first place I fail to see what in the writer's mind, constitutes the logical necessity, rendering it impossible for those who believe that religion comes to man by authority, to make any genuine advances in science and philosophy, which they do not believe to come within the sphere of authority. For I should observe that Pattison's remarks are not at all confined to the Ultramontane or any other party in the church...

The second difficulty is that I cannot believe his theories quite to square with the facts. I remember to have heard you speak about the course of study at Munich in a manner quite inconsistent with the assumption of a necessarily unreal character in the scientific and philosophical studies of a Catholic university. Even that imperfect experience which my own life at Dublin afforded me would make me doubt the accuracy of his position very strongly ... if you, with your wide and exact acquaintance with the higher Catholic education in Europe, could find time to write and tell me what you really think about the above passage, I should be so much obliged. And if you had no objection I should like to show your letter to Pattison.

¹ Letter to Sir John Acton, 17 April 1868, Acton Letters, CUL.

There can be little doubt that Pattison's argument had thrown Thomas into confusion. Yet it should not have done, for in his own letter to Newman about Oxford education he had implied that in order to save their faith Catholic men had to stop in a low rank since extended contact with the best intellects would be corrosive to their beliefs. He had said almost what Pattison was saying, although he had not extended it to a general theory. Similarly, his appeal to Acton was for evidence to confirm what he felt, but not what he believed to be true. The incident had brought his heart and his head into opposition - metaphorically speaking - and it appears that against all the evidence he wanted to revert to the Catholic position. And it was only April 1868; three years after he had left the Oratory. The only question of any importance at this time was how long he could continue in this contradictory state, and the answer is simple: until some outside pressures forced him to choose one or the other, Anglicanism or Catholicism. For the time being those pressures did not exist.

By this time Matthew had ceased to be Professor of Poetry and was, in any case, turning from poetry to prose. Since 1849 and The Strayed Reveller he had brought out five volumes of verse and his tragedy Merope; in 1867 he gave up his Poetry Chair and Poetry at the same time, even though the first collected edition of his poems did not come out until 1869. It was in that year that Thomas's first volume of the Select Works of John Wyclif was published. In general there was little to disturb his family life at this time.

An interesting though slight picture of his life about this time occurs in the memoirs of Miss Ethel Hatch, whose father had once been

a Doctor of Divinity in the university. She does not clearly specify which years she is referring to, but in view of the references to Julia and Ethel at the High School she was probably condensing a number of memories relating to the early to mid 1870's, but before the 1876 election for the Chair of Anglo-Saxon :

The Arnolds lived near us in Church Walk, and Julia and Ethel, though much older, were great friends of ours. They were very fond of my mother, and often came to pay her long visits... One morning they came to say that they were going up to London the next day. Could they do any commissions for my Mother? As my Mother had been trying without success to find a pink silk sash in the Oxford shops, she gratefully accepted their offer, and asked the Arnolds to be kind enough to bring one from London... The following week Mr. Thomas Arnold... tall and grave, with auburn hair turning grey, came to call, carrying a little parcel. He handed it rather shyly to my mother ... and she found the parcel to contain a sash of a beautiful quality of soft silk... He had certainly shown good taste in his selection, but it was difficult to imagine this grave elderly man in a fashionable London shop, looking at sashes for a little girl...

In 1871 another change affected Oxford as the remaining restrictions on Fellows were lifted, and the first generation of married Fellows began to appear. Thomas was hopeful that some kind of post would be offered to him, and certainly the new changes increased his chances, but he was still concerned with the general standard of Oxford teaching, which he considered too low. In 1872 he published a booklet entitled The Revival of Faculties in Oxford, arguing that the academic lessons of the German universities had still not been learned, that Oxford needed to cultivate intellectual excellence by fostering research and setting up subject faculties which would organise the teaching of each subject across the university.

On April 6th 1872 his daughter, Mary, married Thomas Humphry Ward,

¹ Memoirs of Miss Ethel Hatch: Moorman papers.

Fellow and Tutor of Brasenose College. Fittingly, the ceremony was performed by A.P. Stanley, and the young couple moved into a house on the Bradmore Road, rejoicing in the fact that the previously prohibitive restrictions on married Fellows had been lifted at exactly the right time for them to take advantage of it. Although Thomas did not know it, in Humphry Ward he had gained an ally, who was to play a very important part in his life before many years were gone. Within two years Thomas became a grandfather to Dorothy (1874), Arnold (1876) and then Janet (1879). Before this, however, the whole family was shaken by the death of Mrs. Arnold, at Fox How, in October of 1873. The centre of the entire family network had suddenly collapsed. They all gathered at Fox How for the funeral, and it was there that Thomas received a letter from Newman grieving at their sudden loss. At first he could not reply, but a few days later he wrote :

Thank you for your kind note; it found me at Fox How where we were all assembled for the funeral. There is no shock in life so terrible as the loss of a mother, and a good mother, which ours was emphatically. I am most thankful to you for saying that you will "with real affection pray for her soul", and beg you most earnestly not to forget to do so...

So their link with Dr. Arnold's memory was weakened and their connection with Westmoreland attenuated, although Frances brought a touch of comfort to them all by declaring that she would continue to live at Fox How, on her own. She remained there, in the grey house above Ambleside, for a further 50 years, until her death in 1923. Thomas and his family returned to Oxford and there he settled back into his teaching. The list of his publications was beginning

¹Letter to J.H. Newman, October 1873, Oratory MS.

to grow, and demanding research was in hand for more books to follow. In 1870 he published Chaucer to Wordsworth, a short history of English Literature; in 1871 the second and third volumes of his works of John Wyclif came out, and again, in a two-volume format, in 1875. Since his other publications will be referred to later (see p. 329) it is only necessary here to comment on his growing involvement in the Rolls and Clarendon Press series. For the Rolls he edited Henry of Huntingdon (1879), Symeon of Durham (2 volumes, 1882), and Memorials of St. Edmund's Abbey (1890), while for the Clarendon Press he edited book vi of The History of the Rebellion: the First Earl of Clarendon (1886), Notes on Beowulf (1898), and John Dryden (1889 and 1903) Throughout this period he was revising his Manual of English Literature; by 1897 it had gone into seven editions, every one of them revised. Two other books are in a different category altogether and in some ways are more characteristic of him. The first was the Catholic Dictionary, which he worked on in conjunction with W. Addis and which was published in 1884, the other was his semi-autobiography Passages in a Wandering Life, published in 1900 and, as Meriol Trevor has remarked "offended no-one". It was clearly written in such a way as to avoid controversy and the risk of causing offence and, as such, is an unintentional comment on its author: mild, gentle, unassuming, in fact precisely the portrait painted by Stanley in that well-known reference: "He is and was one of the gentlest, purest, most ingenuous characters I have ever known - full of ability and of information...."¹

¹A.P. Stanley, 27 December 1873, in a reference to the Charity Commission. The date, however, may be incorrect: 1874 is more probable. Moorman papers.

In the space of ten years, since he had returned to Oxford, he had established his academic reputation, and in 1876 what seemed to be the perfect culmination of his efforts presented itself: the university Chair of Anglo-Saxon fell vacant. Julia, we are told, hoped anxiously that Thomas would stand and be elected, so bringing to an end, for once and all, the years of uncertainty. Her hopes rose sharply when she learned that he had decided to allow his name to go forward, and in a matter of days their son-in-law, Humphry Ward, began to campaign on Thomas's behalf. His intervention at once increased Thomas's chances, so that only two weeks later it seemed that the result of the election might well be a foregone conclusion; and this precipitated the last and greatest crisis in Thomas's troubled life. The fact that it did so is a further indication of the extent to which he kept his thoughts to himself for if Humphry Ward had known how his father-in-law was tending he would not have begun a campaign at all, and Julia would never have entertained any hopes about the outcome of the election. It is possible - even likely - that Thomas did not fully understand himself, until he was pushed into taking stock, and that was precisely what the election campaign forced him to do. With the sole exception of his subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles made in 1865 as a preliminary to taking his M.A. degree he had done, written or said nothing which had taken him further away from Catholicism, in fact, as the evidence of 1868 suggests, within two years of leaving Birmingham he was already inclining towards the Roman Church once again, though nothing occurred to make him take any public action to demonstrate his inclination. The Oxford years had been untroubled,

and marked by a rising income and a growing academic reputation; there was no obvious reason, in 1875, why this state of affairs should not continue for some time ahead. By February of 1876 he had gone so far as to determine that at some future date he must make a formal return to Catholicism, but still there was no urgency about it. What he had done was to come to the conclusion that for all the irrationalities in the Catholic faith there were even greater virtues which outweighed them. Seen in this way the difficulties which had caused him to reject the faith in 1865 were lightweight and certainly not sufficient grounds for rejecting all the rest that the Church had to offer. In effect he had come round to Newman's view, that difficulties do not amount to a doubt. Strangely, or perhaps not, depending on how shrewdly he had understood Thomas, this is exactly what Newman had predicted even in 1865 :

I cannot bear to let you go from the one fountain of grace and spiritual strength, without saying a word, not of farewell, for well it cannot be so to direct your course, but to express my deep sorrowfulness at hearing the news. I will not believe that you have not found strength and comfort in the Masses and Sacraments, and I do not think you will find the like elsewhere. Nor shall I easily be led to believe that the time will not come when you will acknowledge this yourself, and will return to the Fold which you are leaving.

What it all amounted to was that the echoes of the New College organ resounding from the stained glass and vaulted ceiling, the growing harmony of voices in the choir, the contentment of belonging to the old and respected university of Oxford, the community of learning with all its annual rituals, all of which Thomas loved, called to him in the same way as the Catholic Masses, Sacraments, the communion

¹ Quoted in Meriol Trevor, The Arnolds, London 1973, p.149.

of saints and Apostles standing in continuous succession receding into past ages and forward into the life hereafter. Against this great vision a handful of rational doubts were insignificant. He knew he would eventually return to the Roman Church. He therefore decided to give Julia advance notice of this in February 1876.

It was not the announcement of a decision but merely an indication of his state of mind, though both from his close acquaintance with Julia's temper, and from his experience of his similar action with Newman in 1864, he might have realised that it could do no good.

He would have been better advised to say nothing. But he was honest almost to the point of being naive; he told Julia, and the quarrels erupted. She must have felt as if she was living a bad dream all over again, for their arguments went over all the ground they had previously covered in 1855, before his initial conversion, and it was only when Mary, their daughter, intervened that Julia's anger and frustration calmed down. Eventually Mary arranged an uneasy truce between her warring parents, though by this time Thomas had escaped to London, and this is how she described the position :

She (Julia) bids me say that she deeply regrets the bitter things she said and she promises that for the future she will do her very best to abstain from saying bitter or wounding words. She was in a state of frenzy from a feeling of loneliness and lovelessness and hardly knew what she said. And she also bid me say that if when the children are a little older and your prospects are more assured, you decide to become a Roman Catholic she will feel it "her bounden duty not to oppose you". So my darling father let there be peace between you for your children's sake. We shall all understand that it is your intention to make an open profession of Catholicism as soon as your doing so would not do grave injury to those nearest you...

It was the situation of 1855 repeated. Then the Chair of Anglo-Saxon

¹ Letter to Thomas, 16 February 1876, Moorman MS., PH.

fell vacant, and Thomas allowed his name to go forward and Humphry Ward to begin their campaign. It is clear from Thomas's own statements that he entertained no real hopes of being elected, in fact it was on this premise that he let his name go forward, assuming that nothing would come of it. He also knew that his electors would be thinking of him as an Anglican, for despite the reforms of 1854 and 1871 the old attitudes had not had time to change. So it became a matter of conscience: he could keep quiet and allow the electors to assume he was still an Anglican - for he had given no outward indication that he was inclining to Catholicism - and let the election take its course. Since he regarded his chances of success as negligible there was no problem. But when Humphry Ward's campaign began to improve his prospects, until they reached the point where success seemed very likely, his whole strategy was undermined: he then had to face the real consequences of election, and the first was that he would feel honour bound to remain an Anglican for perhaps five years, having been elected as one. The prospect itself was not dispiriting, it was the loss of the freedom to choose which really troubled him. Suddenly the general idea of eventually returning to the Catholic fold became a specific issue which he knew he would have to resolve before the day of the election. He spent the weeks prior to the voting day reflecting on what he should do.

Janet Trevelyan has written that: "...in 1876 there came a day when his election to the Professorship of Early English was almost a fore-gone conclusion; as the author of the standard edition of Wycliffe's English works he was by far the strongest candidate in

the field."¹

It is interesting that she has called the Chair the "Professorship of Early English" since it was, in fact, the Chair of Anglo-Saxon; but that unintentional distortion does have a curious element of truth in it and it relates to the political overtones of the election, which was not simply concerned with the academic standing of the candidates. Reform was still in the air, a Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge was actually in the process of gathering evidence, and one of the chief questions being debated was that of whether to set up a School or Faculty of English in each of the two universities. The Anglo-Saxon Chair had existed in Oxford since 1795, with a strong tradition of Anglo-Saxon scholarship before that, whereas English studies had come in, and then only as part of the Pass degree, in 1873. In general those who advocated reform of the universities supported the idea of a School of English, while those who were alarmed at the erosion of College independence which would come with Faculty reform tended to deny the validity of English studies and therefore of the need for a separate School. Part of this conflict also embodied the old question of the function of the university; whether it was primarily a teaching institution or a place of advanced scholarship and research. The reformers tended to favour the latter view. As D.J. Palmer has said :

The political move in Oxford towards the creation of a Professorship of English Literature arose therefore from the prolonged controversy between the 'ancients' and the 'moderns', between those who wished to preserve the college system of tutorial instruction in the traditional general education of Classics, and those on the other hand who wished to increase the specialisms

¹J.P. Trevelyan, Life of Mrs. H. Ward, London 1923, p.27.

of new university faculties and professorial scholarship, and to extend the functions of the university beyond the teaching of undergraduates.

In this political connection Thomas was firmly in the latter school of thought, advocating Faculty reform in order to stimulate real scholarship, which he thought wanting in the university, and was thus one with Mark Pattison in regarding the achievements of the German universities in a favourable light. If Oxford was to catch up, or even hold its own in scholarship it had to go beyond simply teaching undergraduates. His respect for the 'real reading colleges' such as Balliol has already emerged, but one quotation from his The Revival of Faculties in Oxford, published in 1872, makes his attitude very clear:

We ask for scholarly eminence, and we are presented with a successful debut at the Old Bailey or the Chancery Bar. We desiderate deep erudition, and we are told to admire the eloquent leaders in the Daily Trumpet. We call for scientific analysis for profound research into the causes and conditions of phenomena, and from his fool's paradise on the top of Mont Blanc or the Devil's Peak, the first-class man and fellow of his college, radiant and self-satisfied, invites us to marvel at his athletic performances.²

One other factor which had a direct bearing on the Anglo-Saxon election was the question of 'English Literature' studies in a School of Anglo-Saxon. Earle, the successful candidate in the election, suggested to the Reform Commissioners later that English studies could fall naturally within the Anglo-Saxon School, and it is in this light that Thomas's academic record is important. His publications to date had hardly qualified him for a Chair in

1 D.J.Palmer, The Rise of English Studies, London 1965, p.77.

2 Thomas Arnold, The Revival of Faculties at Oxford, London 1872, p.4., quoted in W.R.Ward, Victorian Oxford, London 1965, p.276.

Anglo-Saxon; they could more correctly be labelled as studies in English Literature. Apart from his Manual and the three volumes of Wyclif, he had published his Short History of English Literature (1870, 2 vols 1875), an edition of the Works of Addison (1875), a translation of Beowulf (1876) and Selected Works of Pope (1876). His Collection of Illustrative Passages from the Writings of English Authors from Anglo-Saxon to the present day came out later, in 1882. This hardly looks like a pedigree appropriate to a Professor of Anglo-Saxon, but in the context of the Oxford wrangle over the merits of a School of English it was exactly the kind of background that might enable such a man, if elected to the Professorship, to transform the old Anglo-Saxon school into an English School. Both in publications and in attitudes towards Faculty reform Thomas looked to be a good candidate. In retrospect, knowing that a separate English School was eventually founded, the importance of this is easily missed, but at a time when opposition to the founding of a new school was strong the chance to take an existing school and develop it was not to be passed over lightly, after all Earle, the other candidate with a chance, had already been Professor of Anglo-Saxon once before, for the statutory five-year term (abolished in 1858) from 1849 to 1854. He was clearly an Anglo-Saxon specialist pure and simple despite his later evidence before the Commissioners of the Royal enquiry, in 1877. In Cambridge a parallel battle was being fought, and there, as John Gross has remarked "the great man was Skeat, the professor of Anglo-Saxon."¹ Is it impossible to

¹ John Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters, London 1969, p.174.

conjecture that Thomas Arnold might have played a comparable role in Oxford? He had a wide and exact knowledge of literature, with suitable philological associations - and this was an important matter for those who were arguing in both universities that modern literary studies were naturally a part of a school which began with Anglo-Saxon and proceeded through Early English to Middle English. He had already held the post of Professor of English Literature in the Catholic University in Dublin, and he had a string of publications to his credit, which was not always usual in the professorial appointments of the time.¹ There is not much doubt that had he been elected he would have extended the interests of the Anglo-Saxon school into more recent literature, as he had been doing himself. He gives such a clue in Passages in a Wandering Life :

With regard to English Literature the formation of the school is too recent (i.e. in 1899) to admit of speculation as to its working. The field is of vast extent, and has already been successfully entered by many foreigners. When one thinks of the treasures of the Bodleian, the Ashmolean, and the College Libraries, one cannot give up hope that, in this province of English Literature the time will come when Oxford men will explore and handle them more effectually than has yet been done. But a school moves slowly and irregularly, and will not, it is to be feared, cause as much good work to be done in a hundred years as a Faculty of Philosophy and Letters would perform in twenty.²

What he might have done is not now worth conjecture, for with this

¹Gross reports several appointments, of which two are: Raleigh's to the Chair of English Literature at Liverpool: "At the time of his appointment his list of publications consisted of a paper which he had read to the Browning Society while he was an undergraduate" (p.179) and Quiller-Couch's appointment to the English Chair in Cambridge in 1912, with similar qualifications, and no teaching experience. (p.185).

²Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, pp.198-99.

possibility before him as his election chances rose during Humphry Ward's campaign he decided that he could not go forward under false pretences: he had to declare his intention to return to the Catholic Church. He left Oxford for his sister's house in the quiet, Leicestershire village of Woodhouse and there considered how to make his announcement. Julia did not know at this stage, though quite how he concealed it from her must forever remain a mystery. He wrote to Humphry Ward and at the same time to the Times. His letter requires no comment; it speaks well enough for itself :

My dear Humphry,

Before saying what I have to say in this letter, let me first thank you, as I do with a full heart, for the generous self-devoting zeal with which you have fought my battles during the last fortnight. Nothing could exceed it, and nothing can ever efface it from my memory.

The strain however has been more than I could bear; may a resisted conscience never cause you the pangs that I have suffered for some time past. I have been going on for a long time, uneasy indeed and perturbed, but trying to convince myself that whatever might happen afterwards, it was my duty, or might from a certain point of view - not the highest point of view - be thought to be so, to endeavour for the sake of wife and children to gain this professorship. To tell the truth, I thought for a long time my chance was very small, and while conscientiously doing my utmost (as I have done) to obtain it, it would yet certainly fall to the other man, and then I should be exactly in the same position as before. That position itself my conscience did not approve; still one can go on for a long time, without being utterly false to the voice within one, deferring that which it would be right, yet hard and painful to do, so long as one retains the sense of freedom of action. But in proportion as your kind zeal, and other circumstances, increased the at first slight probability of my success, the disquietude within grew more and more. I had to face, as a possible alternative, the prospect of my being elected as a Protestant, and to realize all that that would mean. It would mean my being tied to Protestantism for a term of years. For in honour, in common honesty, I could not let a number of honourable men unsuspectingly raise me to a certain position, believing I was one thing, and then, after a few months, or a year, or two years, having got what I wanted, throw off the mask and declare myself to be quite another thing. That is not to be done; if therefore I were elected without saying a word I should be bound

in honour to remain a Protestant for, say, five years at the least, if I lived so long, when I might without complaint retire, and do anything I chose. Well, this thought will not seem to you very formidable, but when it presented itself to me, the agony of it was intolerable. Such an act would be a forcible suppression of my conscience and would raise a wall of partition between me and my God. Never after that could I pray without the sense of being a hypocrite and a traitor. In the course of a miserable sleepless night a few days ago, this terrible but most certain future painted itself vividly before my eyes; my head seemed to be splitting, my brain reeling, despair began to take hold of me. But at last something within me said that nothing could replace the voluntary loss of God, nothing justify the rejection of Him. Where should I have been now without Him? and shall I reject Him, and coolly ignore all that His Spirit has taught me, with no better excuse than that the apparent happiness of others requires it? For twenty two years, with a short interval in /65 and /66, when, without denying or rejecting Him, a mist hid Him from my eyes - I have been continually in His presence; He has watched over me with incomparable love, and preserved me from a thousand evils... This friend if I reject, what love or friendship will serve my turn?...

After this explanation, you will in some degree comprehend the state of mind which compels me to desire that any member of Congregation who thinks of voting for me at the election to the Chair of Anglo-Saxon, should know that I intend, as soon as may be, to join, or rather to return to, the communion of the Catholic 'Roman Church'...

What my real chance of success may be, or may have been, I cannot tell; I suppose nobody can know for certain. It needs not that I should speak of what it has cost me to run counter to the hopes and bright expectations formed at Laleham,² a man must be made of stone if he did not feel it... You or Mary will probably show this letter to my wife; it is better than that I should write...

I concealed all that was in my mind from my wife before leaving Oxford, but she will know why I did so. I should have been glad to talk it all over with her, but it could have led to no possible good, and might have led to much harm.

Two days later the news became public. Julia heard it and in a mixture of disbelief and despair rushed round to their friends, the Green's, and there gave vent to her feelings in a fit of hysterical tears. The events of 1856 had repeated themselves, but with an infinitely greater loss. Mary tried to console her mother,

¹Letter to Thomas Humphry Ward, 14 October 1876, Oratory MS.

²By 'Laleham' he meant his home at Oxford.

but without success for hours, and afterwards wrote the first of a ten-year sequence of letters aimed at keeping her separated parents in contact with each other.

Meanwhile the election came and went; Earle was elected (and remained Professor until his death in 1903), while Thomas's career in Oxford was finished. In his self-inflicted isolation he turned to the only person who could give him comfort, Newman, who received him at the Oratory on the day his decision was made public. Writing several days later, once more from the seclusion of Woodhouse, he said :

My dear Father,

You must let me call you so, for truly 'in Christ Jesus you have begotten me through the gospel.' I think I shall bless God through all eternity for having brought me to your doors last Monday, and for the charity with which you received a wanderer for whom there was so little excuse, and whom God might so justly have condemned to impenitence.

...The state of my wife is very sad, and it seems likely that it will be found the best course for me to remain in London for a while. I think of taking lodgings somewhere near the British Museum, where I can find plenty to do... If any of the Fathers know of any good and cheap lodgings in that part of London, I should be very glad to be informed of them.

He left Woodhouse for London and settled in lodgings at 18, Fulham Rd., leaving Julia, their two daughters and their son Francis in the rambling Oxford house. They never managed to live together again. Eventually, with Mary's patient help, they came to an arrangement whereby Thomas paid towards the upkeep of the Oxford house and made occasional visits, which always ended in acrimony, despite Julia's promise that she would try to keep her temper under control. The loss of all that she had gained in Oxford since 1865 was more

1 Letter to J.H. Newman, 20 October 1876, Oratory MS.

than her self-control could withstand: she apparently harangued Thomas every time he came home. The next twelve years were for him a particularly difficult time for his prospects had never been worse, he was in his fifty-fourth year, and he had two houses to finance. In faith he might have found the promised land; academically he was in the wilderness.

CHAPTER TWELVE.

The final years.

By the end of the decade the family was scattered. Thomas was living in Fulham Road, London, Julia was still in Oxford with Judy and Ethel, Mary was married and also living in Oxford, William was in Manchester, working on the staff of the Manchester Guardian, Theodore had returned to Tasmania, and Francis was training to be a doctor, after which he went to live in Manchester to be near William. Arthur was killed in the Zulu War in South Africa, at the age of 28. In 1885 Judy married Leonard Huxley leaving Ethel as sole companion to Julia, for Lucy married Dr. Carus Selwyn, Headmaster of Uppingham School, in 1883. She died after childbirth in 1894 and was buried in Ambleside Churchyard.

Julia found it impossible to manage on her own and quickly began to run up debts which Thomas could not settle: he simply did not have the money. Financial strains began to press very heavily upon him. Working either in his cheap lodgings or in the British Museum he tried to earn his living and shut out the miseries of loneliness by constant writing first on the second of his Rolls editions, Symeon of Durham, on the First Earl of Clarendon, for the Clarendon Press, and on the Catholic Dictionary which had been proposed to him in 1879 by a fellow-convert, Father Bowden of the London Oratory. It was a book aimed primarily at converts for it was designed to give easy access to the history and terminology of Catholicism, and it was no accident that it was Thomas who was asked to do it: Newman had long thought such a book to be necessary. As a safeguard, Thomas was appointed to work with a Catholic theologian, W.G. Addis,

to ensure that the work would be both scholarly and acceptable to orthodox Catholic opinion, but the publisher, Kegan Paul, had doubts about whether the sales would be large enough to justify publication. Accordingly Thomas first wrote to Newman asking for a short testimonial in favour of such a book, and then to Sir John - now Lord - Acton asking him to become a subscriber since a guaranteed sale of at least 150 copies was required to offset publication costs. These moves were successful: the work began almost at once and was completed four years later, in December 1883. On Christmas Eve Thomas wrote to Newman in celebration of the fact and asked him to accept a presentation copy since, he argued, "in a very real sense you have been the chief inspirer" of it.¹ In confirmation of Newman's expectations the book was an immediate success; within two months a second edition was brought out without time for any revisions and that too was soon sold out. Thomas was surprised by the speed of the sales, he could not quite understand who would buy the book, but he recognised that it obviously satisfied a widely-felt need in the Catholic community.

During this time two significant events occurred: Newman was made a Cardinal and Thomas was appointed Fellow of University College, Dublin, and Professor of English Literature. Newman's elevation took place in 1879 and along with many other devotees, both Anglican and Catholic, Thomas wrote a congratulatory letter to which Newman replied three months later :

Don't suppose I was neglectful of your kind letter of April 18 because I have left it so long unanswered. But, when it was written I was between Paris and Turin...
It is a strange phenomenon which we heard at the Vatican, that the Pope had been deluged with letters from England by Protestants,

¹ Letter to J.H.Newman, 24 December 1883, Oratory MS.

stating their satisfaction at his having promoted me.¹

Newman's elevation moved Thomas to recall his own father's conviction that in time truth would prevail against all the distorting systems of the world for the event marked the end of that 'dull tyranny' begun fourteen years earlier and marked the beginning of a new phase in Catholic affairs.

Thomas's appointment to the Catholic University came in 1882 and restored some of the security and income he had lost as a result of the disastrous affair of the Anglo-Saxon election. Since leaving Dublin in 1862 he had had little contact with the University except for informal links with his former colleagues, but while his career in Oxford had flourished the fate of the Catholic University had gradually worsened. No clear policy had been formulated, no Charter had ever been conferred, and Dr. Woodlock's desperate attempt to force the issue by conferring degrees without authority had simply been ignored by the government in Westminster. The degrees lost credibility, students did not enroll and the University wasted away. In August 1879 a new Act set up a University College in Dublin as part of the Royal University of Ireland, with a President and a small staff. It opened in 1882 with Thomas as its Professor of Literature, but it failed to attract students in sufficient numbers. Richard Ellman has commented :

Students at University College were dimly aware that Trinity College, half a mile away, had a more distinguished faculty. In classics Mahaffy and Tyrell, lofty and hostile eminences, were beyond their University College counterparts, especially after the death of Gerard Manley Hopkins, who in a state of

¹Quoted in Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.205.

exalted misery held the U.C.D. classics chair during the 'eighties. In English the professor at Trinity was Edward Dowden, a gifted scholar, while at University College... the professor was Thomas Arnold, less impressive and enfeebled by age.

The final remark is as much a comment on the personal burden of worry Thomas was carrying as on his age - he was only in his sixties - but the strain was beginning to tell.

In October 1883 the University College was consigned to the Jesuits who promptly removed the original library and allowed the teaching function to lapse until, with hardly any students at all in the middle of the decade, it became little more than an examining body for constituent colleges of the Royal University in Dublin, Cork, Galway, and Belfast. In 1908 it was finally absorbed into the University of Dublin.

The transfer to Jesuit control increased Thomas's uncertainty and the strain he had to endure for his Fellowship was on an annual basis; each year he had to be reconsidered. He had to accept a continuous assessment of his performance and from comments made in his letters to his daughter Mary it is clear that it was all a great worry to him. One brief anecdote about the Catholic Dictionary illustrates the way in which he felt his Catholic allegiance was being watched by his Jesuit masters. The President of the College, Father Delaney, stopped him one day in the street and made some pleasant remarks about the Dictionary and about its usefulness to young Catholics seeking information, and added: "Of course I," he said, laughing, 'went first to the article on the Jesuits, and read

¹Richard Ellman, James Joyce, London 1966, p.59.

it through and through."¹ Preparing and marking endless examination scripts sorely taxed Thomas's weak eyes and his general health, much to Mary's alarm, but he had no choice for the Catholic University was his only secure means of livelihood, qualified though it was, and the drain on his resources occasioned by his separation from Julia was increasing each year. On his appointment he had moved from Fulham Road to 10, Charlemont Mall, Dublin, and while this eased the problem of how often and for how long he should visit Julia, and settled the question of whether they would ever live together again - for Julia was absolutely determined not to go to Dublin - it made contact between them even more tenuous. From Dublin as from London he visited her regularly though less often, but his visits always resulted in the same acrimonious debates and arguments about money. Underlying it all were Julia's accusations that the source of all their woes was her husband's religious obsession. She did not understand it and she certainly could never accept it. Matters were made much worse when it was learned that Julia was suffering from incurable cancer of the breast. The treatment, such as it was, was debilitating and ineffective, and as a result of one operation she underwent early in the decade she was left with an open wound which did not properly heal again. Inevitably, she felt sorry for herself, with good cause, but it did not ease Thomas's burden to have this extra worry over Julia on his mind. Tragically, neither understood the other and neither of them was prepared to give in. By 1882 Thomas could not give in even if he had wanted to,

¹Letter to Mary Ward, 6 February 1884, Moorman MS., OB.

his future was vested in the Catholic University, and though Julia's body became steadily weaker her will remained strong. Mary was the only means of mediation between them; but for her Thomas's relationship with his family would have wasted almost to nothing. She became the centre of the family, as Mrs. Arnold had been, and up to Julia's death arrangements between Thomas and Julia were made through her.

In 1885 came his last chance to return to England: the Merton Chair of English Literature was proposed at Oxford and the election announced. Though by this time he had been in Ireland for three years and was obviously identified with the Catholic University, he decided to stand as a candidate. Once again Humphry Ward tried to help, as Mary reported to her father :

Humphry wrote to the Warden of Merton on the grounds that under the special circumstances of the case one felt bound to see that all possible stress was laid on your literary claims, but we have not heard and we are both quite in the dark as to the chances of the different people. Mr. Gosse we hear on good authority is standing, but he does not confess it publicly... then I imagine Churton Collins will be formidable as he will probably have the Balliol interest, but he has published very little to justify what one hears of his knowledge... then there are W. Saintsbury and Wm. Courthope. When is it to be decided? Do you know?

In the event a little known specialist in German philology, A.S. Napier, was appointed. The result of the election reveals one or both of two things. Either there was still considerable resistance to the notion of literature studies, with the result that a philologist was elected, or the claims of the rival candidates confounded each other, leaving Napier as the only uncontested option. For Thomas it was the final evidence that he had no future in Oxford and perhaps

¹ Letter to Thomas, 21 May 1885, Moorman MS., PH.

none outside Ireland. He was sixty-two, and he turned back to poring over his manuscripts and the examination scripts knowing that this would be his work for the rest of his life. Increasingly his health began to suffer, not only because of his weakening eyesight but also as a result of nervous exhaustion. He suffered from attacks of giddiness and fainting, and every year he wrote with some relief to tell Mary of his election for yet another year at University College.

From 1880 to the end of his life he was helped by occasional gifts of money from Mary, and a once-and-for-all loan raised jointly by Humphry Ward and William Arnold, Thomas's son, to settle the Oxford bills and solve the problem of Julia's declining health, for it had become obvious to Mary that a regular nurse was needed in the house if Julia was to continue on her own. Fortunately the reforms in Oxford during the 1860's and 70's played in Julia's favour: the founding of Somerville Hall in 1879, and the earlier decision of the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board to admit women students to its examinations brought an unprecedented number of young women into the city, and they needed good lodgings. Four were lodged with Julia and eased her financial position a little.

Dublin, meanwhile, was in the spate of unrest and agitation which eventually led to the Home Rule movement, despite Gladstone's attempt to ease the problem in 1882 with the passing of the Land Tenure Act. Obstructive tactics in the Commons by Parnell mirrored the growing resistance in Dublin, and finally turned to violence in the streets. Mary wrote to Thomas anxiously concerned with the 'horrors in Dublin' and asked him what it was like to live in a city "under

the curfew clause of the Crimes Act. Do take care of yourself and avoid slums!" she urged.¹ His income from various sources, of which University College was the foremost, amounted to £700 a year, which would have been a great sum earlier in his career, but having to provide for two houses effectively reduced it to what he had been receiving in Birmingham up to 1865.

In an attempt to provide some compensation for the university honours he had lost, Mary raised with Humphry, and Matthew Arnold the possibility of having her father elected to the Athenaeum.

Eagerly she wrote :

Uncle Matt thinks it could be managed and so does Humphry. Uncle Matt likes the idea greatly. He said your Rolls books would be the things to stand on and that they ought to do it. There is an entrance fee, of course - £30 - but we could help with that. It is above all the recognition of your historical worth, which your² election by the committee would imply, that I should like...

But Thomas, flattered no doubt, was against the idea and it was dropped.

The year 1888 brought him a succession of incidents, both of joy and grief. The joy came early in the year with the first intimations that Mary's novel Robert Elsmere would be a great success; the first grief came with Julia's death. Mary, Julia, Ethel and Willy gathered round her as it became obvious the end was near, and Thomas left Dublin to reach Oxford just in time to see her again before she finally lost consciousness. There was one last moment of recognition between them before she died. It was April 6th. Thomas accompanied her body up to Fox How, still numbed by the final parting, and began to ease his heart by writing two poems which, while not

¹ Letter from Mrs. H. Ward, November 29th 1882, Moorman MS., PH.

² Letter from Mrs. H. Ward, October 3rd 1886, Moorman MS., PH.

masterpieces, are moving in their expression of his recognition of the pain that their married life had caused her. Before he returned to Dublin a second shock rocked the remaining members of the family: Matthew Arnold died suddenly, though not without warning, in Liverpool only an hour or so before he should have welcomed his daughter Lucy home from America. Having so recently witnessed Julia's burial in Ambleside Thomas then had to travel south, to Matthew's funeral in Laleham. It was April 20th. Lonely, and perhaps still a little bemused by the double loss, he turned once again to Newman before returning to Dublin. It was destined to be their last meeting, and though Newman seemed to feel the weight of age Thomas was glad to see signs of good health and strength:

I noticed then and not for the first time, how much more distinguished his features had become, for regularity, dignity, and even beauty, since he had become a very old man. There was not the least sign in his talk of the infirmities of age... When I rose to go, I spoke of the pleasure it had given me to find him in such comparatively good health and strength. He replied with a smile, 'But you know Arnold, I am so very old'.¹

He was then 87. He died two years later, and Thomas was one of many who crowded into the Brompton Oratory Church for the Memorial Service. Writing to Lord Acton in 1892, in reply to queries about Newman, Thomas had this to say about their relationship :

At Dublin and Birmingham there was never any intimacy between Newman and me; the relations between us did not favour it for one thing; my stammer also must have gone against it; also, greatly as I revered Newman's intellect, and valued the preaching and polemic side of his extraordinary character, still there never was anything of the clerical temper about me, and he inspired me in those early days with a certain uneasiness, which did not favour the welding of those links of confidence which bind teacher and pupil together...²

¹ Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, London 1900, p.205.

² Letter to Lord Acton, January 29, 1892, Acton Letters CUL.

There is some justice in this assessment, subjective though it was, but it does not truly reflect the extent to which Thomas had depended on Newman's advice and support at crucial moments in his life. That, however, would properly have required a book and this was only a comment in a letter.

The year had not ended before another of the Arnold family died: Mary, Thomas's sister, died at Woodhouse, from where the fateful announcement of his return to Catholicism had been made. With her death the ranks of Dr. Arnold's children were further reduced and the family circle closed in.

Ethel, his daughter, who was now alone after the death of her mother, decided to accompany Thomas back to Dublin, where she helped him greatly in the following months by reading over examination scripts and other manuscripts to save his eyes. But his working life was now coming to an end. Only one new academic work was to come out before his life ended, and that was Catholic Higher Education in Ireland, 1897. Otherwise he contented himself with revised editions of previously published works: a second edition of Edward Hyde, First Earl of Clarendon (1894), the seventh edition of his Manual of English Literature (1897), two more editions of Dryden's Essay of Dramatic Poesy, the last appearing three years after his death, in 1903, and Passages in a Wandering Life, which though a new book was a gentle self-portrait, not an academic work.

In 1890 he married Josephine Benison, of Slieve Russell, County Cavan. She was the daughter of the late James Benison, J.P., and apart from the fact that he left her a small annuity of £100 a year little else is known about her. But she was welcomed by Mary and

Humphry Ward and seems to have given Thomas more contentment in their ten years together than he had had since those eight happy years with which his life had begun. They were not married in Dublin, which suggests that the ceremony took place in the family town of Ballyconnell, but they lived at number 16 Adelaide Road, in Dublin. Josephine seems to have had two advantages over Julia, and they both worked to promote happiness: she was as gentle as Julia had been tempestuous, and she was a Catholic.

From 1893 Thomas's Fellowship was reviewed every two years - perhaps it was a concession to his 70th birthday - but the relief was considerable, and from then on there were no more remarks in family letters about his state of health, which seems to have improved on what it had been two or three years earlier, though at the beginning of 1894 he was not fit enough to leave Dublin to attend the funeral of his daughter Lucy, wife of Dr. Selwyn of Uppingham. In 1898, however, he made an extended tour of Sweden, after which he visited Mary and Humphry Ward in Rome, which he was then seeing for the first time in his life.

The success of two of his friends afforded him no mean pleasure during these years; the first being the long-delayed appointment of J.A. Froude to the Regius Professorship of Modern History in Oxford, in 1892, the other was Lord Acton's appointment to the Chair of Modern History in Cambridge, in 1895. By this time, of course, he had settled back to enjoy the last, happy years of his life. The tour of Sweden is curious, for though St. Brigit had apparently been instrumental in bringing him to the Catholic Church in the first place, he had never mentioned her to Newman in that long explanation

of his conversion, in 1855. The Lives of the Saints, by Butler, continued to interest him for years, but no specific reference was made to St. Brigit in all that time. Then, two years before his death, and forty-four years after he had first read about her he decided to make a pilgrimage to her tomb. He left England for Sweden in July 1898, with Josephine, and spent several weeks uniting his interest in the regions supposed to be the country of the Beowulf adventures with his concern for the saint, after which he left for Rome and Florence. Rome he admired greatly, as Mary Ward describes :

Never before, throughout all his ardent Catholic life, had it been possible for him to tread the streets of Rome, or kneel in St. Peter's.. At last, the year before his death, he was to climb the Janiculum, and to look out over the city and plain whence Europe received her civilisation and the vast system of the Catholic Church... I remember well that one bright May morning at Castel Gandolfo, he vanished from the villa, and presently after some hours re-appeared with shining eyes. "I have been on the Appian Way - I have walked where Horace walked!"¹

A year and a half later he died in Dublin on November 12th 1900 only days before his 77th birthday. His death was preceded by a short illness, and Mary wrote home to Willy: "Alas, our dearest father is just fading away very peacefully."² He died in St. Vincent's Hospital, Stephen's Green, leaving half his estate to Josephine, who also had rights of residence in their house, and the other half to his remaining children. Even at this stage Julia was not forgotten, for he left £5 to pay for Masses to be said for himself and his first wife, though what she would have said at the

¹ Mrs. H. Ward, A Writer's Recollections, London 1919, p.343.

² Letter to W.T. Arnold, 10 November 1900, Moorman MS., PH.

prospect of a Catholic Mass in her memory is not hard to imagine. So his life, the nineteenth century and the Victorian period came to an end almost all at the same time. His wanderings were finally over. The final comment shall be left to his second wife, Josephine, who was not caught up in the strains of the early years but who undoubtedly brought him a share of contentment at the end:

It was a great privilege to have shared his companionship for ten years, life beside him was so beautiful, only those who came into close contact could realise the tenderness and unselfishness of his character. I am now preparing to leave the house in which we were so happy, but the great break came when he went. His children did not wish to make his grave in England, and it is a comfort to me that he rests in the land he loved, and served so well. ¹

¹ Letter to General T.B.Collinson, 25 November 1900, Turnbull MS.

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| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Brotherton Library, Leeds: | Moorman MS., BL. |
| Cambridge University Library: | Acton Correspondence, CUL., or |
| Cambridge University Library: | Acton Letters, CUL. |
| The Oratory, Birmingham: | Oratory MS., or Moorman MS., OB. |
| Pusey House, Oxford: | Moorman MS., PH. |
| Turnbull Library, New Zealand: | Moorman MS., TL., or Turnbull MS. |

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