

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE NOVEL
TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS, (1857), BY THOMAS HUGHES,
ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE IDEAS, PURPOSES AND POLICIES
OF DR. THOMAS ARNOLD IN RUGBY SCHOOL, 1828-1842.

by

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A MASTERS THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1967

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FRONTISPIECE.....	111
PREFACE.....	iv
CHAPTER I: DR. THOMAS ARNOLD.....	1
Arnold's Life, 1795 as far as 1827	
The English Public School System and Rugby	
Arnold's Later Life to 1842	
CHAPTER II: THOMAS HUGHES AND HIS NOVEL.....	15
Hughes's Life, 1822 to 1896	
The Novel, Its Publication and Popularity	
Criticism of the Novel	
The Novel's Double Vision	
Plot and Characters	
The Novel's Influence	
CHAPTER III: ARNOLD'S EDUCATIONAL IDEALS AND PURPOSES AT RUGBY.....	31
Arnold's and Hughes's Educational Ideals Contrasted	
Christian Morality	
Gentlemanly Conduct	
Intellectual Ability and Academic Endeavour	
Athletics	
CHAPTER IV: ARNOLD'S POLICIES AND REFORMS AT RUGBY.....	63
Vices and Custom at Rugby	
The Præpositional System	
Fagging and Bullying	
Flogging and Expulsion	
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS.....	92
GLOSSARY.....	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	104

FRONTISPIECE

By way of a frontispiece, I can do little better than quote A. O. Lovejoy in that classic treatise on the study of the history of ideas, the introductory chapter to his monograph, The Great Chain of Being:

Another characteristic of the study of the history of ideas, as I should wish to define it, is that it is...most interested in ideas which gain wide diffusion, which become part of the stock of many minds. It is this characteristic...which often puzzles students...in present day literature departments in our universities. Some of them...are repelled when called upon to study some writer whose work, as literature, is now dead—or at best of extremely slight value, according to our present aesthetic and intellectual standards. Why not stick to masterpieces, such students exclaim....But your minor writer may be as important as...the authors of what are now regarded as the masterpieces. Professor Palmer has said, with equal truth and felicity: 'The tendencies of an age appear more distinctly in its writers of inferior rank than in those of commanding genius. The latter...are for all time. But on the sensitive responsive souls, of less creative power, current ideas record themselves with clearness'.

I wish to thank my tutor, Professor R. D. S. Higham, ever the Appollo to the chariot of my unwilling mind, and the other members of my committee, Professor R. Kent Donovan and Professor Fred Higginson, for their constant help.

August, 1966.

G. D. Carter.

Yet in some far shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word,
Of the spirit in whom thou dost live—
Prompt, unwearied, as here!
Still thou upraiest with zeal
The humblest good from the ground,
Sternly represses the bad!
Still like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the borderland dim
Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st
Succourest! This was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

Matthew Arnold, Rugby Chapel, 1867.

CHAPTER I. DR. THOMAS ARNOLD

I

Thomas Arnold was born on June 13, 1795 in the small town of East Cowes of the Isle of Wight, where the Arnold family, originally yeoman farmers from Suffolk, had been settled for about two generations.¹ His father, William Arnold, was a prosperous member of the middle classes, being what was then termed a government "placeman" because he held several profitable positions in the gift and patronage of the Crown, to wit: he was Collector of Customs for the Isle of Wight and the island's Postmaster, and was in addition a Collector of Dues for Trinity House. Young Thomas therefore grew up in comfortable family surroundings, in a sizable newly-built house with twenty-five acres of grounds, overlooking the Solent.

Such equable childhood conditions as these were not devoid of disturbances, however. The very nearly constant and proximate presence of an inimical French Army, encamped across the English Channel, waiting only for a favourable wind to invade, put the Isle of Wight firmly into the centre of the theatre of defensive operations throughout the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and can only have been considerable source of anxiety for all inhabitants, not excluding

¹The details of Thomas Arnold's life, to be found in this chapter, are taken from the various biographies: T. W. Bamford, Dr. Arnold, (London: 1960); Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, (ed.), Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D. D., II Vols., (London: 1844); Arnold Whitridge, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, (London: 1928); Norman Wymer, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, (London: 1953). Also consulted were: Stanley J. Currie, Article on Arnold, Encyclopaedia Britannica, II, (Chicago: 1964), 469; Theodore Walrond, Article on Arnold, D.N.B., I, (Oxon.: 1921-22), 585-89.

the Arnolde. The sudden death of William Arnold in 1801 from angina pectoris, a hereditary form of heart disease, must have caused a great shock to the family and laid up fears for the healthy longevity of succeeding generations, fears which were to be tragically justified in Thomas's case, and partially so in the case of Thomas's own son, Matthew.²

In 1803, the young Thomas was sent away to Warminster, a small preparatory school in Wilthire of which both the Headmaster and the Usher³ were personal friends of the family. From there, at the age of twelve in 1807, Thomas proceeded to Winchester, one of the most respected and more ancient Public Schools in England.⁴ Here life was hard, even brutal when the large amount of flogging is considered. But this did not stop him from breaking rules, and frequently; for instance, he once recounted in a letter to his sister that, while a praepositor no less, he was caught playing a forbidden game of cards with his fellows. The curriculum was purely Classical; though not in the top drawer academically, Thomas worked hard, but was not above shamming illness when the going got too tough. The Classical curriculum at Winchester did not prove as stupefying to Arnold as it did to the vast majority

²Thomas Arnold himself died suddenly of angina pectoris in 1842 at the comparatively early age of forty-seven, (see below, 14). Thomas's eldest son Matthew, (1822-1888), the poet, critic and educationalist, also suffered from heart trouble and dropped dead suddenly when leaping over a low fence in his eagerness to meet his daughter at Liverpool. (See Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold, (New York: 1939), 406.

³For the terms "Preparatory School," "Headmaster" and "Usher," see the glossary of Public School terms, below,

⁴Winchester was founded in 1387 as a Cathedral School by William of Wykeham, Lord Bishop of Winchester. It is reckoned on a technical point to be the oldest Public School foundation in England. King's School, Canterbury, and St. Peter's, York, are older: both were founded as early as the seventh century, but they were last refounded in 1541 and 1447, respectively. (See various references to the schools in the 1964 Edition of Britannica).

of Public School boys, notably to another Wykehamist, Sidney Smith, who later drew attention to its "safe and elegant imbecility;"⁵ for it was at that venerable foundation that Arnold developed his life-consuming interest in the Classical writers, especially in the historian, Thucydides. In the first folly of a youthful entry into politics, he became an apostle of the rights of man and he remained a Liberal, if not so radical a one as this, for the remainder of his life.

In 1811 at the early age of sixteen he was elected to a scholarship at Corpus Christi, Oxford, though it should be noted that all the very brightest Wykehamists went to New College. He naturally read the Classics for his B. A. and in 1814 obtained a First Class degree. In March, 1815, he was elected to a Fellowship at Oriel, then an up and coming college academically, on the grounds that his baccalaureate final examinations, according to the Oriel electors, showed promise rather than actual fulfillment. The choice was soon justified, for in June, 1815, he won the Chancellor's English Prize with an essay, somewhat ponderously titled, The Effects of Distant Colonisation on the Parent State⁶ and two years later he carried off another Chancellor's prize, this time for Latin. In 1817 also, he was able to take the M. A. degree, according to the Oxonian custom of purchasing it.

Arnold had always had a deeply spiritual side to his nature since his days at Winchester, but it was one as liberally framed as his politics and tended to

⁵Quoted by Sir Llewellyn Woodward, The Age of Reform, 1815-70, (Oxon.: 1962), 485. Sidney Smith (1771-1845) was a wit, essayist, and Anglican priest; he was also co-founder of the Edinburgh Review in 1802 and wrote regularly for it until 1828. (Britannica, IX, 834).

⁶See The Miscellaneous Works of Thomas Arnold, D. D., 1st American Ed., (New York: 1845), 7-15.

make him impatient with dogma. So only after a period of self-questioning was he persuaded by the Lord Bishop of Oxford and some of his friends to submit at least to Deacon's orders. This he finally did in December, 1818, but his religious doubts about the validity of certain of the Anglican doctrinal 39 Articles and especially of the Apostle's Creed kept him from taking the final step into the priesthood for nearly another ten years.

A matter of days after his ordination to the diaconate, he met and fell in love with the sister of one of his Oxford friends. Mary Penrose was four years older than Arnold and lived the secluded paragon life of a daughter of the rector of Fledborough Parish Church in Lincolnshire. Both were soon contemplating marriage, a step which meant Arnold had to resign his Oriel Fellowship⁷ and look around for a new means of supporting his wife to be. He decided to open a small private school, preparing young men for University entrance. For this purpose, Arnold went into debt to the extent of £1000 in order to buy a large house at Laleham, a small Thames-side village, sixteen miles from London. There, he and Mary settled as husband and wife in 1820, and there she was to bear him six of their eventual eleven children.⁸

Arnold's school, with its eight pupils, each paying two hundred guineas a year for board and tuition, was an extremely successful one and for a time he was satisfied; in 1823 he commented to a friend:

⁷It is interesting to note that his place was taken by the election of John Henry Newman (1801-90), later to become a political and ecclesiastical opponent of Arnold as leader of the Tractarian or "Oxford" Movement, and even later, a convert to Roman Catholicism.

⁸Mary bore him, in almost annual confinements, six children at Laleham and five at Rugby, one out of each set not surviving. A daughter, Jane, was the eldest, and eventually married W. E. Forester, author of the great Education Act of 1870; Matthew, the apostle of Culture, was the second child.

I have always thought that I should like to be aut Caesar aut nullus, and as it is pretty well settled that I shall not be Caesar, I am quite content to live as nullus.

However by 1827, in order to avoid stagnation, he felt constrained to try for a First Consulship of one sort or another. He applied for a chair at the newly created University of London, but was not appointed. It was at this time that the Mastership of Rugby School fell vacant; Arnold plunged into a conflict between the voice of his ambition, which urged him to try for the post, and that of his modesty, which did not think he stood a chance of being selected. Again the concerted persuasive powers of his friends swung the balance towards applying, though never convincing him of the wisdom of the act. An old Oxford friend, Edward Hawkins, soon to become Provost of Oriel, offered to write a testimonial for him and he gratefully accepted it. This contained the oft-quoted prophetic remark that, if appointed, Arnold

would change the face of education,
all through the public schools of
England.¹⁰,

which has as often been claimed as quoted to have ultimately secured him the job.

Whatever may have been the Rugby School Trustees' reasons, they elected Arnold to the Mastership out of a total of twenty-five candidates and after reading through nearly a thousand supporting testimonials under their consideration. The result was announced to a modestly amazed Arnold on October 19th, 1827.¹¹

⁹Stanley, Life, I, 36. Exact source not given by Stanley.

¹⁰Bamford, Arnold, 19-20.

¹¹If it is thought that Arnold was a little young at 32 for such a responsible post, it should be noted that when the Mastership of Rugby last fell vacant, in summer 1966, the candidate elected, Mr. J. S. Woodhouse, was only 33. (Illustrated London News, (9/VII/1966), 11.)

Before moving into the Master's house at Rugby the following summer, he resolved his difficulties over the priesthood because he regarded it as essential that the Headmaster of an important public school like Rugby should be able to offer religious instruction and to administer the sacraments to his pupils; so he was ordained priest. He also read for the Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity degrees in quick succession and was awarded them by his old University. The Reverend Doctor Thomas Arnold was ready to take up his Public School duties as Master of Rugby.

II

The English people have never really been clear and concise about what sort of educational institution constitutes a "Public School." In origin, the Public Schools existing in Arnold's day were all Endowed Grammar Schools whose foundations date from the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Yet, not all Endowed Grammar Schools necessarily became Public Schools. The ancient Endowed Grammar Schools were so called because their founders, whether they were individual churchmen or merchants, or whether they were a corporate body like a Cathedral Chapter, left them a source of income such as that from land or property to provide for the education of boys in the rudiments of classical grammar. Rugby School was exactly of this type, having been founded in 1567 by Lawrence Sheriff, a local Rugby citizen who became a prosperous London grocer and left land in the City of London to serve as an endowment.¹²

Such a school would also be labeled "Public" either to differentiate it from private education given in the home by a tutor employed by the family, or

¹²See W. H. D. Rouse, A History of Rugby School, Ch. I, (New York: 1898).

because its governing body and its endowment were public. The epithet "Public" was also used in its more obvious sense: to describe a Grammar School which was open to "members of the public." However, many schools interpreted the last phrase very illiberally; some schools accepted only the living descendants of the founder, while others accepted only residents of the Parish in which the school was sited; still other schools meant the phrase to be interpreted in an unlimited way, thus in theory throwing open the school to boys from the whole country; though in fact few came from distant places before the nineteenth century due to inadequate roads and systems of transportation. Most Public Schools by Arnold's day had regulations forcing them to take certain numbers of boys under the narrow interpretation, called "foundation scholars," and they profitably made up the remainder with fee-paying boys from throughout the British Isles. Those who came any distance at all would have to be given food and board by the school, which thus became also called a "Boarding School." Rugby was no exception to either of these two cases.¹³

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the number of British schools grew enormously; some called themselves Colleges, others Academies, still others, Private Grammar Schools. Some were highly respectable, as witness, Laleham School run by Arnold himself, or the Warrington Academy in Lancashire where Joseph Priestley taught classics, literature and constitutional history from 1761 to 1767,¹⁴ or those schools set up by the

¹³Two excellent, if rather textbookish, histories of English educational institutions are: J. H. Adamson, English Education, 1789-1902, (London: 1965), and Stanley J. Curtis, A History of Education in Great Britain, (London: 1963).

¹⁴Joseph Priestley (1733-1804). Co-discoverer of oxygen (with Lavoisier) and a nonconformist divine. The Warrington Academy is now defunct. (Britannica, XVIII, 482).

religious bodies.¹⁵ Others were not so respectable, especially those founded and run by enterprising but pedagogically incompetent people; fortunately many of this sort of Private Grammar School were not long-lived, though they were still a serious enough problem to warrant a flailing from Dickens in the 1840's.¹⁶

Those ancient Endowed Grammar Schools which wished to disassociate their proud and ancient traditions from these new Private Schools, especially from those of ill-repute, therefore claimed the title "Public School" with this new meaning. In this sense, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, in his treatise of 1789 entitled Practical Education, while warning parents of the Private Schools, spoke of Eton, Rugby and Westminster as "the large Public Schools."¹⁷ The Charity Commissioners' Act of 1818 classified the more exclusive Public Schools as Westminster, Eton, Winchester, the Charterhouse, Harrow and Rugby.¹⁸

This sense of their own exclusiveness, based on self recognition of their ancient foundations and their aristocratic clientele, set the Public Schools apart from all other educational institutions. As an old Wykehamist, Arnold easily became re-infected by this spirit once he had returned to the system in 1828; as he said in one of his famous sermons to the whole of Rugby School

¹⁵E.g. John Wesley founded Kingswood School, Bath, (1748); the Roman Catholics founded Stoneyhurst College (1794), Ampleforth (1802) and Downside (1814); the Quakers founded Ackworth (1791) and Bootham (1828).

¹⁶See Dotheboy's Hall and its sadistic headmaster, Wackford Squeers, (Nicolas Nickleby, 1844); Dr. Blimber's Academy, (Dombey and Son, 1846); Salem House and its proprietor, Mr. Creakle, (David Copperfield, 1849).

¹⁷Quoted in Curtis, History, 164.

¹⁸Act of Parliament, 58 George III, Cap. XCI, 1818, quoted by Bamford, Arnold, 21. Conspicuous by their absence from this list are Shrewsbury, St. Paul's and Merchant Taylors', who would all claim greater Public School status as well.

gathered in the Chapel:

the advantages of the great places of education are very considerable....It seems to me that there is, or ought to be, something very ennobling in being connected with any establishment at once ancient and magnificent where all about us...should be great, splendid and elevating. What an individual ought...to derive from the feeling that he is born of an old, illustrious race...this belongs to every member of an ancient and celebrated place of education.¹⁹

Yet in spite of these inspiring sentiments, the Public Schools had been going through a period of decay since the end of the Napoleonic Wars; their curricula were exclusively classical and had stagnated, their methods of teaching were a libel on the name, their punishments brutal, and relationships in them between boy and boy, and between pupil and master, vicious. What was worse the numbers of their pupils were declining at such a rate that had not enlightened reformers like Arnold appeared when they did, the Public Schools might not have survived the following half century in any form.

Arnold came to Rugby to find it in "a state of monstrous license and misrule."²⁰ His predecessor, Dr. John Wooll, had been at the school since 1807. By 1816 he seemed to have had his charge in a flourishing condition; in that year he is said to have got rid of the worst abuses;²¹ the school was rebuilt into its present structure at a cost of £35,000 and the numbers of pupils reached the height of 381. But from 1820, Rugby under Wooll went into a decline so that when Arnold entered the school in 1828, there were only 123

¹⁹Thomas Arnold, Sermons, (ed., Mrs. W. E. Arnold), III, 95, (No. 5 "Christian Education," 1833), (London: 1876).

²⁰Bernard Darwin, The English Public Schools, (London: 1929), 46.

²¹Bamford, Arnold, 23.

pupils left.²²

Suffice it to say here that because Arnold was a man of unique power and personality, he was able to raise the whole tone of the school, morally and academically, and consequently its reputation. The school's rise in public esteem is best illustrated by the increase in the number of pupils and in the pressure of demand for the limited number of places. In 1830, Arnold astutely asked the Trustees to limit the number of pupils to 300; by 1839, though long bordering on it, this limit was reached with ten names on the waiting list; by April, 1842, there were 370 boys and the limit had been raised to 400.²³ Other factors affected this rise in numbers, such as the building of the London and Birmingham Railway through Rugby in 1839, the prestigious visit to the school of the Dowager Queen Adelaide in the same year, and Arnold's deliberate exploitation of the pretensions of a newly-rich middle class, product of the Industrial Revolution, to have their sons educated alongside those of the gentry and aristocracy, who had traditionally been sent to the Public Schools. Yet it little alters the fact that had Rugby remained in the condition Arnold had found it in 1828, it would have declined further in prestige, and might even have ceased to be a public school altogether.

III

The remainder of Arnold's life outside school affairs was at least eventful. In politics, he remained a Liberal, verging on the Radical; he welcomed the Bill for the Emancipation of Catholics in 1829, the Reform Bill in 1832

²²Arnold Whitridge, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, (London: 1928), 86.

²³Norman Wymer, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, (London: 1953), 122 and 188.

and the Ecclesiastical Tithes Bill in 1836; he also had deep sympathies with the Chartists at the end of the 1830's; or at least for their plight if not for the violence by which they hoped to remedy it. He became involved in the controversy with the Tractarians over the appointment of the Low Church Dr. Hampden as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and wrote a bitter, wounding article in the Edinburgh Review called "The Oxford Malignants"²⁴ against Newman, Pusey and their followers. This is said by at least one biographer to have lost him the chance in the 1839 of being appointed to the Archbishopric of Dublin, the Anglican Primacy of Ireland.²⁵

In 1832, he took steps to fulfill a lifelong ambition, namely to build a holiday retreat in the Lake District, which he loved so much. William Wordsworth, long a resident of the periphery of Lake Rydal, arranged the purchase of the land and even supervised the building of the cottage upon it. "Fox How" was ready to receive the Arnolds in the summer of 1834, and it proved ideal for a boisterous growing family of nine children. Arnold himself went on vacations there whenever he could, and not the least attraction of his visits was the strong friendship which grew up between himself and the ageing poet, Wordsworth; that they could never agree on the political or ecclesiastical subjects of conversation on their long walks together only seems to have sharpened their enjoyment of each other's company.

"Fox How" was an ideal place for Arnold to write undisturbed. Though he did some writing at Rugby, especially the composition of his regular sermons for the School Chapel, administrative affairs always impinged upon him there.

²⁴Dated April, 1836, 65-8.

²⁵Bamford, Arnold, 30-1.

Nevertheless he managed to get an edition of the Works of Thucydides together, translated by himself and published in three consecutive volumes in 1830, 1833 and 1835. He then began work on a three volume History of Rome, which remained unfinished at his death. His plans for a multi-volumed work on the social and religious condition of England also went unrealised.

Arnold thus made a reputation as a classical historian amongst academic circles quite as great as his reputation as a reforming Master of Rugby was amongst the nouveau-riche middle class public. It is not therefore surprising that he should be offered by Lord Melbourne the Regius Professorship of Modern History at Oxford in late 1841. He accepted eagerly and delivered his introductory lecture in modern history in December, and it was very well received. He did not straightway resign his position as Master of Rugby but was hoping to do so by the summer of 1843, in order that he might devote his full time to his University duties and his writings.

Poor Arnold was not given the chance; he died suddenly at the age of forty-seven, on June 12th, 1842. The cause was that which killed his father: angina pectoris.

His suddenly dying came as a shock to all of his friends, not least to that small body of Rugbyean intellectuals, who had been, or still were, under his personal influence in the Sixth Form of the school. They were all, as one of them put it, "completely stunned by the blow, incapable of realising or speaking of what had happened, and unable to rest."²⁶ Their hero's death placed them all upon "a little island of memory, and all who share in that

²⁶Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. by his wife, (London: 1869), 33.

memory must hold together as long as life lasts."²⁷

Such was his eldest son, Matthew, who though somewhat rebellious as a child, came near to worshipping his father in later life, and who wrote the poem, "Rugby Chapel," to his memory.²⁸ Another disciple was Arthur Penrhyn Stanley,²⁹ who was to help initiate that rather regrettable hagiographic strain in nineteenth century biography with his own worthily sacerdotal Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D. D., of 1844. Yet another, John Phillip Gell, labouring to transplant Arnoldian ideals into the Tasmanian educational system, wrote to the recently widowed Mrs. Arnold from the Antipodes:

No one inspired and encouraged my undertaking here as he did; no letters were so sure to bring fresh hopes and happiness as those which can never come again from him.³⁰

A slightly more critical view of the Headmaster was expressed by another of his pupils, the poet, Arthur Hugh Clough, in the Epilogue to his work,

²⁷Quoted by Aea Briggie, Victorian People, (London: 1954), 160.

²⁸Matthew Arnold asserted in a letter to his mother of 1867 that the occasion for this poem was Fitzjames Stephen's "ill-treatment" of his father in his review of Tom Brown's Schooldays (see below, 19). However the poem is dated November, 1857 and the review appeared in the Edinburgh Review for January, 1858; and Matthew remained on good terms with Stephen all his life. (See Trilling, Matt. Arnold, 263).

²⁹A. P. Stanley (1815-1881), attended Rugby School 1829-1834, shone academically, became one of Arnold's favourite pupils and won the Balliol Scholarship. He wrote on leaving, "Moet sincerely I thank God for his goodness in placing me here to live with Arnold...I fear I have made him my idol, and that in all I might be serving God for man's sake." He became Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, 1854 and Dean of Westminster Abbey, 1864. (D. N. B., XIX, 292-299).

³⁰Stanley, Life, II, 344. J. P. Gell (1816-1898), attended Rugby School 1830-1836; critical of Arnold at first, though respecting him, he only really came to love him after he left the school. Trinity College, Cambridge 1836-1839; recommended by Arnold to the Headmastership of Christ's College in Tasmania; left England 1839; returned 1848. Held various Anglican livings for the rest of his long life. (D. N. B., VII, 205).

"Dipsychus."³¹ But an even more realistic assessment came from William Charles Lake, later Dean of Chester, an Arnoldian and Tractarian combined, and therefore only the former with distinct reservations; he wrote:

I have met no man (save Newman) in life who has equalled Arnold in the impression of greatness which his remarkable combination of qualities conveyed. I am sometimes at a loss to understand how so great an effect was produced; but I believe it was in the main by the union of reality and simplicity of character, with a constant freshness and liveliness of intellect almost amounting to poetry, all of which was animated by an untiring and restless energy and devotion to duty.³²

³¹The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, (Oxon.: 1951), 294-296. Clough claims in this poem that the ruination of the Public Schools "was all Arnold's doing." A. H. Clough (1819-1861), son of a Liverpool cotton merchant; Charleston, S. C., 1822-1828; sent home to Rugby, 1829-1837; became a favourite of Arnold and almost one of the family; won the Balliol Scholarship but felt he had failed Arnold when he got a 2nd class in 1841. Elected in 1842 a Fellow and Tutor of Oriel; became Head of University Hall, London, 1849; Education Department 1853-1859; died in Florence never having discovered any directed sense of vocation after Arnold died. (D. N. E., IV, 583-4).

³²Quoted by Sir Michael Sadler, "Introduction" to Whitridge, Arnold, xiv-xv.

CHAPTER II. THOMAS HUGHES AND HIS NOVEL.

I

The author of the novel, Tom Brown's Schooldays, Thomas Hughes, was born on October 20th, 1822 in the Berkshire village of Uffington, second son of a scholarly dilettante with squirearchical aspirations named John Hughes, and grandson of the village rector. According to Hughes himself, the most important single influence on his early life was that of his brother George, thirteen months his senior. In 1830, both boys were sent to a private school at Twyford, a preparatory school for Winchester, but passed on four years later not to that ancient foundation, but to the comparatively more recent one of Rugby School.

By that time Dr. Thomas Arnold, Master of Rugby, had for over five years been consciously attempting to raise the reputation and standards of the school; but the fact that he was an old Oxian colleague of John Hughes weighed more heavily in the latter's decision to send his two eldest sons there, where they both placed in Schoolhouse,¹ under Arnold's direct supervision.

Though Thomas, shortly after his arrival at Rugby, was invited to breakfast with A. P. Stanley, who was about to leave the school on a Balliol Scholarship, neither he nor his brother George gained, or even pretended to, membership of the academic élite of the school; Thomas wrote that,

¹See Glossary, below, 95.

I might have been advised to go elsewhere early in my career but for a certain fondness for history and literature which Arnold discovered in me and which (I fancy) covered a multitude of sins.²

Yet both advanced into the Sixth Form and were made praepositors and both shone on the sports field, Thomas becoming Captain of Bigside³ at football and of the cricket eleven.

He was temporarily estranged from his Headmaster when Arnold ruthlessly expelled his brother George in 1839 for not informing on his fellows as to whom of them was responsible for a prank in which an Italian vendor of plaster statues had his wares smashed. George's disgrace did not last long; he was promptly invited by Arnold to spend his summer holidays at "Fox How" where he much enjoyed himself, and in 1841 he went up to Oriel, his father's old Oxford college. Thomas soon returned in allegiance to Arnold, became one of his greatest admirers, and in 1842, somewhat unwillingly, left Rugby to join George at Oriel. Of these teenage years, the most important in any boy's life, Thomas Hughee was to say in 1891,

You may well believe what a power Rugby has been in my life. I passed all those years under the spell of this place and Arnold, and for half a century have never ceased to thank God for it.⁴

Little need be said for the purposes of this thesis of the remainder of

²Quoted in Edward C. Mack, and W. H. G. Armytage, Thomas Hughes, (London: 1952), 21.

³For definitions of the terms "With Form," "Bigside," "praepositor," see the Glossary, below, 95.

⁴Thomas Hughes, "A Layman's Address to Rugby School," (February 8, 1891), quoted in Mack and Armytage, Hughes, 25.

Hughes' life,⁵ apart from his literary career. After receiving a degree in Classics at Oxford, he entered the legal profession and was called to the Bar in 1848, became a Q. C. in 1869 and a County Court Judge in 1882. He was also an active politician; in the 1850's he fraternised with the Christian Socialists;⁶ and from 1865 to 1874 served in Parliament as Liberal-Radical member for Lambeth. He helped to found the London Working Men's College in 1854 and acted as its Principal from 1872-1883. In 1879, he attempted without much success to set up a utopian community based on the principles of Christian Socialism and Arnoldianism in Tennessee; it was not surprisingly called "Rugby" and though the community resulted in failure, a town of that name still exists today.

Hughes died in Brighton on March 22nd, 1896 after a full and exuberantly active life, in which he was, as Asa Briggs aptly put it, "a grown-up school-boy in a large playground."⁷ He had ever been a gentleman, a public man, a pugnacious healthy extrovert who preferred action to thinking and theorizing; he was a John Bull incarnate.

⁵See Mack and Armytage, Hughes; Encyclopaedia Britannica, Article on "Hughes," II, (Chicago: 1964), 814; the D. N. B. contains no entry for Hughes.

⁶Christian Socialism was a highly imaginative form of Evangelistic Radicalism in British politics of the 1850's, whose leaders were F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, and other Cambridge "Apostles." They sought a solution to social problems by stressing Christian values. The importance they attached to manly self-sufficiency and to their desire to eschew the "namby-pamby" images of Christ so prevalent in Victorian times, (both in order to win over the working man to Christianity), led to their beliefs being dubbed "muscular Christianity."

⁷Briggs, Victorian People, 177.

II

Hughes' literary career commenced in the mid- and prosperous 1850's.

Tom Brown's Schooldays, his first novel, was begun late in the summer of 1856, and though by no means completed, Hughes was soon thinking in terms of a publisher for it. With his characteristic enthusiasm, he opened correspondence with Alexander Macmillan:⁸

My chief reason for writing is, that, as I have always told you, I'm going to make your fortune, and you will be happy to hear that the feat is almost, or at least more than half done. I've been and gone and written or got in my head a one vol. novel, a novel for boys, to do with Rugby in Arnold's time Shall I send you 3 or 4 chapters as specimens...?⁹

Macmillan, who was an admirer of liberal churchmen like Arnold, readily agreed that his firm should publish the novel and so Hughes never had the problem of scouring elsewhere in the book trade for a publisher. The novel's progress was held up by the death of Hughes's daughter from scarlet fever in December and it was not finally completed until February, 1857. If its later parts are graver and deeper, it is surely due to the chastened frame of mind in which Hughes completed the writing of it.

Macmillan published the book on April 24th, 1857 under the anonymous pseudonym "An Old Boy," but owing to its instant success, they were soon led to betray the identity of the author, and Thomas Hughes became famous almost overnight. In terms of current standards set by the sales of "best seller"

⁸The Macmillan Brothers: Alexander (1818-1896); Daniel (1813-1857); born on the Isle of Arran in Scotland, the sons of a crofter, they founded a book dealer's business in 1843, which became one of the world's most important publishing houses. (*Britannica*, XIV, 594).

⁹Quoted in Mack and Armytage, Hughes, 87.

novels, the immediate success of Tom Brown's Schooldays is deceptively modest, but for the 1850's it had an amazing vogue. By July, a second edition was required; by January 1858, eleven thousand copies had been sold and Macmillan was planning a sixth edition to consist of five thousand copies, which came out in February and for which Hughes, abandoning all pretence to pseudonymity, wrote a special preface; by 1866, it had been translated into French and German.

Nor was this success transitory; Tom Brown's Schooldays has continued to sell steadily in the English speaking world down to the present day. Fifty editions or reprints are listed for the United Kingdom alone down to 1890; twenty-nine editions are listed in the catalogue of books in print for 1929; the writer of this thesis is himself using a paperback edition put out by Macmillan in 1958.¹⁰

When the novel was first published, it was reviewed by the professional critics of all the serious journals and newspapers of the day, few of whom treated it as a book for children, as manifestly it merely is not. Most were as enthusiastic about its merits as were the general reading public. Even such a leading dissident as the Edinburgh Review's Fitzjames Stephen, no lover of Arnold's ideas, whose notice of the fourth edition of novel in fact forms an essay condemning the Headmaster's rigidity, was forced in the end to praise the book itself.¹¹ But the novel can be said to have received its official imprimatur from that stalwart of respectability, The Times, which, in two and a half columns of comment called it:

¹⁰ Much of this statistical material can be found in Mack and Armytage, Hughes, 90.

¹¹ Fitzjames Stephen, "Tom Brown's Schooldays," Edinburgh Review, CVII, (January: 1858), 172-193.

the truest, liveliest and most sympathising description of an unique phase of English life that has yet been given to the public.¹²

It is little wonder that in the face of such a welter of praise, Hughee was to be found bemoaning the dearth of those who would "really set about and criticise it as severely as possible."¹³

III

No amount of well-deserved praise and lasting popularity could make Tom Brown's Schooldays a work of high literary value. Thomas Hughee has his limitations as a writer. His first novel is pervaded with a patronising heartiness which was so common in lesser nineteenth century fiction and thus becomes wearisome; he assumes (and in most cases quite correctly) that his reader is not a Public Schoolboy, or at least not an initiate into Rugbyean rituals, hence repeatedly referring to him as "the simple reader" or "the gentle reader," and urging him not to "begin throwing my poor little book about the room, and abusing me and it..."¹⁴

But there is also an assumption here that the ignorant reader must be acquainted with life at Rugby, whether he likes it or not; and it is this overfondness on Hughee's part for the habit of preaching which the modern reader finds it hard to stomach, though it nowhere reaches the unbearable condescension of those Victorian essays of "child-improvement" variety. This odious

¹²The Times, (October 9, 1857), 10. Other reviews consulted were "Arnold and His School," North British Review, XXVIII, (February, 1858); "Rugby Reminiscences," Quarterly Review, CII, (October, 1857).

¹³Mack and Armitage, Hughee, 89.

¹⁴Thomas Hughee, Tom Brown's Schooldays, (London: Macmillan Paperback: 1958), 120. Hereinafter referred to as Hughee, T. B. S., (1958), 120.

didactic trait was self-imposed. It was in fact Hughes's professed intention, as he wrote in the Preface to the sixth edition: "My whole object in writing at all was to get the chance of preaching."¹⁵ It has been written that because of this fault, the Rugbyans of the 1870's, when Hughes revisited the School, regarded him as rather a bore, a sad fate for one who had immortalised the school by means of his novel.¹⁶

In spite of these strictures, the novel has some genuine merit. It has survived the disappearance of the world of which it was a part and has weathered changes, not merely in literary taste, but also in educational ideas. In addition, it is no mean achievement for Hughes that his was literally the first work of fiction to present a real world of boys in the setting of an existing Public School. Though authors like Dickens, Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë had mentioned various sorts of educational institutions in their works, none had touched on the Public School, save in a casual way. Thomas Hughes must therefore be credited with the invention of a new literary genre, the first example of which is still the most vigorous, convincing and deeply moving of all subsequent attempts.¹⁷ If, as the cliché has it, Dickens created the spirit of Christmas, then surely it can be claimed that Hughes created the spirit of the Public School as most people know it today.

¹⁵Hughes, Preface, Sixth Ed., T. B. S., xiv.

¹⁶Darwin, The English Public School, 56.

¹⁷See Rudyard Kipling, Stalky & Co., (London: 1897); Alec Waugh, The Loom of Youth, (London: 1917); David Benedictus, The First of June, (London: 1961). A comprehensive survey of this sort of literature can be found in John R. Reed, Old School Ties: The Public School and British Literature, (Syracuse: 1964).

IV

Tom Brown's Schooldays forms a hymnody to Thomas Hughes's two great life-long loves. It is his love for Dr. Thomas Arnold which gives the novel its ultimate moving power; yet, it is his love for the spirit of boyhood which endows the book with its extraordinary illusion of reality. It is one of the most vivid pictures of boy society ever painted and if it tends towards the melodramatic, this is because Hughes, between the years 1834 and 1842, had lived through a lot of what he describes, with a passionate enthusiasm which spilled over into his adult life. It has been said that Hughes "loved his schooldays so much that he remained to some extent a boy all his life."¹⁸

For this reason, Hughes is able to see, and act as the medium by which the reader can also see, the cosmos through the eyes of the young themselves, a perspective only achieved with rarity by adult writers. One such writer was Mark Twain; though a work of lesser literary value than Huckleberry Finn, Hughes's novel has in common with that work the double vision of both child and adult. It is a boy's dream of school, while at the same time it presents an accurate picture of the dreamer and a recognisable, if not faultless, sketch of his actual environment.

Hughes's literary style is permeated with boyish bounce and energy, which only accentuates the book's pervasion with the spirit of boyhood; it is as if his youthful gusto and enthusiasm had got into his ink. An excellent example of Hughes's boyish style and vision occurs in his description of the celebration in School House after their victory over the rest of the School at football,

¹⁸Mack and Armytage, Hughes, 92.

under their captain, Brooke:

The glasses and mugs are filled, and then the fogleman strikes up the old sea song... 'The Chesapeake and the Shannon,' a song lately introduced in honour of Old Brooke; and when they came to the words--

'Brave Broke he waved his sword, crying,
Now my lads, aboard, And we'll stop their
playing Yankee-doodle-dandy oh!'

you expect the roof to come down. The Fifth and Sixth know that 'brave Broke' of the Shannon was no sort of relation to our old Brooke. The Fourth form are uncertain in their belief, but for the most part hold that old Brooke was a midshipman then on board his uncle's ship. And the lower school never doubt for a moment that it was our old Brooke who led the boarders... During the pauses the bottled-beer cork fly rapidly and the talk is fast and merry.¹⁹

As one of Hughes's biographers says in an apt summing up of the novel: "Tom Brown's Schooldays has about it a zest and joy of happy memory, the love of froety mornings and endurance, and the eager anticipation of life."²⁰

V

That Hughes aimed to give his reader some insight into the Public School system of education as he thought it had been reformed by Arnold has already been touched upon. His moral is clearly stated in the novel: be straightforward, honest, self-reliant, and use your powers responsibly under God and in the service of others. Life is seen as an eternal battle between good and evil and the Christian has no choice but to fight for good. The medium for this didacticism is Hughes's love of the spirit of boyhood and its embodiment

¹⁹Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 115-116.

²⁰Mack and Armytage, Hughes, 92.

into various individual boys.

The central character is Tom Brown, "the commonest type of English boy of the upper middle classes."²¹ He is undoubtedly an idealised portrait of the author, though Hughes himself always pretended this was not the case, probably because his aim was more catholic than merely telling his own story. Rugby School is quite simply the background against which Tom Brown discovers himself and builds his character. Arnold is a major force in this process, and the extent of his influence is only realised by Tom after the Headmaster suddenly dies at the end of the novel. Arnold's death leaves Tom Brown to begin an adult life of action based on his example.

A sense of struggle predominates throughout the book, and whether it takes the form of a football match or the constant battle of wits between masters and boys, the principles involved are those of morality versus evil. The climax of this struggle develops around whether Tom ought to use dishonest methods to get through his academic work and thus defeat the educational process or whether he ought to work hard and genuinely.

Harry East, Tom's first friend, a likeable and cheerful scamp, largely idle and more shallow than Tom himself, represents in this struggle the forces of schoolboy evil and advises Tom to cheat whenever possible. The intellectual and saintly George Arthur whom the Headmaster has arranged for Tom to look after represents the voice of Arnoldian and Christian morality and eventually succeeds in persuading Tom to do his work conscientiously and honestly, relying only on himself. Both then go to work on East who, though not academically bright, becomes more moral as he fits his adult career of a builder and

²¹Hughes, *T. B. S.*, (1958), 64.

defender of the British Empire.

Throughout the course of this novel, many other interesting schoolboy characters appear. Intellectual curiosity is represented by Martin, who has a passion for chemistry and natural history, and who, in typical Darwinian manner, leaves the school for a voyage to the South Seas in one of his uncle's ships;²² though tolerated, Martin is regarded as an eccentric by the more conformist of his fellow pupils and is nicknamed "Madman" by them. This tendency towards rejection of the nonconformist is also to be seen at work with Diggs, a misfit Fifth Former; he is shunned by the rest of his form, and apparently as a result, becomes a champion of fair play towards Lower School boys. A Fifth Former more true to his class and of a type frequently found in the Public School novel is the bully Flashman, who plays the villain in a rather over-sadistic and melodramatic fashion. Representing the traditional aggressive manliness of the English gentry is "Slogger" Williams, who is basically only a more sporting variety of bully than Flashman. Old and Young Brooke represent the new and shaky praepositorial authority in the school, remembering well the days before the reforming Arnold arrived, and therefore loyal to him only within certain limits; they are virtually only more mature types of the young Tom Brown, less responsible versions of what Tom will become under Arnold's constant influence.

Each of these characters is the manifestation of a different version of the genus boy to be found attending a Public School like Rugby. Their inter-relationships go to make up what has been called that "undying record of healthy English boyhood raised above itself by passionate love of a great

²²Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 261.

leader."²³ That great leader for Hughes was, of course, Dr. Thomas Arnold.

VI

Thomas Hughes's unbounded love and admiration for Arnold are most evident. The novel itself was dedicated to Arnold's wife, significantly without her permission, by an author "who owes more than he can ever acknowledge or forget to her and hers."²⁴ The picture Hughes paints of his Headmaster in the novel is a human moving impression of a great teacher, welling up from the mist of his imaginative memory. It has been aptly said, "...of all that has been written about Thomas Arnold, it is that schoolboy classic that best communicates his spell."²⁵

Indeed, Tom Brown's Schooldays did more than just this; the publication of the novel in 1857 considerably revived public interest in Arnold and his methods. This interest had not been as great since the summer of 1842, when the press had been filled with the Doctor's obituaries, and since the autumn of 1844, when A. P. Stanley's biography, The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D. D., had emerged from the publishers.

Save in their shared hagiographic approach to their hero, biography and novel could not be more different, though the two books are complementary rather than antagonistic. Stanley's work contains a scholarly intellectual's viewpoint only, pervaded with a deep spirituality. With documentary materials

²³Edward C. Mack, Public Schools and British Opinion, Vol. I, 1780-1860, (New York: 1941), 325.

²⁴Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), Frontispiece.

²⁵F. J. Woodward, The Doctor's Disciples, (Oxford: 1954), 4.

placed at his disposal, and with the recent memory of a close personal friendship with Arnold, Stanley could penetrate the Doctor's mind and survey his purposes far more effectively than Hughes; the resulting picture of Arnold was one excessively colored by Stanley's own deep reverence for the man. Stanley admitted that many other Rugbyans, whose thoughts were bounded by their loyalty, awe or dread of the Headmaster, could not possibly feel the close sense of communion with Arnold, which he felt to the exclusion of more mundane aspects of life in the school. He therefore found Tom Brown's Schooldays "an absolute revelation" opening up "a world of which, though so near to me, I was utterly ignorant."²⁶

Stanley found the novel so strange because Hughes could recall much more of the informal life of ordinary, Rugby boys who, largely because they were not academically inclined, were outside the circle which enjoyed Arnold's personal influence and friendship and which pre-eminently included Stanley and Clough. The impression which Arnold made on the run-of-the-mill schoolboy, and the conception of the Headmaster entertained by the latter could certainly not be found in Stanley's work of 1844 and did not find expression until Hughes's work rolled off the presses in 1857. If, therefore, Stanley reflected the mind of Arnold, Hughes primarily reflected the minds of all the Tom Browns who made up the mass of Rugby pupils and who had little intimate contact with their Headmaster.

In addition, Stanley's book was less popular than Hughes's, and reached a different type of audience. The Life and Times of Thomas Arnold had run only to its twelfth edition by 1881, respectable enough in itself, but inconsiderable

²⁶Quoted by Briggs, Victorian People, 163.

when set against the fifty editions or reprints of Tom Brown's Schooldays listed for 1890.²⁷ The biography moreover only spread a knowledge of Arnold's ideas and policies amongst the leaders of Victorian thought, people largely like Stanley himself. Hughes's novel, on the other hand, introduced Arnold to thousands of ordinary people in both Europe and North America who knew little or nothing about him. Just as a serious biography was necessary to provide a convincing assessment of Arnold and the Public Schools for the Christian intellectuals, so was a "jolly" novel to popularise the same amongst the vast numbers of the middle class, and later on of the working class, reading public. A national institution, which is what the Arnoldian-influenced Public School system became after Arnold's death, had to be defended on all levels in an increasingly literate and democratic society. So Hughes became the most popular advocate of an educational system which social pressure in mid-century rapidly changed from Arnold's ideal into conformity with the demands of the middle class ethic. And he has continued to be the same down to the present day.

In this process, Hughes's lack of subtlety remained an advantage. His oversimplified picture of Arnold as a strong, just and fearless captain, which was just what the middle class desired their schoolmasters to emulate, his colourful melodramatization of Rugby life, both have won more renown and admiration than the whole mass of writings on Arnold's complicated ideology put together. A bold and obvious picture cluttered with bourgeois unambiguities such as this was essential to the development of the Public Schools as a national institution. The middle class public, who played a major role in this development, was indifferent, even hostile, to Arnold's intense spirituality and

²⁷Figures from Britannica, Article on "Hughes," XI, (1964), 814.

his deep respect for learning,²⁸ and readily responded to Hughes's more mundane idea of a group of self-reliant, manly boys tamed into submission to Christian principles. When these same middle classes expanded the Public School system after the death of Arnold, they used the popular image of Arnoldian Rugby, which was largely reflected in Hughes's dream, rather than the real original, as their model. It is no exaggeration to say that Tom Brown's Schooldays made the nineteenth century Public School spirit what it was precisely because of its immense popularity amongst the middle classes.

Thomas Hughes is therefore a figure of decisive importance in the development of Victorian educational ideas and institutions because he wrote this one great work of schoolboy fiction and thus invested himself with the dual role of hero-worshipper of Arnold and populariser of his ideas and his system. It becomes of some importance to discover how far these ideas and this system were corrupted in the process of hero-worshipping and popularisation; why they were so corrupted and just what this act of corruption represents in early Victorian society. In short, how accurately does the novel Tom Brown's Schooldays reflect Arnold's ideas and policies at Rugby, and what explanation can be provided for the considerable deviation.

That this problem is a real one is succinctly stated by no less an educationalist (and no more faithful an Arnoldian) than Sir Joshua Ffitch:

The Arnoldian legend which has fixed itself in the minds of most English people, is based more upon Mr. Thomas Hughes's romance, than upon the actual life as set forth in Stanley's volumes. Tom Brown's Schooldays is a manly and spirited book, and is pervaded throughout with a sense of humour, a sympathy with boyhood, and a love of righteousness and truth. The story is well

²⁸ A fact which Arnold's son Matthew never ceased to point out. See his work, Culture and Anarchy, (London: 1916), 246.

and vigorously told and has been deservedly admired. But as Matthew Arnold once said to me, it has been praised quite enough, for it gives only one side, and that not the best side, of Rugby school life, or of Arnold's character.²⁹

²⁹Sir Joshua Ffitch, Thomas and Matthew Arnold and Their Influence on English Education, (London: 1899), 104-5. Ffitch (1824-1903), was a Welsh writer and educational theorist who became Chief Inspector of Training Colleges in England, 1877-94. (Who Was Who, 1897-1916, (London: 1916), 246).

CHAPTER III. ARNOLD'S EDUCATIONAL IDEAS AND PURPOSES AT RUGBY

I

One of Arnold's main reasons in applying for the Mastership of Rugby was to see if his idea of a Christian education were practicable in a Public School of the day, and to reform existing institutions and customs only so far as they conformed to this basic idea. To offer a truly Christian education as, was his great objective at Rugby, involved improving the character of the school, and imparting a more healthy tone to it; in short, raising its moral standards. All other objectives he subordinated to this one.

Arnold stated his education purposes on many occasions, though he was not always consistent in doing so. In a sermon to the School, he said:

...in the true scale of excellence, moral perfection is most highly valued, then comes excellence of understanding, and last of all, strength and activity of body.¹

Stanley, quoting from memory in his biography a talk Arnold once gave to the Sixth Form, put the priorities in a slightly different order:

And what I have often said before I repeat now: what we must look for here is, 1st, religious and moral principles; 2ndly, gentlemanly conduct; 3rdly, intellectual ability.²

There is no real contradiction here. Arnold's first aim in the School was without doubt religious and moral perfection; his second was clearly gentlemanly

¹Arnold, Sermons, II, 51, (Sermon VII, Rugby Chapel, 1829-32).

²Stanley, Life, I, 123. Stanley gives no source.

conduct; his third was the cultivation of intellectual excellence; and lastly came the cultivation of the body by means of sports. In this order only were Arnold's educational objectives arranged.

Thomas Hughes put these priorities in a totally different order. When Tom Brown was asked by George Arthur to give the purposes for which he had come to Rugby, he answered after some hesitation:

I want to be A-1 at cricket and football, and all the other games, to make my hands keep my head against any fellow, lout or gentleman. I want to get into the Sixth before I leave, and to please the Doctor; and I want to carry away just as much Latin and Greek as will take me through Oxford respectably.... I want to leave behind me, ... the name of a fellow who never bullied a little boy or turned his back on a big one.³

It is not denied that Brown made this statement before Arthur converted him to the new Christian morality of Arnold. He would have to have changed his ideas anyway in order to get into the Sixth Form, for this involved pleasing Arnold; this he manifestly did not do before his conversion, hence the Headmaster's use of Arthur for the task. But the somewhat hard-to-accept fact that Brown did eventually make a praepositorship in the Sixth Form should not blind us to the more important fact that the new morality he accepted really only extended as far as working at his academic subjects honestly and conscientiously or as far as a bolstered-up sense of fair play which he had always more or less felt. It did not alter his basic priorities as he first gave them. Ever the mouth-piece of his creator Hughes, Tom Brown continued for the remainder of the novel after his conversion to exaggerate the importance of games as a means of character building, to misinterpret gentlemanly conduct as mere aggressive

³Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 268.

manliness, to demean learning by compromising it to merely getting through, using lack of academic ability as an all-too-frequent excuse, and to please the Doctor without truly understanding what he was trying to accomplish at Rugby.

Such perversions of his ideas and purposes as these would certainly not have met with Arnold's approval, even if they did meet with that of the succeeding generation. Indeed, it might be argued that Hughes's perversions merely met the needs of that mid-Victorian generation. Just how Arnold's four educational objectives were perverted by Hughes now remains to be considered.

II

It will be seen from the above comparison between the educational objectives of Arnold and Hughes that both shared a marked de-emphasis of intellectuality. Hughes saw the task of a school like Rugby as one of fostering an aggressively independent spirit in sans corpore rather than the cultivation of mens sana. In one sense, Hughes was only reflecting an anti-intellectual trend in Arnold's thought upon which the Doctor constantly reiterated. But this trend in Arnold did not take the form of a preference for athletics over academic work, but a preference for goodness rather than truth as the end of education.⁴ In short, the moral reigned supreme at Rugby.

That morality, inculcation of which had absolute priority in Arnold's system of education, was of course Christian morality. He could conceive of no education that was not Christian, no school which was not a Christian institution run by orthodox, believing Christians, if not by actual Christian

⁴Several writers have drawn attention to this preference: Basil Willey, Nineteenth Century Studies, (London: Penguin: 1949), 63; Frances J. Woodward, Doctor's Disciples, (Oxon.: 1954), 5-10.

clergymen. As he told the assembled School in the Chapel:

I speak of us as a society, as a school, as a Christian school, as a place...to which the sons of Christian parents, and of no other, are sent to receive a Christian education. Such a society is beyond all doubt in its idea or institution a temple of God....⁵

Arnold's view of morality was fundamentally Augustinian, and two aspects of it primarily concern us here. He believed dogmatically in an absolute moral law, divinely dictated, outside of the individual yet to be adhered to by him, which clearly differentiated between good and evil and identified sin unequivocally. He believed in the notion of the essential evil of human nature, arising out of the original sin of Adam and Eve, an evil which was all the more dangerous in a child until he could be made to abide by the dictates of the moral law.

In everything he undertook, Arnold was obsessed by the glory of righteousness and the reality of evil; all life had the potentials either of being virtuous or of being sinful and both elements were at war with each other. In children, this war would result in a victory for innate sinfulness if morality were not inculcated into them to enable them consciously to choose virtue, and thus enter responsible Christian adulthood. As childhood was thus a very dangerous time of life, the purpose of education was to inculcate morality and to accomplish this transformation into adulthood as quickly as possible. This led to the accusation in which there is some truth that Arnold's system produced premature and priggish young men.

The young Rugby pupil therefore, though he possessed no sense of sin, could still commit moral crime; he was not merely physically imperfect, immature, and

⁵Arnold, Sermons, V, 55, (Sermon V, "Christian Schools," Rugby Chapel, 23/VIII/1840).

inferior by adult standards, he was to Arnold's eyes, morally so as well. Before taking up his Rugby appointment, the future Headmaster wrote in a letter (2/III/1828):

With regard to reforms at Rugby, give me credit I must beg of you, for a most sincere desire to make it a place of Christian education. At the same time, my object will be, if possible, to form Christian men, for Christian boys I can scarcely hope to make; I mean that from the natural imperfect state of boyhood, they are not susceptible of Christian principles in their full development upon their practice, and I suspect that a lower standard of morals in many respects must be tolerated amongst them....⁶

It is clear from this statement that Arnold was no Rousseau and that his views on the education of boys ran counter to those of the English Romantics, especially of Coleridge and of Wordsworth. It was axiomatic to the latter, a good friend of Arnold from 1831 onwards, that the child gradually receded from God as he grew older, therefore that society was an agency of corruption in his education. Arnold's outlook reflected the more typically Victorian one that children were adults manqués, and altogether lower order of humanity; society for him was likely to develop the child rather than corrupt him. Rugby School was after all society in microcosm; though he realised that it encouraged roughness, pride and profanity, it acted as a testing place for virtue; and untried goodness, mere innocence, was to a man of his views, worthless.

Though the state of sinfulness and actual vice of his young pupils, the very state of childishness, caused Arnold to be needlessly depressed, just as their inferiority caused him to be irrepressably distant, his illiberal outlook was at least realistic and sensible when faced with the chaotic situation at Rugby in 1828. That considerable vice of all sorts, ranging from bullying to

⁶Stanley, Life, I, 88, (Letter XXV, 2/III/1828).

homosexuality, existed in the School, there is little doubt, to which many contemporary accounts bear witness.⁷ But Arnold's sensibility and realism regarding the situation was to a great extent nullified by his deep religiosity, which blinded him in two ways: he exaggerated the actual and potential evil of small boys out of all proportion, and he did not see the dangers of developing a boy's moral sense too early and too strongly.

"Public Schools are the very seats and nurseries of vice."⁸ This quotation by the Rev. Dr. John Bowdler, whose work expurgating the plays of Shakespeare has given the English language the verb "to bowlerize," was Arnold's constant watchword. It only took one school year to undo the good habits of a decade at home; Arnold told his boys:

Every boy brings some good with him at least, from home, as well as some evil; and yet you see how much more catching the evil is than the good.⁹

Rugby School was a place

where a boy unlearns the pure and honest principles which he may have received at home, and gets in their stead, others which are utterly low and base, and mischievous—where he loses his modesty, his respect for truth, and his affectionateness, and becomes coarse, and false, and presuming; and goodness is timid and shy...where the good, instead of setting the tone of society, and branding with disgrace those who disregard it, are exposed to reproach for their goodness...where evil is more willingly screened and concealed than detected and punished.¹⁰

⁷See T. W. Bamford, "Discipline at Rugby under Arnold," Educational Review, X, No. 1, (November, 1957), 18-28.

⁸John Bowdler, Remains, II, (London: 1826), 153. This was a quotation which Arnold had frequent recourse to especially in Sermons, II, 88, (Sermon XII, Rugby Chapel, 1829-32).

⁹Arnold, Sermons, II, 42, (Sermon V, Rugby Chapel, Ash Wednesday, 1829-32).

¹⁰Ibid., II, 89, (Sermon XII, Rugby Chapel, 1829-32).

Mass evil was therefore not merely worse than individual evil, it was far more likely than mass good in such an isolated, self-contained boy society as Rugby School. Arnold said:

Too many of you are the very slaves of each other's opinions, the veriest imitators of each other's conduct. So I must try to rouse you to something of a more independent feeling and to break through that bondage...Every day I observe some wickedness or low principle, for which the ever ready excuse would be that everyone says or does the same.¹¹

Few in every school would ever gain that independent feeling and break through that bondage, but Arnold was confident:

Yet if we multiply schools, and everyone sends forth only a few who have received the blessing of a Christian education, the few so educated... will be with God's blessing a leaven working in the mass of the meal, till...a larger part be leavened.¹²

One such pupil of Arnold well illustrates how easily an overdeveloped sense of morality could result from the Headmaster's constant harpings on vice in the school. A somewhat priggish Clough wrote to his sister (10/X/1835):

There is a great deal of evil springing up in the School, and it is to be feared that the tares will choke much of the wheat...I am trying if possible to show them that good is not necessarily disagreeable...it is a weary thing to look around and see all the evil, all the sin and sickness of those with whom one must daily associate....¹³

¹¹Quoted by Sir Michael Sadler, "Introduction" to Arnold Whitridge, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, (London: 1928), xlii.

¹²Arnold, Sermons, V, 96, (Sermon VIII, "Education and Instruction," Rydal Chapel, 24/I/1841).

¹³Fred L. Mulhouser, (ed.), The Correspondence of A. H. Clough, I, 19, (Oxon: 1957), (Letter XIII, 10/X/1835).

Of Arnold's moral ideals, three were the most important: loyalty, self-sacrifice and obedience. He taught loyalty and obedience to God, to the School, and to himself, because he thought that the best way to further his ideals was to secure allegiance to objects which embodied these ideals. Loyalty and self-sacrifice, willing and conscious subjections of the ego, he taught chiefly to the older boys, and this voluntaristic principle had the unfortunate tendency to limit self-expression; in subscribing emotionally and unthinkingly to his moral code, Rugby School Sixth Formers failed to evolve their own scale of values, a result which he ultimately would not have wanted.

As the younger, potentially more sinful, boys could be allowed no such independence they had to be restrained, curbed and taught humility. With them, therefore, he stressed authoritarian ideal of loyalty through unquestioning obedience, more than any virtue. He justified this in a special sermon devoted to obedience; Rugby School, he said,

is a place where the habit of true, of noble obedience may and ought to be cultivated: of obedience, not from any unworthy fear or hope, but upon principle...Government by fear alone or chiefly is happily impossible here, because the object is your improvement not outward obedience only...obedience for conscience' sake may often be practiced here, and the habit gained, than which none is more needed, nor any more ennobling, of cheerful submission to lawful authority...the good of so obeying in the formation of character is not inconsiderable.¹⁴

If Tom Brown's Schooldays were supposed to be the story of Arnoldian Rugby, it comes as something of a surprise to find that the central hero played so small a part in it. Until the middle of the book, he is off-stage, mentioned only in hallowed tones, putting down bad customs. His first two appearances

¹⁴Arnold, Sermons, III, 213, (Sermon XXV, "Christian Obedience," Rugby Chapel, 1832-4).

show him in clerical functions; he took prayers in the Schoolhouse Hall after calling over and he delivered a sermon in the Chapel, both awe-inspiring occasions. Therafter both Brown and East had only slim contacts with him—a thrashing, a lecture on duty, and a solemn warning as to the future; all after a series of misbehaviors on the part of the two boys. After Arnold's sermon, Tom became proud, not only of being a Rugbyman, but primarily of being one of Arnold's boys; from then on,

he hardly ever left the chapel on Sunday evenings without a serious resolve to stand by and follow the Doctor, and a feeling that it was only cowardice (the incarnation of all other sins in such a boy's mind) which hindered him from doing so with all his heart.¹⁵

However, Tom was weak, and conversion to Arnold's moral ideals only really came, as we have already seen, through the new boy, George Arthur, a relationship planned by the Headmaster. His personal influence, working via Arthur, forced Tom to give up his childish habits; he learned responsibility, he gave up cribbing, he helped his weaker brethren and even learnt to pray. Only at the end of the novel did he learn from the young assistant master that Arnold had planned it all and "he marched down to the Schoolhouse, a hero-worshipper who would have satisfied the soul of Thomas Carlyle himself."¹⁶ Tom's devotion went not merely to the Schoolhouse, to the School, but also to Arnold (and so far all is fine) and to the moral ideals which Hughes thought he stood for.

The moral ideals which emerge out of Hughes's novel are hardly those of Arnold at all; they are a vulgarised version typical of the broad mass of insensitive Public Schoolboys, a member of which Tom Brown indubitably was. They

¹⁵Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 133.

¹⁶Ibid., 310.

do not have the grand design of Arnold's Augustinian code, but are concerned with triviality. They never really get beyond what his father parochially conceived of as the ultimate aim in a moral education; as he advised his son before Tom left for school:

But never fear. You tell the truth, keep a brave and kind heart, and never listen to or say anything you wouldn't have your mother and sister hear, and you'll never feel ashamed to come home, or we to see you.¹⁷

Hughes's view of ethical discipline was one-sided and imperfect. While he sought to make a boy sensitive on the point of honour, refusing to "blab" or tell tales on a school fellow, he is tolerant of "cribs" or vulgarities and other devices by which masters could be hoodwinked or deceived. The traditional opposition of boys and masters, which Arnold deplored, but which to East was all part of the schoolboy code of conduct—"its a fair trial of skill and last between us and them...We're natural enemies in school"¹⁸—was replaced in Hughes's debased version of Arnoldian morality by the eternal battle with evil. But it was still a battle, and moreover, conducted with the same old equipment and according to the same old rules, tempered by fair play, and with Arnold as the commanding general. The Headmaster, according to Hughes,

stood there before them their fellow-soldier and the Captain of their band. The true sort of captain, too for a boys' army, one who had no misgiving, and gave no uncertain word of command, and, let who would yield or make truce, would fight the fight out (so every boy felt) to the last gasp and the last drop of blood.¹⁹

"So every boy felt." But the incredible thing is that Hughes felt this

¹⁷Ibid., 72.

¹⁸Ibid., 281.

¹⁹Ibid., 132.

way all his adult life, just as he always abhorred that cowardice which was "the incarnation of all other sins in such a boy's mind." Hughes's view therefore of Arnoldian morality was a boy's view of it, and it never advanced from such. Boyishness, so much detested by the real Arnold, sums up the nature of Hughes's vulgarisation of the Headmaster's moral ideals.

The tragedy of the situation is that Hughes's cheapening of Arnold's personality and ideals was committed partly by way of an apologia²⁰ in answer to the Doctor's detractors. The fact that he proved very successful at it makes it all the greater pity that Hughes failed to emphasize the prophetic and subtle quality of the Headmaster; that he chose for emphasis instead the human and downright in him, his ability (so rarely in evidence) to turn a blind eye, all sterling Victorian middle-class virtues, more at home in the 1860's than in the Arnoldian sphere thirty years earlier. Arnold in the novel had none of the original's fanatic idealism, his reforming zeal, his other-worldliness or his over-developed sense of sin. The fictional Arnold in fact conformed to the type of respectable Schoolmaster who, in the interval between the real Arnold's death in 1842 and the writing of the novel in 1857, had grown familiar to middle-class Englishmen and whose demeaned Arnoldian ideals were publically expected. Hughes at least did a faithful job of reflecting the change in this segment of Victorian ethics in this respect.

III

Arnold's second great educational aim was the inculcation into his boys of gentlemanly conduct, which was to be their means of putting the Christian and

²⁰ See the Preface, *I. E. S.* (Sixth Ed.: 1858).

moral principles already discussed into action.

An important element in his conception of gentlemanly conduct was what Walter Houghton has called "the saving ideal of nobility."²¹ It was this ideal which Arnold found in the works of Homer, Thucydides and Sophocles and which to his mind was perpetuated in British aristocratic values. Though he was all for curtailing the political power of the aristocracy, he thought that of all their virtues this element of conservation of values was worthy of preservation in the increasingly democratic and industrial society which was emerging outside. As has already been mentioned,²² Arnold believed in the advantages of the ancient and magnificent places of education in producing Christian gentlemen and he hoped to keep the aristocratic tradition alive by means of such schools, Rugby first and foremost.

Hughes did not interpret gentlemanly conduct with such high minded integrity; he saw it simply as that aggressive manliness which had long characterized the English gentry, squirearchy rather than aristocracy. That life was an unceasing battle between right and wrong, he was never in any doubt, if only from the reiterations of Dr. Arnold; but he demeaned this battle into some sort of eternal fist-fight with the powers of darkness. In so doing he showed how easily the sincere Puritanism of Arnold could be blended in a school like Rugby with the innate squirearchical and combative instincts of the majority of the pupils. He wrote in a chapter of the novel appropriately called "The Fight:"

After all what would be life without fighting, I should like to know? From the cradle to the grave, fighting, rightly understood, is the business, the real highest, honestest business of every son of man. Everyone who is worth his salt has enemies,

²¹Walter E. Houghton, Victorian Frame of Mind, 287.

²²See page 9 above.

who must be beaten, be they thoughts and habits in himself, or spiritual wickednesses in high places, or Russians or Border ruffians, or Bill, Tom or Harry, who will not let him lead his life in quiet till he has thrashed them. It is no good for Quakers, or any other body of men, to uplift their voices against fighting. Human nature is too strong for them....²³

This over-emphasis on simple manliness as the chief attribute of gentlemanly conduct is a major weakness on the moral side of the novel, indeed of Hughes's lifetime philosophy as a whole. "A Christian...is surely much more than a gentleman" wrote a more faithful reflector of Arnold's ideal in 1835.²⁴ In its under-estimation of the Christ-like qualities of gentleness and charity, and its identification of Christianity with pugnacity, what later became nicknamed "muscular Christianity," was a clear vulgarisation of Arnold's ideal and would only have been abhorred by him, had he lived to see its development. The admiration for physical prowess and bodily strength which muscular christianity implied contributed much to the cult of games which arose in the Public Schools after Arnold's death.

Yet Hughes was unconscious of his act of vulgarisation, of his act of conformity to changing social pressures. The value of his system was that, by means of the rough-and-tumble of Public School life, even at the cost of much pain his key virtues of animal courage and self-reliance could be inculcated into little English boys, milk-sop or otherwise. In spite of the fact that Hughes stressed that the virtues of his system must be accompanied by a strong sense of fair play to avoid deliberate cruelty, one is tempted to ask how was that favourite sport amongst young boys, bullying, to be checked; such a system could only too easily encourage it.

²³Hughes, I. E. S., (1958), 242-3.

²⁴Arthur Hugh Clough, Correspondence, I, 19, (Letter 13, 10/X/1835).

That the ends could so simply get lost in the means is condemnation enough for Hughes's educational system of lessons learnt bitterly from a series of hard knocks. Yet Arnold, in a sermon, actually condemned the independent spirit Hughes sought to cultivate, if only because it interfered with his attempt to mould the school to his moral ideals. He wrote:

...the feeling of independence is admired chiefly because it shows absence of fear. But if obedience were rendered not from fear, but from principle, it would then be nobler, because it would imply greater self-denial, than the feeling of independence... (which) is...a wish to have our own way, a wish in which there is nothing at all noble or admirable... independence becomes no better than self-denial for the sake of others, that is benevolence or charity....²⁵

Lastly, though Arnold expected conformity to his moral ideals, he pretty well left it to the individuals concerned how they turned these ideals into conduct. Hughes's ideal of a gentlemanly conduct presupposed a rigid conformity to the pugnacious gentlemanly code. Tom Brown got along marvellously with his fellow Rugbians, especially because he enjoyed fighting and playing games, and more especially when it was realised that "he's got nothing odd about him, and answers straight forward and holds his head up."²⁶ Hughes's debasement of Arnold's ideals led clearly to conformism, while his Headmaster if anything erred in the opposite direction by not giving his disciples enough guidance for their lifetime's task of following his moral ideals. Hence there was little conformity in following them and, one might also add, hence Hughes's too easy debasement of those ideals in the first place.

²⁵Arnold, Sermons, III, 214, (Sermon XXV, "Christian Obedience," Rugby Chapel, 1832-4).

²⁶Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 89.

IV

At Rugby under Arnold, the moral ruled supreme, even over what is today regarded in England as the main business of the Public and Grammar Schools, those institutions for the educational élite of the country. The inculcation of Christian morality claimed by present-day standards a disproportionate amount of Arnold's teaching in comparison with intellectual training.

It is no exaggeration to claim that the use to which Arnold put the Classroom was only an extension of that to which he put the chapel pulpit. Academic work done at Rugby consisted almost entirely of the Classics, or of subjects like History, Geography, Mathematics, Modern Languages, and even Divinity, which were pursued in close alliance with, and subordinate to, them. All these subjects, though the Classics first and foremost, were learnt for the moral lessons they provided, and for the mental industriousness they cultivated, the latter being in Arnold's eyes a moral and religious duty in itself. The purpose of learning was therefore not the mere gaining of knowledge, nor essentially mental training, but in order to cultivate the spirit of work and industry. Like all teachers, he admired the industrious plodder over the natural scholar; he once said, polemically:

More intellectual acuteness, divested as it is in too many cases of all that is comprehensive and great and good, is to me more revolting than the most helpless imbecility.²⁷

Arnold used academic studies at Rugby as the means of acquiring knowledge and in order to discipline the mind into a perfect instrument. Naturally, he wished to broaden the intellectual outlook of his pupils, to create in them an appetite for knowledge through study, and ultimately, to make them think for

²⁷Quoted by Norman Wymer, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, (London: 1953), 127-8.

themselves. Hence his love of the Classics as, (in words worthy of one of his son's critical pronouncements, a quarter of a century later):

...forces hostile to obscurantism, pedantry and superstition, forces making for intellectual light for the advancement of knowledge in every field.²⁸

In spite of all this, in spite of his admiration of boys who shone academically, Arnold was anti-intellectual to the extent that he put morality and the means of practicing it above intellectuality; he never tired of insisting that the school aimed at developing character rather than cleverness.

Arnold was only being realistic in his relegation of cultivation of the mind to a position below that of moral perfection, for he realised that very few of his boys were capable of being intellectual geni, nor ever would be. Rugby pupils were not selected by any entrance exam in which academic ability was measured, so the only factor he could rely on was, not that they were intellectually brilliant, but that they were morally immature. This does not mean to say that he did not encourage bright boys or that he was not pleased when they were successful. Many of the brighter boys became his closest friends and most encouraged pupils. His enthusiasm for their achievements is best shown in his words to one such, A. P. Stanley, who newly elected to a Balliol Scholarship at Oxford, (Rugby's first), was attending his last prize-giving at the School in June, 1834. Arnold said:

Stanley, I have now given you from this place every prize that can be given, and I cannot let it pass without thanking you publicly for the honour you have reflected upon the school,

²⁸Thomas Arnold, "Rugby School: Use of the Classics," Quarterly Journal of Education, VIII, (January, 1834), 347.

not only within these walls, but even already at the University.²⁹

In fact, it speaks very well for Arnold's invigorating presence at Rugby that, amongst all the philistinism and unacademicism which had been rife in the school's past, scholars, weaklings, the unathletically-minded, and ehy iolationiste, could not only survive, but could avoid ostracism and bullying, and even become respected and authoritative. Doubtless, boys like Stanley or Clough (both of whom at one time or another fitted into all four of the above categories), had formerly survived, but under Arnold they were for the first time actively encouraged, despite his de-emphasis of intellectuality. One of Stanley's few friends at Rugby enlarged upon this point:

There was certainly such respect entertained for intellectual powers in our school society that none of us held Stanley in less esteem because he was not a football player or cricketer. The regard for strength and activity is always a prevalent feeling among boys, but I am confident that at Rugby, at least in my time, equal, if not greater, regard and respect were entertained for intellectual vigour and mental requirements.³⁰

Arnold's doctrinal de-emphasis of intellectual attainments therefore must be looked at in the light of the high plane of recognition which he gave to them in practice. It was not simply a case of goodness over truth all the time.

Hughes not only demeans Arnold's moral ideal, he is also fundamentally more anti-intellectual; indeed he is pointedly so, in keeping with the changed

²⁹Rowland E. Prothero and G. G. Bradley, The Life and Correspondence of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, D. D., I, (London: 1893), 60.

³⁰H. G. Allen quoted by Prothero, Stanley, I, 62. Allen also admitted that when Stanley first arrived at Rugby, he was nicknamed "Nancy" due to his feminine appearance. (Ibid., 41). Both Tom Brown and East feared that George Arthur would get "called Molly, or Jenny, or some derogatory feminine nickname." (Hughes, T. B. S., 193).

outlook of mid-Victorian England. Sir Joshua Ffitch attacked Tom Brown's Schooldays for precisely this reason:

It leaves out of view, almost wholly, the intellectual purpose of the school. It gives the reader the impression that it is the chief business of a Public School to produce a healthy animal, to supply him with pleasant companions and faithful friends, to foster in him courage and truthfulness, and for the rest to teach as much as the regulations of the school enforce, but no more... [Hughes's] typical schoolboy is seen delighting in wanton mischief,... distinguished frequently by insolence to inferiours, and even coarseness and brutality, but not by love of work or by any strong interest in intellectual pursuits.³¹

This is no exaggeration. Studies are hardly mentioned in the novel, and Tom Brown is largely idle academically; there is little suggestion of the school's intellectual purpose, and no trace of Arnold's concern for the mind, both interests close to the Headmaster's heart. Squire Brown best expressed this anti-intellectual bent in his meditation on what to say to Tom as the boy was leaving to start Rugby School:

Shall I tell him to mind his work, and say he's sent to school to make himself a good scholar? Well he isn't sent to school for that—at any rate not for that mainly. I don't care a straw for Greek particles, or the digamma; no more does his mother. What is he sent to school for? Well, partly because he wanted so to go. If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truth-telling Englishman, and a gentleman, and a Christian, that's all I want....³²

This anti-intellectual bent is kept up. Gray, one of the winners of the Balliol Scholarship when Tom entered, is a silent character and East thought

³¹Ffitch, T. and M. Arnold, 105-06.

³²Hughes, T. E. S., (1958), 74.

the half-day holiday secured by Gray more important than the academic triumph itself.³³ Old Brooke, Captain of Bigside and Tom's first hero, who also won a Balliol Scholarship, said to his assembled House, in a vein typical of the whole novel:

I know I'd rather win two School-house matches running than get the Balliol Scholarship any day'--(frantic cheers).³⁴

The only real intellectual of the story besides George Arthur, (who is Arnold's agent for Tom's moral conversion), is the naturalist, Martin, who is nicknamed "Madman," made out to be slightly deranged and quickly despatched out of the story. While in the novel it is suggested that such eccentrics ought to be protected from their coarser fellows, it is nowhere suggested that perhaps a Public School might be a better place if more pupils felt the spur of intellectual endeavour, even along the paths of Natural History and Chemistry as chosen by Martin, and if more pupils were encouraged to win university scholarships.

Only towards the end of the novel did Tom, then cricket captain, admit to his lack of intellectuality with just a faint trace of regret, but no more than this:

...only the question remains whether I should have got most good by understanding Greek particles or cricket thoroughly. I'm such a thick, I never should have time for both.³⁵

Hughes is in one sense presenting an extremely realistic picture of Rugby in the 1830's. He has successfully captured, as Stanley could not possibly have

³³A point with which The Times reviewer made great play. (The Times, 9/X/1857, 10).

³⁴Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 117.

³⁵Ibid., 299.

have done, Arnold's influence over, and relationship with, the many stolid, extroverted and comparatively insensitive boys who spurned any intellectual interests, who were untouched by the joy of intellectual adventure which Arnold cherished, and who, at most, may have been moved to work harder as a result of their Headmaster's urgings. These were the boys whose attitudes, when they grew up, formed the mid-Victorian ethic, in response to whose needs, Hughes was really writing in 1857. The price of this realism is that the picture of Arnold, his ideas and purposes representing a prior generation, is faulty. The one unrealistic development in the novel is the fact that Tom Brown managed to get into the Sixth form with these attitudes totally unaffected by the Doctor's passionate quest for truth.

The whole novel is therefore permeated with an indifference amounting to contempt for the intellect. The pedagogic efforts of Arnold and his Assistant Masters seem futile and unimportant through Tom's eyes. The quintessence of Arnoldian Rugby according to Hughes was time after class.

V

Cultivation of the body came at opposite ends of the spectra of educational objectives drawn up by Arnold and Hughes; of least importance to the Headmaster; but having top priority for the novelist. The issue is further complicated by the fact that a perverse posterity took athleticism, or the cult of games as an educational instrument to build character, in a direction unforeseen by Arnold and ultimately regretted even by Hughes.

From the late 1830's onwards, there came to Rugby School, and other schools modelled on its example, an increasing emphasis upon the organization of sports and their inclusion into the regular curriculum, as part of the educational offerings of such schools. Yet Arnold's earlier years at the school

were spent under the shadow of many of his predecessor, Dr. Wooll's institutions. There were no rules compelling boys to play games, and thus cultivate their bodies against their wills, and there was little attempt to organize those who chose to do so, much less to theorize on the benefits of athletics. Amongst the healthy, the most popular sports were single wicket cricket, a primitive form of football akin to both soccer and rugby, Hare-and-Hounds or cross-country runnings, and fives. All of these were extra curricular activities; all were voluntary to the extent that any traditional activity is so.

In this respect, the picture portrayed in the novel, Tom Brown's School-days, is realistic. Though Hughes devoted a chapter apiece to a football and a cricket match, and a considerable portion of another chapter to a Hare-and-Hounds run,³⁶ official School sports in the novel are so permeated with an amateurishness and lack of organization that the reader is forced to the conclusion that they were less frequently played and formed a much smaller part in the corporate life of the school. This was largely the case up until the late 1830's.

Apart from the above-mentioned chapters devoted to specific sports, Tom Brown and East hardly ever discussed such activities, preferring instead "to talk about fishing, drink bottled beer, read Marryat's novels, and sort birds' eggs."³⁷

Similarly, if there was a post-Arnoldian development in over-organized sport, games in the novel and in Arnold's earlier years were almost too chaotic

³⁶See Ibid., Chapter V, "Rugby and Football," 85-109; Chapter VIII, "Tom Brown's Last Match," 291-310; part of Chapter VII, "Settling to the Collar," 133-141.

³⁷Ibid., 193.

to be pleasurable to any of the participants. During the cricket match at the end of the novel, Tom, who was no less than Captain of the Schoolhouse eleven, spent most of his time discussing Aristophanes and other problems with the young master rather than directing his team. So oblivious was Tom of the progress of the game, that when the Sixth wicket fell, he was forced to ask Arthur:

'Whose turn is it to go in?'
 'I don't know; they've got your list
 in the tent.'
 'Let's go and see,' said Tom, rising;...
 'Oh, Brown, mayn't I go in next?' shouted
 the Swiper.
 'Whose name is next on the list?' says
 the Captain.
 'Winter's, then Arthur's.'...
 'Oh, do let the Swiper go in,' chorus
 the boys; so Tom yielded against his
 better judgement.³⁸

Football was equally casual and even more irregular. Regulations, like the British Constitution itself, were not at this time written down, but depended heavily upon custom and precedent. In a match proper, the whole School played against one of its constituent houses, which meant that any number of boys could be participating, from less than 150 in the late 1820's to over twice that number a decade later. The fact that one side greatly outnumbered the other only added to the spirit and tenacity with which the minority side had to play. All participants played in their everyday clothes, occasionally with jackets removed, the only distinguishing marks being the white trousers worn by School House when it was the minority side. There were no School rules which demanded that everyone play; School opinion rather demanded it or else

³⁸Ibid., 299-300.

the older boys would "fag"³⁹ the younger to play. When a game was called for, the praepositors would sweep all shirkers into the close and the smallest would act en masse as goal keepers. With this afterwards went the ritual of an enormous feast for the winning side and the climactic speech given by the Captain. If there is nothing to equal the excitement communicated by Hughes in his fifth chapter on the football game, there is also nothing to equal its sense of chaos.

Hughes's realism in the novel also extended to the chaos of Hare-and-Hounds, as the cross-country runs were dubbed. Tom, East and a tiny boy nicknamed "the Tadpole," were chosen as the Hares whose job it was to lay the paper-trail or "scent" for the rest of Schoolhouse to follow. Yet there were several possible different runs, some nine miles long, others even longer; and their instructions as to which one to follow were, to say the least, scanty. Hence it is not suprising that the three boys got hopelessly lost, and, not wearing any form of athletic kit, got their clothes terribly torn and filthy. Eventually they found the turnpike road, and followed the Oxford coach back into Rugby. Late for tea, they were sent up to the Headmaster for a genial chastising, with a vague hint ("You're too young to try such long runs")⁴⁰ that he thought the whole episode a particular waste of time. A contemporary of Hughes at Rugby well communicated the air of amateurish disorganisation which pervaded this whole sport, but indicated that it was preferred this way:

Hare-and-Hounds was also a very popular pastime with many, and the hares had special orders, when they pulled up at some well-known publichouse after they had completed their twelve-mile circuit,

³⁹See Glossary below,

⁴⁰Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 141.

to prepare plenty of bread and cheese, and homebrewed beer for the hungry and thirsty hounds who seldom succeeded in catching the hares.⁴¹

Yet Hughes's treatment of school sports in the novel contained a paradox. If the games which he portrayed are historically correct for the 1830's in so far as they were unorganised and amateurish, this portrayal contains an anachronism in that the games are played in, indeed permeated with, the spirit of athleticism, which only developed in reality after Arnold's death. We have seen how Hughes's conception of Arnold's moral ideal was in its highest form a kind of spiritual courage based upon the instinctive aggressive manliness of English Public Schoolboys. The best way to Hughes of achieving those ethical purposes which he thought were so dear to Arnold was by means of games. Hughes emphasised them as a prime educational instrument; they provided a training ground for courage and fair play, a lesson in co-operation and "team-spirit," an inspiration in local, and ultimately national, patriotism.

Certain games provided a better moral training than others; according to Tom himself:

that's why football and cricket, now one comes to think of it, are such much better games than fives or hare-and-hounds, or any others where the object is to come in first or to win for one's self, and not that one's side may win.⁴²

This goes some way towards explaining why, of the school sports mentioned in the novel, football and cricket are in the preponderance, why fives and

⁴¹J. B. Booth, Bits of Character: A Life of H. H. Dixon, (London: 1936), 25. Henry Hall Dixon (1822-1870) entered Rugby in 1838 at the unusually advanced age of 16; was an avid sportsman who rode with the local foxhunt; suffered from opthalmia and got behind in his work so Arnold reluctantly had to get rid of him in 1840 before he reached the Sixth form; this did not stop him going up to Cambridge, however, to read Classics a year later.

⁴²Hughes, T. E. S., (1958), 300.

hare-and-hounds have smaller portions of the text devoted to them. Indeed, fives was hardly mentioned at all and hare-and-hounds never got beyond the chaotic stage of being an excuse for high jinks or frowned-upon tours around the local public houses. Football and cricket were a superior means of moral inculcation.

The chapter on the football match significantly appears some time before Arnold does; it is an exhilarating chapter, with its many and diverse characters, its examples of true and false courage, and its obvious moral: "We've union, they've division."⁴³ But it is clear that Hughes was exaggerating the importance of the match out of all proportion when he summed it up with such literary and ideological aplomb:

This is worth living for; the whole sum of school-boy existence gathered up into one straining, struggling, half-hour, a half-hour worth a year of common life.⁴⁴

If this was truly the "sum of schoolboy existence" then it must be admitted that it was something of which Arnold's favourite pupil, A. P. Stanley, never tasted. This view of football was distinctly half-hearted:

To be sure I am a very poor player, ...for the last half-year...I don't think I ever played at any game in the playground. I do really like it—it is such an enlivening warm game; though I sometimes catch myself looking at the sunset instead of the ball.⁴⁵

To which he later added:

⁴³Ibid., 117.

⁴⁴Ibid., 106.

⁴⁵Prothero, Stanley, 48.

I think I kick the ball, whereas before they used to tell me I only pushed it with my foot.⁴⁶

Stanley, shortly afterwards was able to give up football altogether.

The following questions might therefore be posited: if there were no definite school rules demanding participation in sports, thus allowing Stanley to get out of them so easily, why did he bother to play football in the first place? Did he and his unathletic fellows feel that there was anything educationally beneficial to be gained from participating in sports?

Not a bit of it. As junior boys, of course, the unathletically minded could always be "fagged" to play and thus would have little choice. But later, when exempt from fagging, though they would then have a choice, some of them still chose to play. Their problem was succinctly stated by H. H. Dixon, concerning Hare-and-Hounds:

for "big side runs" in which boys in the Upper School were almost compelled to join, I never had much liking, and generally declined to take part in them, although well aware that my refusal made me unpopular with my fellows....⁴⁷

The answer to the problem was that boys, both junior and senior, were ostracised by their classmates for not taking part in games, and all the arguments, that it was the tradition, that it was expected, that the House would suffer if they didn't play, were used to back this ostracism up. Hence we find Stanley and some poor fat boy so outdistanced as hounds that they had to turn around and walk back to school;⁴⁸ hence we find Clough, though "athletics were neither

⁴⁶Ibid., 57.

⁴⁷Booth, H. H. Dixon, 25.

⁴⁸Prothero, Stanley, 51.

his delight nor his vocation," and despite the weak ankles much made of in his obituaries, once actually won the Barby Hill Hare-and-Hounds and was called the "best goaler on record" by William Arnold.⁴⁹

This ostracism was a definite step in the later-to-be-followed direction of the cult of games. At the same time the cult was not in the late 1830's well enough developed in Rugby School that it could not be weathered and overcome. Dixon was easily able to do so partly because of his advanced age and position in the School (he started in 1838, already past sixteen years and a Fifth former). Stanley was able to do so because of his intellectual precocity. Clough, somewhat surprisingly in view of his romantic nature and scholastic reputation, never chose to do so.

Stanley once admitted that if he could play it, he might enjoy cricket. Yet his nearest counterpart in Hughee's fiction, George Arthur, was positively enthusiastic about the game and was already building a cult around it:

"But it's more than a game. It's an institution," said Tom.

"Yes," said Arthur, "the birthright of British boys old and young, as habeas corpus and trial by jury are of British men."

"The discipline and reliance on one another which it teaches is so valuable, I think," went on the master, "it ought to be such an unselfish game. It merges the individual in the eleven; he doesn't play that he may win, but that his side may."⁵⁰

The spirit of athleticism was abhorrent to Arnold; no part of his writings suggests that he considered games an essential part of a child's education and they formed no part of his policy at Rugby. That "the temperament of an

⁴⁹Levy Goldie, Arthur Hugh Clough, 1819-1861, (London: 1938), 17. See also his Obituary, Blackwoods Magazine, (November, 1862), 588.

⁵⁰Hughes, T. E. S., 300.

athlete is not suited to the life of a citizen," would have been as axiomatic to him as it was to Aristotle; Spartan brutality of soul would have been to him the only educational end-product of a school which cultivated games, to the exclusion of all else.

Not only did he not see games as a means of inculcating his moral ideal, but he did nothing to place games on an equality with academic work. He would have disapproved entirely of such a process, seeing it as leading to a lower standard of intellectual effort, a vulgarisation of intellectual labour, to a legitimatising of self-indulgence and a substitution of the latter for self-denial, one of the moral ideas he sought to inculcate. He objected to the placing of merely athletic boys like Tom Brown into positions of command and influence, because by his standards they were all-to-frequently unfit to exercise either.

All this is not to say that Arnold did not approve of games as the means to healthy physical exercise. He did so, enjoyed such exercise himself, especially swimming and walking, and encouraged his boys to indulge in all forms of bodily cultivation with the same enthusiasm which he himself displayed. He frequently watched team battles of football and cricket in a detached sort of way. But seeing them in any other light than as recreation, seeing them as Hughes did as a deliberate business, or more, as a quasi-mystical agency for developing character, would only have excited his disgust.

Arnold's naive view of sport as a form of bodily exercise and healthy recreation was after his death made the excuse for an over-emphasis upon school athletics, in which Hughes played a prominent part and the lengths of which the Headmaster would never have tolerated. It never occurred to him that an obtuse posterity would twist his delight in sheer physical vigour into the strange

doctrine that proficiency in games was a test of manliness and moral virtue. Yet his very stress upon the morality of self-sacrifice could so easily be applied by unsubtle minds to playing a game for the sake of one's companions rather than for oneself. That it was so only makes the most enthusiastic admirer of Arnold wish that he had not been so hopelessly blind to the dangers of athleticism which his innocent playing of games could lead to. One example of his naivete and blindness will suffice. After he had been at Rugby for a decade, Arnold ought to get some form of Royal recognition for the School in order to raise still further its reputation. He eventually secured the visit of the Dowager Queen Adelaide, widow of William IV, in October, 1839. The institution she most wished to see was a game of football which Arnold was pleased to order for her. It did not occur to him that this was merely raising the athletic reputation of the school, rather than its moral or academic tone.⁵¹

Unwittingly he had done two things at Rugby in his own lifetime which contributed much to the spirit of athleticism, that driving force of the newly expanding Public School system of the 1850's and 1860's. He had sown the seeds of team spirit which led to solidarity in defence of class and Empire in the outside world, an obvious social need in mid and late Victorian England but yet the very opposite of his conception of self-sacrifice; he had provided the spur which indirectly led to the putting of school sports on a properly organised basis and to the cult of athleticism. Many Arnoldian disciples, both pupils and fellow masters, took the seeds of both of these elements of athleticism and planted them in the new Public Schools being founded in mid-century. One

⁵¹Wymer, Arnold, 181. The game was still played in the old chaotic fashion and hardly represented athleticism; 75 members of Schoolhouse played 218 of the rest of the school; Schoolhouse won and Hughes scored the 2nd goal.

such, George Cotton,⁵² an assistant master at Rugby from 1837 to 1842, became the first Headmaster of Marlborough from 1852 to 1858; there he deliberately used organised games to discipline a rebellious mob of schoolboys and to build up a loyal and moral community. It is significant that Hughes used Cotton as the model for the highly-lauded young master in his novel. The trend towards organisation which we have already noted in Rugby led to the extinction of the old chaotic games as rules were codified from the 1850's onwards. The rules of Rugby's peculiar form of football were first drawn up in September, 1846, by a special *levée*, rather untypically (but ironically in view of Arnold's attitude towards games) some time before those of many other schools. These rules were thought important enough to warrant publication in booklet form shortly thereafter.⁵³ Another regulative element had also entered Rugby by about 1847, a football kit of multi-coloured jerseys and velvet caps was reported as being worn there by many boys.⁵⁴

To imply that the manifestations of these phenomena were anything other than part of the post-Arnoldian development in athleticism in Public Schools is

⁵²George Cotton (1813-1866) while at Rugby became engaged to Arnold's eldest daughter but fished her in 1842; created Bishop of Calcutta, 1858, and drowned in the Hooghly, 1866. Other spreaders of Arnold's influence were: James Prince Lee (1804-1869), Assistant Master at Rugby, 1830-1838; Headmaster of King Edward's School, Birmingham, 1838-1848; Bishop of Manchester till his death; Bonamy Price (1807-1888), occasional pupil at Laleham, 1825-29; Assistant Master at Rugby, 1832-50; Chair of Political Economy at Oxford, 1868, till his death; Charles John Vaughan (1816-1897), pupil at Rugby, 1829-34; Headmaster of Harrow, 1845-59; Master of Temple, 1869-79; helped to found University of Cardiff, 1883, and its President, 1894. (See various entries in D. H. E.)

⁵³See The Laws of Football, as Played at Rugby School, (Rugby: Croseley and Billington: 1846). (An Old Rugbaean, Recollections of Rugby, (London: 1848), 133).

⁵⁴See Old Rugbaean, Recollections, 134. This interesting little monograph, researched about 1847, contains an historical account of so much of what Hughes described in print a decade later, that it leads one to wonder if Hughes used it as a source book for his novel.

therefore to be anachronistic. When Hughes does this in his novel he is merely reading back into his own school-days in the Rugby of the 1830's, that cult of games which was rearing its ugly head, in answer to the needs of that generation succeeding Arnold's, when Hughes was writing the novel in 1856-57. To mix the spirit of athleticism with a lack of one of its constituent parts, that is organisation, only makes the novel unrealistic to the historian.

But Hughes's greater offence is that, because he himself excelled at sport and little else,⁵⁵ because he was overfond of games, he sought to justify his predilection by injecting high moral purpose into it. We have seen how he was as much responsible for the projection of the Arnoldian reputation after 1857 as any other writer. In unconsciously meeting a mid-Victorian social need, he succeeded in posthumously providing Arnold with a highly unsuitable set of instruments with which others tried to achieve the Headmaster's moral ideals for him, and in the process, he once more cheapened those ideals. Games could lead, and did, to the glorification of mere strength and proficiency in the game itself, rather than in the larger issue of Christian morality which Arnold would have desired; they might teach self-sacrifice and loyalty, but to the team, the upper-middle class, the Empire, rather than to Christ; they did not supply any lucid appreciation of the ends for which they were merely the means.

Not only in this view was Arnold's stature reduced to that of a glorified cricket captain, but his purposes hardly got beyond what was entailed in playing the game. Hughes wrote in the novel:

"And then the Captain of the eleven!" said the master, "what a poet is his in our School-world!"

⁵⁵Hughes captained the first Rugby Cricket XI to play at Lords in 1840. (Wymer, Arnold, 174).

almost as hard as the Doctor's; requiring skill, and gentleness and firmness, and I know not what other rare qualities."⁵⁶

The irony is that the athleticism in which the novel gloried and which it helped propagate as Arnold's own, was later still pushed by an expanding industrial and imperialistically motivated nation too far even for Hughes. His attacks on the Public School over-emphasis on games later in his life were too tardy. He had nourished the seed, which Arnold had unwittingly sown, of practices which, however necessary they were to society, he too basically abhorred.

⁵⁶Hughes, T. E. S., 300.

CHAPTER IV. ARNOLD'S POLICIES AND REFORMS AT RUGBY

I

The specific policies Arnold followed at Rugby, and the reforms he found it necessary to introduce, all had one end in view and were governed by one principle: they were to further and facilitate his desire to inculcate Christian morality into his pupils; they were governed by the traditional English regard for the sacred authority of that which is established.

Christian morality for Arnold, as we have already discussed, consisted in getting a child to distinguish between good and evil, and to make a conscious choice of the former. In practical terms, this meant he had to root out the evil in the school, to identify it as such unequivocally, and to attempt to get rid of it. In a sermon to the School, he pointed to six most prevalent evils amongst them:

- i.) "direct sensual wickedness, such as drunkenness....
- ii.) systematic practice of falsehood,—when all lies were told constantly by the great majority, and tolerated by all.
- iii.) systematic cruelty...the systematic annoyance of the weak and simple, so that a boy's life would be miserable unless he learnt some portion of the coarseness and spirit of persecution which he saw all around him.
- iv.) the spirit of active disobedience,—when all authority was hated...a general pleasure in breaking rules simply because they were rules.
- v.) a general idleness, when everyone did as little as he possibly could, and the whole tone of the school went to cry down any attempt on the part of any boy or more to show anything like diligence or a wish to improve himself.

- vi.) a prevailing spirit of combination in evil and of companionship; by which a boy would regard himself as more bound to his companions in ties of wickedness, than to God or his neighbour in any tie of good....¹

His policies therefore aimed particularly at the eradication of these six evils, that is drunkenness, lying, bullying, disobedience, academic laziness, and solidarity in opposition to the masters. His desire in pursuing these policies, to respect the traditional way of doing things made him a conservative and cautious reformer, an evolutionist rather than a revolutionary. In this deference he showed to the established, he was almost at one with many of his pupils; as one of them, Hughes, wrote:

For there are no such bigoted holders by established forms and customs, be they ever so foolish or meaningless, as English school-boys...We looked upon every trumpery little custom and habit which had obtained in the School as though it had been a law of the Medes and Persians, and regarded any infringement or variation of it as a sort of sacrilege.²

But Arnold differed from most of his pupils in that he did not wish to see the preservation of all customs, willy-nilly. Somewhat surprisingly, Hughes himself recognised this difference, that some exercise of discrimination was necessary, in the novel:

And the Doctor, than whom no man or boy had a stronger liking for old school customs which were good and sensible, had, as has already been hinted, come into most decided collision with several which were neither one nor the other. And as old Brooke had said, when he came into collision with boys or customs, there was nothing for them but to give in or take themselves off....³

¹Arnold, Sermons, V, 66-67, (Sermon VI, "Christian Schools," Rugby Chapel, 30/VIII/1840).

²Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 120.

³Ibid.

In fact Arnold went so far as to attack the whole concept of clinging to bad customs in a sermon:

...at no place, or time of life, are people so much the slaves of custom, as boys at school. If a thing has been an old practice, be it ever so mischievous, ever so unworthy, it is continued without scruple; if a thing is new, be it ever so useful and ever so excellent, it is apt to be regarded as a grievance. The question which boys seem to ask, is not, What ought to be and what may the school become, if we do our duty?—but What have we been used to, and is the school as good as it was formerly? So, looking backward instead of looking forward...we are sure never to grow better, because we lose the wish to become better: and the growth of goodness will never come....⁴

Yet Arnold had the good sense not to press this line of thought. He realised that the respect for established traditions, which he at least shared with his pupils, was too valuable a means of rapport to jettison altogether; so he used it as a firm foundation on which to carry out reforms at Rugby. He retained most of the internal structure of the School and the general nature of its organisation and discipline, especially the praepositorial system and compuleory chapel; he preserved almost intact the apparatus of academic study. Yet upon these three institutions he impressed the motivation of morality and thereby re-invigorated them. The customs of boy life he divided into good and bad. Modern ethical opinion might not always agree with his divisions; fagging was designated as good once it had been regularised to serve moral ends and so was fighting, even though it often came near to bullying in practice; poaching fish and small game, trespassing on local private land, and keeping beagles for hunting were all designated as unmitigatedly evil. The School was weeded of such bad customs, though Arnold was not always successful in getting rid of

⁴Arnold, Sermons, II, 87, (Sermon XII, Rugby Chapel, 1829-32).

them; sometimes such evil traditions were replaced by others little better. At his death some of the worst features of the Public School system still remained.

At all times he sought to avoid a violent revolution, even one for the better, because he realised that to lose the sympathy of the boys in reform would be fatal; schoolboy mutinies were by no means unknown within living memory.⁵ His reforms had, of necessity therefore, to be carried out conservatively and unobtrusively. It is all credit to Hughes that he saw his Headmaster's purposes in this light; though it was a revelation that came to Tom Brown only at the end of the novel. The young master told him:

...fag as you were, you would have shouted with the whole school against putting down old customs. And that's the way all the Doctor's reforms have been carried out when he has been left to himself—quietly and naturally, putting a good thing in the place of a bad, and letting the bad die out; no wavering and no hurry—the best thing that could be done for the time being, and patience for the rest.⁶

It is the purpose of this chapter to examine the various established institutions at Rugby which Arnold reformed, with a view to discovering whether Hughes reflected them in the novel as invigorated or merely pre-Arnoldian. Exception only will be made to Arnold's extensive curriculum reforms, which get no treatment in the novel at all, due to Hughes's marked anti-intellectual bent; where academic studies are mentioned in the novel they represent pre-Arnoldian practice and curriculum. An examination of schoolboy customs will also be made, in this process, with the same ends in view.

⁵A mutiny at Winchester, Arnold's old school in 1818, was so severe that troops with bayonets fixed had to break the barricades and bring the schoolboys to order. (Curtis, History, 165).

⁶Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 301.

II

The first pre-requisite in an institution which purports to provide an education in christian morality is law and order. Rugby School on Arnold's arrival was manifestly a place of tyranny and chaos. It was not merely a tyranny of the biggest and strongest boys, whether they be the oldest or not, over the mass of smaller and frequently younger, but it was also a tyranny of masters, whose only recourse to keep some semblance of order over all the boys, was to flogging and physical terror. Arnold realised that no system of christian morality could survive if it were imposed from above by the staff; after all had not East said that masters and schoolboys always would be enemies? Though this last was a state of affairs which schoolboy opinion had erected into the status of established custom and which Arnold deliberately tried to bring to an end, he did not see that even a re-invigorated system of staff control was the answer to his problem of bringing law and order to the school. Instead, he believed that a far better method than the discipline of masters was the example of other schoolfellows; in short he saw that his answer lay in a system of schoolboy self-government. He wrote in 1829:

If the King of Prussia were as sincere a lover of liberty as I am, he would give his people a constitution—for my desire is to teach my boys to govern themselves—a far better thing than to govern them well myself.⁷

But who amongst the whole schoolboy body was to carry out this task of self-government? Arnold answered this question in an article he wrote for a learned journal:

⁷Quoted by Briggs, Victorian People, 165. No source given, or found.

It would be absurd to say that any school has as yet fully solved this problem. I am convinced, however, that, in the peculiar relation of the highest form to the rest of the boys, such as it exists in our great public schools, there is to be found the best means of answering it. This relation requires in many respects to be improved in character; some of its features should be softened, others elevated; but here and here only, is the engine which can affect the end desired.⁸

That "engine" was of course the Sixth Form and that class of boys which Arnold intended to give superiority over the rest were its constituent prefects or praepositors, with whose help rather than singlehandedly, he realised any improvement in moral standards in the School would be more easily accomplished. Nothing better illustrates the way he made an old form serve a new purpose. Arnold did not invent the praepositorial system; it was one which in some schools dated back to late mediaeval times,⁹ but had only been introduced by Dr. James at Rugby in the comparatively recent 1780's. These pre-Arnoldian praepositors had undefined privileges and plenty of power, but no sense of responsibility was expected of them in return; they could fag their inferiors or flog those who irritated them, and did both unmercifully. Furthermore, there were no strict rules as to whom the praepositors should be, as membership of the Sixth form did not bring the prefectorial privilege automatically.

Arnold regularised the whole system. He clearly indicated that only

⁸Thomas Arnold, "The Discipline of Public Schools, Quarterly Journal of Education, IX (July, 1835), (Miscellaneous Works, 360).

⁹In the foundation of Winchester, Arnold's old school, the Statutes of William of Wykeham (1337) provided that each dormitory have three senior boys to watch the younger and to report offenders to the masters. Regular duties were assigned to praepositors and monitors at Eton from the 16th century, and Dean Colet's Statutes for St. Pauls (1674) made provision for form presidents. Manchester Grammar School has always had prefects since its foundation, (1515). (Curtis, History, 167n).

certain pupils in the School could become praepositores by electing, as early as September, 1828; every member of the Sixth form to that position; henceforth no boy who was not fit to be a praepositor could get into the Sixth form, and Arnold alone decided who was fit for the office. His criterion of fitness was a boy's ability to bear the new responsibilities with which he invested praepositorehips. Again the idea of giving the older pupils responsibility did not originate with him. Both Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster in the early nineteenth century had revolutionised monitorial systems, respectively named after them, and used them in elementary education to good effect; but to these two men they were primarily labour-saving devices, whereas Arnold was feeling his way towards some system of self-government.

The new responsibilities he brought in for praepositores involved a set of duties the carrying out of which gave them much power. Their duties were broadly to assume what had formerly been the masters' function of persuading and disciplining the younger boys, into conformity with the Headmaster's wishes. Specifically they had to see that Arnold's newly drawn up school rules were strictly observed; they had to put a stop to bullying and to keep order; they had to watch especially for boys smoking and drinking spirits, and report any sexual, especially homosexual, offences straightway to Arnold; they were to meet with the Headmaster several times a term to discuss problems and possible reforms; and lastly they were to behave in an exemplary fashion at all times. Their powers were considerable but not entirely arbitrary. They could punish all boys below the Fifth form either corporally or by means of impositions like writing "lines" or passages from the Classics, or extra fagging. They were forbidden to deal with the Fifth form but had to send them to Arnold for punishment; but they could deal (amongst themselves) with offences within their own

body, unless they were very grave.

It will be clear from the foregoing that the praepositors had to take many decisions themselves, in accordance with Arnold's aim of self-government. He gave them the authority so to act providing they did not abuse that authority, and as abuses, Arnold considered any official protests they might make to him as a body or anything like a rebellion against him; in effect they had to carry out his decisions whether they agreed with them or not. Similarly, they were not to organise a conspiracy against the rest of the school, but were to govern as disinterestedly as possible. The old independent praepositorial system had been too much the symbol of division between Headmaster and boy; Arnold intended it to be the link. This tremendous authority which he entrusted to these young Gods demanded a complete loyalty to his ideals and a readiness to spread them abroad. Therefore the crux of his system lay in his ability to instil into his praepositors this loyalty and readiness. If he could not trust them, his authority could not be delegated and his task hopeless. He said in one farewell address:

When I have the confidences of the Sixth, there is
no post in England which I would exchange for this;
but if they do not support me, I must go.¹⁰

It was in return for responsibly and authoritatively carrying out his duties and exercising his considerable powers, that the praepositor received his many privileges, not the least of which were the right to fag any boy below the Fifth (of which more later) and that of constant close communion with his Headmaster.

In fact, Arnold's scheme for governing and moralizing the school through

¹⁰Stanley, Life, I, 124.

his Sixth form could only be successful if he kept close contact with its members, and it was at this point that his method transcended mere delegation of power and became one of personal influence. Though as their form master he saw them all daily, he realised that such pedagogical contact, however informal, was not adequate. So he set aside one evening per week to entertain four praepositors to a dinner at which all manner of topics were discussed. This was how many of Arnold's favourite pupils became close friends of the family; one such, Clough, commented in a letter (5/V/1836):

I love Arnold, and Mrs. A., and the children very much...Arnold had been very kind to me and asked me to dinner to meet Mrs. Stanley, and I had shaken hands with his sister, though no more, and I had talked with Lady Munro....¹¹

He frequently invited them to his cottage in the Lakes after 1833; not merely favourites like Clough and Stanley, but recently expelled praepositors like Hughes's brother George in 1839. Arnold explained the advantages of Fox How in these terms:

I find Westmoreland very convenient in giving me an opportunity of having some of the VIth form with me in the holidays: not of course to read but to refresh their health when they get knocked up by work, and to show them the mountains and dales; a great point in education....¹²

Always, he treated his praepositors as equals and as young gentlemen, thus raising their status in the school and their own self-respect. He also arranged for the Sixth form Common Room to be furnished decently and for the old chaotic levies to be turned into intelligent and constructive debates, with all the

¹¹Clough, Correspondence, I, 45-46 (Letter 28, to J. N. Simpkinson, (5/V/1836). "Mrs. Stanley" was of course Lady Augusta Stanley, mother of Arthur Penrhyn.

¹²Quoted by Wymer, Arnold, 151. No source given.

rules of a Debating Society, like those in the Universities.

Being a praepositor was therefore an education in itself, an extension of that moral education offered to those lower down the School. Arnold wrote in advocacy of his system:

This governing part of the school, thus invested with great responsibility, treated by the masters with great confidence and consideration, and being constantly in direct communication with the Headmaster and receiving their instruction almost exclusively from him, learn to feel a corresponding self-respect in the best sense of the term. They look upon themselves as answerable for the character of the school; and by the natural effect of their position acquire a manliness of mind and habits of conduct infinitely superior....¹³

By 1830, using these methods, Arnold already had the support of the Sixth form. He had created what he called "a real aristocracy, a government of the most worthy"¹⁴ with an esprit-de-corps which raised the whole tone of the school from that of a beer-garden to that of an ideal commonwealth. So successful was this reconceived praepositorial system that it spread to many other Public Schools under the Arnoldian influence. It is no exaggeration to say that there is hardly a school in England today, be it Public, Grammar, Technical or Secondary Modern, that does not have such a system of pupil self-government.

The great value of Hughes's novel is that it helps us understand in a more graphic fashion than Stanley's biography, the methods by which Arnold converted the old praepositional system into a re-invigorated institution. That Hughes only had a demeaned version of Arnold's ends, that he did not

¹³ Arnold, Quarterly Journal of Education, (Miscellaneous Works, 362).

¹⁴ Ibid., 362.

really know why the praepositorial system was invigorated, detracts little from his account.

The praepositorial system which existed on Tom Brown's arrival at Rugby, though outwardly reflecting Arnold's reforms, was as yet only shaky in its allegiance to the Headmaster and retained something of the spirit of the pre-Arnoldian system. The very first mention of the praepositors in the novel well illustrates this feeling of compromised values; the incident was Tom's first calling over, the one prior to the football match:

The master mounted into the high desk by the door, and one of the praepositors of the week stood by him on the steps, the other three marching up and down the middle of the school with their canes, calling out "Silence, silence!" The sixth form stood close by the door on the left, some thirty in number, mostly great big grown men... Then the praepositor who stands by the master calls out the names... Some of the sixth stop at the door to turn the whole string of boys into the close; it is a great match-day and every boy in the school... must be there. The rest of the sixth go forwards into the closs, to see that no one escapes by any of the side gates... The master of the week being short-sighted, and the praepositors of the week small and not well up to their work, the lower school boys (were)... pelting one another vigorously with acorns, which fly about in all directions. The small praepositors dash in every now and then, and generally chastise some quiet, timid boy who is equally afraid of acorns and canes, while the principal performers get dextersously out of the way...¹⁵

All the elements of the system after Arnold's reforms are in evidence on the surface: the tremendous authority wielded by, and respect demanded for, the Sixth form gathered collectively as a body; the praepositors of the week performing what had formerly been the duties of the masters, that is, the reading of the roll-call and the ensuring of silence and orderliness in the process.

¹⁵Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 100.

Yet beneath this veneer, pre-Arnoldian elements remain. The Sixth was after all using quite illegally the authority vested in its members by Arnold in forcing the lower school to play football; games were not compulsory for any pupil, and were not even a part of the curriculum. The praepositors of the week appeared to be punishing arbitrarily and indiscriminately with their canes, a situation which Hughes seemed to condone; worse still, he implied that they lashed out because they were small and naturally tyrannical. This conflict in values, which Hughes captured so well, would be typical of the reformed praepositorial system in its infancy.

Even old Brooke, the head praepositor of Schoolhouse and winner of the Balliol Scholarship, when Tom entered the school, had a nostalgic hankering for the days before Arnold arrived, which he presumably could remember only too well. In a speech to the boys urging support for the Headmaster's reforms, he could not resist commenting in a most un-Arnoldian manner, "You all know that I'm not the fellow to back a master through thick and thin."¹⁶ Nevertheless he came out firmly behind Arnold's reforming policies in the School.

Later, however, we read of a bad time coming after the strong rule of old Brooke, in which the Fifth form's usurpation of privileges can only indicate that the Sixth were too weak to do or to have anything done about it. Indeed they appeared to be lacking in other respects too; take the praepositor young Brooke's action over Tom's fight with Slogger Williams:

"The Doctor! the Doctor!" shouts some small boy who catches sight of him, and the ring (of spectators) melts away in a few seconds...Young Brooke alone remains on the ground by the time the Doctor gets there...

¹⁶Ibid., 118.

"Hah! Brooke. I am surprised to see you here. Don't you know that I expect the sixth to stop fighting?"

"Yes, sir, generally. But I thought you wished us to exercise discretion in the matter too—not to interfere too soon."

"But they have been fighting this half-hour and more," said the Doctor...as he stopped at the turret door, "this fight is not to go on—you'll see to that. And I expect you to stop all fights in the future at once."¹⁷

These were but the growing pains of the reformed praepositorial system. Hughee in effect was realistically reflecting something that Arnold forgot when trying to make his system of self-government work. This was the maxim that "boys will be boys." Not even his influence could make them eschew their enjoyment of a good fight or make them over-eager to tell on each other. Those with whom he had the greatest success, turned out to be the sort of prigs which his whole system of education was sometimes vilified for encouraging. The constant presence of this problem depressed Arnold needlessly.

By the end of the novel, the whole Sixth form had been moulded (rather too easily, one suspects) into the instrument Arnold desired them to be, as was largely the situation in real life Rugby by 1840. At their head was an entirely unpriggish Tom Brown, "grown into a young man nineteen years old, a praepositor and captain of the eleven."¹⁸ So great at this stage in the novel was Arnold's trust in this Sixth, that he had departed for the Lakes and left the whole school in their care, especially in the capable and responsible hands of his head praepositor, Tom, for the duration of the end-of-term cricket match. After bearing his responsibility honourably and without mishap, Tom left the

¹⁷Ibid., 254-56.

¹⁸Ibid., 298.

School for the even greater responsibilities of adult life in the outside world.

Hughes's description of the mechanics of Arnold's re-invigorated system of schoolboy self-government was entirely realistic, especially in the transfer from the old ways to the new. Only the ends which it was supposed to serve have been demeaned; and lack of awareness of this act of vulgarisation on Hughes's part is what renders Tom Brown's entry into the Sixth form somewhat unrealistic in the first place.

III

A Rugby praepositor had the privilege to fag (or use as a servant) any boy in the school below the level of the Fifth form and he had the power to flog the same as punishment for transgression; this privilege and this power were guaranteed to him by Arnold. Fagging and flogging were two more established institutions at Rugby when Arnold arrived, which he chose not to abolish, but merely to use as the basis for reform.

Hughes never doubted that his Headmaster was right in the confidence he placed in these two institutions. If there was any truth in the frequently made accusations that fagging and flogging were brutal and degrading, Hughes hoped that it would be largely ameliorated by the innate traditionalism and conservatism of the English schoolboy. Most junior Rugbyans accepted flogging as a time-honoured punishment, (which they probably received at home anyway) without questioning its wisdom and if they felt varying amounts of indignity at playing the part of valet-cum-house-maid to the praepositors, they knew that they could expect exactly the same privilege if they ever reached the Sixth. Hence, Hughes in this respect, reflected the views of the typical schoolboy.

The custom of fagging was in a chaotic state when Arnold arrived at Rugby.

In the "lawless tyranny of physical strength" it was not clearly laid down who could fag whom. It was by no means unknown for the small or academically-inclined Sixth former not to be able to obtain a fag because he lacked the means of physical coercion, whereas most of the Fifth form, his juniors, would be doing so precisely because they had the physical power with which to coerce juniors. It was also not laid down what constituted the duties of a fag and how long he could be fagged. The result was that fagging before Arnold's day was far more rigorous than after his reforms. The poor junior might be expected to fag when he ought to be sleeping; for instance he might be ordered to retrieve highly illegal night lines on the River Avon for his master in the early hours of the morning, risking not only prosecution by the owner of the Avon fishing rights, but also punishment by a master for being out of school bounds, quite apart from the detriment to his general health.

Again, Arnold regularised the whole system. He laid it down that only the Sixth could fag others and only boys below the Fifth form could be fagged. Any Fifth former or lower boy caught fagging a fellow, an act which would clearly involve physical coercion, was to be taken to the Headmaster for punishment, usually expulsion from the school. Hughes in fact devotes a whole chapter¹⁹ to a fag rebellion led by Tom and East against a group of Fifth formers, led by the bully Flashman, who insisted on illegally fagging them. The revolt was successful and this Fifth form usurpation of praepositorial privilege ceased, though Flashman took personal revenge by bullying Tom and the Sixth fagged the rebels all the harder because they thought success had made them too arrogant;

¹⁹Hughes, *T. E. S.*, (1958), Part I, Chapter VIII, "The War of Independence," 145-167.

neither quite the outcome Arnold would have liked to have seen.

The Headmaster also defined a fag's duties as primarily domestic; the junior had for instance to provide his praepositor with hot water for washing and ehaving in the mornings, to prepare his breakfast toast and coffee, and other snacks, to dust his study out, to run errands and take messagee; in fact, to perform any odd jobs his master could find him. He could be fagged to retrieve balls at cricket or fives; but for the junior boy to be fagged to keep goal at football, as they frequently were under Arnold on wintry afternoons or half-holidays, were strictly illegal, if often tolerated. It will be seen from the foregoing that the quicker one made the Fifth form, the quicker one got out of fagging; Stanley did so after one year in the school and George Arthur did so in the novel after two.²⁰

Night fagging, or being on duty outside a praepositor's study from after dinner until he decided to go to bed, was legal in Arnold's early days at the school, but we are told by a clearly relieved Clough in a letter (23/IX/1836), that it had been "at last abolished, totally and finally, excepting only a quarter of an hour at the beginning."²¹ This was typical of an Arnoldian reforming compromise.

Arnold had difficulty abolishing another form of fagging, part of a very old tradition at Rugby and very dear to the Sixth form; this was known as "island fagging." The island was a small knoll of trees in the middle of the school close, surrounded by a moat, which for many generations had been cultivated by fag-labour to produce flowers for the Sixth to present at Speech Day.

²⁰Ibid., 261.

²¹Clough, Correspondence, I, 52, (Letter 33, to J. N. Simpkinson, 23/IX/1836).

Hughes accurately described in his novel this onerous task and how it was swept away:

'Every place and thing one sees here reminds one of some wise act of his,' went on the master. 'This island now—you remember the time, Brown, when it was laid out in small gardens, and cultivated by frost-bitten fags in February and March?'

'Of course I do,' said Tom; 'didn't I hate spending two hours in the afternoon grubbing in the tough dirt with the stump of a fives-bat?...'

'...but it was always leading to fights with the townspeople; and then the stealing flowers out of all the gardens in Rugby for the Easter show was abominable.'

'Well, so it was,' said Tom, looking down, 'but we fags could not help ourselves. But what hae that to do with the Doctor's ruling?'

'what brought island-fagging to an end?'

'Why, the Easter Speeches were put off till Midsummer,' said Tom, 'and the Sixth had the gymnastic poles put up here.'...

'Who changed the time of the speeches and put the idea of gymnastic poles into the heads of their worships the Sixth form?'

'The Doctor, I suppose,' said Tom.²²

Hughes illustrates well Arnold's policy of tactful reform and substitution of a good custom for a bad one. He later, according to Clough,²³ managed to get the island gymnasium opened for the use of the lower school as well as the Sixth, a remarkably radical reform for such a school as Rugby.

The questions a present-day reader of the novel may posit are twofold: what end did the eervile institution of fagging serve in Arnold's system of education and hence, why did he preserve and regulate it at Rugby.

The Headmaster justified his action in several ways. Firstly, it regularised a situation that had always existed in the school, a dire need when

²²Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 301. See *An Old Rugbyean, Recollections*, 116-118, for a contemporary description of island fagging.

²³Clough, *Correspondence*, I, 47, (Letter 28, to J. N. Simpkinson, 5/V/1836).

faced with the chaos of 1828; he wrote:

If you have two or three hundred boys living with one another as a distinct society, there will be some to command, as in all societies, and others to obey: the only difference is that... (fagging) first of all puts the power into the best hands; and secondly, by recognising it as legal, is far better able to limit its exercise and prevent its abuses, than it would be if the whole were a mere irregular domination of the stronger over the weaker.²⁴

Regularised fagging existed at Rugby,

for the sake of securing the advantages of regular government amongst the boys themselves, thus avoiding the evils of anarchy... like all other government, it has often been abused and requires to be carefully watched....²⁵

Fagging was therefore an adjunct to the praefectorial system in the civilizing and moralising of the school. It taught obedience towards legalised authority:

I am not one of those who think it an evil that younger or less manly boys should be subject legally to those more advanced in age and character. Such subjection is not degrading, for it is rendered not to an arbitrary, but to a real superiority; it is shown to a power exercised in the main not for its own good, but for that of society as a whole.²⁶

Though enhancing the stature of the praepositor, fagging had therefore nothing to do with real servility. In addition it inculcated other virtues:

the degree and kind of obedience enforced under a well regulated system of fagging is beneficial to those who pay it. A strict system is not therefore a cruel one; and the discipline to which boys are thus subjected, and the quickness,

²⁴Arnold, Quarterly Journal of Education, (Miscellaneous Works, 364).

²⁵Ibid., 360.

²⁶Ibid., 362.

handiness, thoughtfulness and punctuality, which they learn from some of the services required of them, are no despicable part of education.²⁷

Though Hughes nowhere in his book offered such a detailed apologia for fagging, he obviously approved in principle of the institution once it has been regulated and legalised. This was in spite of the fact that Tom Brown and East had considerable first-hand experience of extra-legal fagging, and abuse all too easily arising in such a system in its early days. By the time of Arnold's death however, the legalised system of fagging had passed out of its teething troubles, according to one Rugbaean, George Kelly, whose lauding of the institution was all the more convincing in that he never made the Sixth form and thus never experienced the privilege of fagging others.²⁸

Arnold was convinced that his system of legalised fagging, under the control of his praepositors, was the best safeguard so far devised against bullying in a Public School. He saw bullying largely as the result of overgrown boys, in the Fifth form and lower, trying to exert an authority they did not possess; in short it was an abuse of the fagging system rather than the result of it. He wrote:

It is important to distinguish such acts of oppression as belong properly to the system of fagging, from such as arise merely from superior physical force, and consequently exist...more in those schools where there is no legal fagging...the tyranny practiced ...at bedtime, tossing the blanket, tying toes, bolstering, etc.,...are most odious practices, but what

²⁷Ibid., 361.

²⁸See George Kelly, School Experiences of a Fag, (London: 1854). Kelly is stated by W. H. D. Rouse (History of Rugby School, New York: 1898) to have entered Rugby in 1830. Yet the School Register records his entry as February, 1844. (See Bamford, Educational Review, X, No. 1, 28.) It should be added that Kelly sounds a somewhat tough, insensitive little boy from his descriptions of Rugby.

are they to do with fagging? I have known them exist in Private Schools, where there was no fagging, to a degree of intolerable cruelty...the boys who delight in this petty tyranny are very rarely to be found...amongst those who have raised themselves to the highest rank...(they are those boys) who, never rising high in the school, are by the system of fagging, and by that only, restrained from abusing their size and strength in tyranny. Other abuses...such as toasting, lighting fires,... arise so far from a system, when ill-regulated, allows a certain well defined class of boys to exact services which ought to be exacted by the Sixth...the government of boys, like every other government, requires to be watched, or it will surely be guilty of abuses.²⁹

Arnold, in this last passage showed a wide knowledge of the range of a bully's activities, a knowledge he presumably gained from his own schooldays at Winchester, and one which would have been equally applicable to Rugby. He denounced such activities from his pulpit:

Nothing more surely brutalizes anyone, than the allowing himself to find pleasure in the pain and annoyances of others. It degrades and brutalizes too those who stand by and laugh at annoyance so inflicted, instead of regarding it with indignation and disgust.³⁰

Yet by 1840, he clearly thought that his system of praepositors and legalised fagging had somewhat diminished bullying for he felt able to say of it, "this evil is one which I am happy to believe is neither general amongst us."³¹ If Hughes is to be credited at all, Arnold had considerably over-estimated the success of his system.

²⁹Arnold, Quarterly Journal of Education, (Miscellaneous Works, 363).

³⁰Arnold, Sermons, V, 71, (Sermon VI, "Christian Schools," Rugby Chapel, 30/III/1840).

³¹Ibid.

Tom Brown's lower-school life was punctuated with frequent confrontations with the bully. Notable were the tossing of new boys in a blanket, and forcing them to drink salt water and sing, or the fagging of those boys who tried to pray, the latter of which in the novel is based on fact.³² Another form of bullying was the practice of "smoking-out." In order to diminish bullying Arnold had insisted on the absolute sanctity of the study, whether it be a praepositor's or the most junior boy's; even a master had to knock before entering. In order to get into a younger boy's study, bullies would, according to Hughes, put lighted strips of paper under the door. According to the anonymous author of Recollections of Rugby, smoking out was far worse than Hughes's description and included burning holes in study doors with red hot poker and the pouring of water down the chimney to fill the room with smoke and ashes.³³

The most brutal single incident of bullying mentioned in the novel was the roasting (was it a slip of memory for Arnold to call it in his sermon "toasting?") of Tom before the fireplace by the lately defeated illegal fag-master, Flashman, for refusing to sell to the Fifth former an equally illegal lottery ticket. Though Tom refused to give up his ticket to the bully, his trousers were completely burned through and the backs of his legs were badly scorched, and he had to spend a couple of days in the sick-room.

The lessons drawn from the incident by Hughes were perverse to say the

³²Two boys were notable for their religious zeal in Arnoldian Rugby and both became Evangelical clergymen in later life: Spencer Thornton who entered in 1828 and influenced as many as 30 boys on one occasion and attended both the School Chapel and the Parish Church; Henry Watson Fox who lived a lonely frustrated life in the School. (Bamford, Educational Review, X, No. 1, 20, and Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 201).

³³An Old Rugbaean, Recollections, 155-56.

least. Firstly:

Tom...won second prize in the lottery, some thirty shillings, which he and East contrived to spend in about three days....³⁴

Hence the implication that Tom's resistance and roasting paid off. Secondly, the school regarded Flashman with complete disgust when they heard of the roasting. Lastly, the matron who treated Tom's legs was met with silence when she enquired what had happened and a praeceptor, Morgan, who knew of the incident, was begged by Tom not to report it to Arnold; clearly, that nobody "blabbed" was intended by Hughes as the ultimate moral lesson provided by the incident. The strangest sequel however concerned Arnold. Though the matron reported Tom's severe burns to him he made no effort to clear up their cause, an action so uncharacteristic and irresponsible for the Headmaster, as to be virtually unbelievable; especially when it was later implied when he expelled Flashman, that he had full knowledge of the incident.

Was Hughes guilty of melodramatisation in his description of the roasting of Tom? His biographers are of the opinion that the incident must have been exceptional in real-life Rugby, because Hughes never mentioned anything so extreme in any of his non-fictional writings.³⁵ Yet, if Hughes exaggerated this one incident, there is little doubt that he was being realistic in his reflection of the preponderance and general level of bullying at Rugby. As T. W. Bamford has shown, of the sixteen accounts (excluding Hughes's novel) left by pupils in the school under Arnold, all of whom paint a grim picture of life at Arnoldian Rugby, twelve are in agreement with Hughes that bullying was rampant in one

³⁴Hughes, T. B. S., (1958), 168.

³⁵Mack and Armytage, Hughes, 36.

form or another.³⁶ Arnold was either deluded or over-optimistic about the success of his disciplinarian systems.

IV

From serious moral offences to minor infractions of the school rules, all were met by means of the operation of another of Arnold's reformed and regularised institutions: a graduated system of punishments. Of the latter, flogging was retained, somewhat surprisingly by so enlightened a reformer as Arnold, but only used as the last resort. It was in fact confined to the most serious moral offences such as cases of bullying, extra-legal fagging, lying, drunkenness and habitual idleness; Arnold did not want it to become ineffectual by arbitrarily over-using it for lesser crimes, as had been the common practice at Rugby prior to his time. In fact, there were three stages on the road to a flogging by the Headmaster: firstly the recalcitrant boy would be summoned to the Master's study, warned by Arnold where his conduct was leading him, and advised what to do for his moral advancement; this was then followed by a period of silence in which the boy would be completely ignored by Arnold in order that he might decide whether to follow the good or evil course; if he then followed Arnold's advice nothing more was said, but if he persisted in evil, he was flogged.³⁷ These safeguards, when put alongside Arnold's aversion to inflicting corporal punishment, rendered a flogging by the Headmaster even less

³⁶Bamford, Educational Review, X, No.1, 18-28. The 17 accounts of Rugby life, including T. B. S., listed by Mr. Bamford were those discovered in November, 1957 when the article was published. This writer has since discovered the existence of one more account not considered by Bamford: Thomas Hughes's correspondence (which presumably would not differ markedly from T. B. S.).

³⁷See Wymer, Arnold, 120.

infrequent than Arnold's reformed statutes would suggest.

In effect however, it was neither Arnold nor his assistants who dealt out most of the corporal punishment in the school, it was the praepositors. This was a power delegated to them as part of Arnold's reform of the praepositorial system, but characteristically, the exercise of this power was strictly regularised. A praepositor could only strike those boys below the Fifth form; he was not allowed to give more than six strokes, with right of appeal on the part of the punished boy if the maximum flogging were administered, while the normal punishment only consisted of three strokes. The size of cane carried by their worshippers the Sixth form was not laid down by Arnold, neither did he seem interested in the problem; as he once opened a letter:

I do not choose to discuss the thickness of Praepositors' sticks, or the greater or less blackness of a boy's bruises....³⁸

According to one victim's account, some praepositorial canes were weighted with lead, and at least one was a "knotted blackthorn stick."³⁹

Even this reformed and regulated system was possessed of elements of brutality and degradation. Why did Arnold not sweep it away altogether? He justified corporal punishment in a sermon:

Suppose we have a nature to deal with, which cannot answer to a system of kindness, but abuses it... thinking that it may follow evil safely... Is punishment a degradation to a nature which is so self-degraded as to be incapable of being moved by anything better?... the real degradation which

³⁸Stanley, *Life*, I, 131, (Letter to an Assistant Master, undated).

³⁹See a letter to the *Northampton Herald*, (26/XII/1835), quoted in Bamford, *Educational Review*, 23-4. The boy who wrote this letter, being an aggrieved victim of a flogging may perhaps have exaggerated.

we should (is) not the fear of punishment...but being insensible to the love of Christ and of goodness; and so being capable of receiving no other motive than the fear of punishment alone.⁴⁰

Living in a state of moral degradation was far worse than the degradation involved in the act of corporal punishment. The latter idea, wrote Arnold,

Originates in the proud notion of personal independence which is neither reasonable nor christian, but essentially barbarian... (it springs) from selfish pride—from an idolatry of personal independence in its modern and popular form. It is simply an impatience with inferiority and submission... (which when) felt by a child towards his parents, or by a pupil towards his instructors, is merely wrong because it is at variance with the truth: there exists a real inferiority in the relation, and it is an error, a fault, a corruption of nature, not to acknowledge it. Punishment, then, inflicted by a parent or master for the purposes of correction, is in no true sense of the word degrading....⁴¹

Flogging was not degrading because small boys were inferior in their sense of morality to adults and could not be degraded any further. Arnold did not object to the use of fear either:

To say that corporal punishment is an appeal to personal fear is a mere abuse of terms. In this sense, all bodily pain or inconvenience is an appeal to personal fear; and a man should be ashamed...to avoid the tooth-ache... To destroy the fear of pain altogether...would be but a doubtful good, until the better elements in our nature were so perfected as wholly to supersede its use. Perfect love of good is the only thing which can profitably cast out all fear. In the meanwhile...(do not) make a boy insensible to bodily pain, but...make him dread moral evil more; so that fear will do its appointed work.⁴²

⁴⁰ Arnold, Sermons, IV, 94, (Sermon X, Rugby Chapel, 13/XI/1836).

⁴¹ Arnold, Quarterly Journal of Education, (Miscellaneous Works, 356).

⁴² Ibid., (Miscellaneous Works, 357).

Again Arnold refers back to his firm belief in original sin, tempered with a Benthamite awareness that the greatest good depends upon a fine balance between pain and pleasure. Boys were in too inferior a state of moral development to do without bodily pain and the fear it engendered. Flogging and the fear of it were evil, but were justified by the greater evil residing in immorality. His final words were:

It is cowardice to fear pain or danger more than neglect of duty, or than commission of evil; but it is useful to fear them when they are but the accompaniments or the consequences of folly and of faults.⁴³

If, as Arnold claimed, the moral principle became stronger with advancing age, then there was no need to flog the oldest boys in the school. This was the reason why Arnold would not permit the flogging of any boy in the Fifth and Sixth forms by praepositor or master, but only those boys below the Fifth. It is clear that if a boy met Arnold's criteria for holding a praepositorship, he would of necessity be morally enough matured as to have passed the need for a flogging. But what about those boys in the Fifth form who were never able to meet these criteria for Sixth form membership yet chose to linger on in the school, or those lower down in the school who never even made the Fifth? They would obviously outgrow the rest of their respective forms, and might prove to be bullies or agents of other forms of immorality and corrupting influences. Flogging was out of the question with such misfits, for their fault was not always deliberate committing of moral crime, but merely academic

⁴³Ibid.

backwardness or moral immaturity.⁴⁴ Arnold's answer to this problem is contained in one of his maxims:

Till a man learns that the first, second and third duty of a schoolmaster is to get rid of unpromising subjects, a great public school will never be what it might be, and what it ought to be.⁴⁵

In short, Arnold saw that the only answer to the problem was a rigorous policy of expulsion. This punishment took two forms: an official, possibly public, expelling always for moral crime, as in the case of George Hughes; or a quiet, gentle expulsion, called "superannuation," always for academic backwardness, as in the case of H. H. Dixon.

Hughes, if realistic on the question of Flashman's expulsion for being drunk and disorderly,⁴⁶ exaggerated the amount of flogging at Rugby in his novel, or else he was merely presenting an accurate picture of flogging in pre-Arnoldian times. Tom Brown is beaten countless times by praepositors and it appears to have little effect upon his naughty activities. He and East were also beaten personally by Arnold for illegally fishing and climbing the school tower to carve their initials on the hands of the clock. These would hardly have come under the category of a moral offence, let alone warranted a magisterial flogging, in real life Rugby. Moreover, Arnold advises them as to their future after the flogging, not before it.

Furthermore the reader even hears of a Sixth former being beaten, by a

⁴⁴It should be remembered that a boy progressed up the school to the Fifth form by means of intellectual attainment; if he was bright like Stanley, it might take less than two years; but if he was dull it could take five years. Entry into the Sixth required more than mere intellectual ability.

⁴⁵Stanley, *Life*, I, 127.

⁴⁶Hughes, *T. B. S.*, (1958), 174.

subordinate member of his own class no less, a situation almost impossible to conceive of under Arnold. As Tom and East leave the Headmaster's study after their flogging,

they met at the door old Holmes, a sturdy, chesry
 praepositor of another house, who goes in to the
 Doctor;....
 the Doctor goes on to Holmee--'you see, I do not
 know anything of the case officially, and if I take
 any notice of it at all, I must publicly expel the
 boy. I don't wish to do that, for I think there
 is some good in him. There's nothing for it but
 a good sound thrashing,'....
 'I understand. Good night, sir.'
 The door closed on Holmes; and the Doctor...explained
 shortly. 'A gross case of bullying. Wharton, the
 head of the House, is a very good fellow, but slight
 and weak, and severe physical pain is the only way
 to deal with such a case; so I have asked Holmes to
 take it up. He is very careful and trustworthy,
 and has plenty of strength. I wish all the Sixth
 had as much. We must have it here, if we are to
 keep order at all.'⁴⁷

Not only was this constitutionally highly improbable in Arnoldian Rugby, it also reflects a debasement of Arnold's stated purposes in flogging. The Headmaster wanted to get rid of innate evil in the boy and impress the good upon him. Hughes implied that the virtue lay rather in being able to take a whipping without blubbing and in surviving it with no hard feelings for the person wielding the cane. In a preaching session following the above story in the novel, Hughes wrote:

Now I don't want any wiseacres to read this book;
 but if they should, of course they will prick up
 their long ears, and howl, or rather bray, at the
 above story. Very good, I don't object; but...
 Holmes called a levy of his House...made a speech
 on the case of bullying in question, and then gave
 the bully 'a good sound thrashing;' and years after-
 wards that boy sought out Holmes, and thanked him,

⁴⁷Ibid., 187-88.

saying it had been the kindest act which had ever been done upon him, and the turning point in his character; and a very good fellow he became, and a credit to his school.⁴⁸

This long-eared wiseacre brays not primarily at Hughes's preaching, his exaggeration, his lack of realism in this instance or his overall patronising air, but at his complete vulgarisation of Arnold's high sense of purpose, (in which flogging played only a very small part), turning it into a glorification of mere physical strength and of a warped sense of fair play.

⁴⁸Ibid.

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS

As an interpretation of Arnold's educational ideals—what he was really trying to accomplish at Rugby—Hughes's novel has tremendous limitations. Arnold was much more than the strong, downright and just leader against petty selfishness and cruelty, which Hughes's one-sided portrait stresses. The novelist underplayed the awesome, subtle and fanatical side of Arnold's complex nature and he completely neglected his intellectual powers, his respect for academic ability in others.

Why was Hughes in communion with only part of his Headmaster's character, and that a very superficial part? Ffitch supplied the key to the answer of this problem:

It is to be feared that Hughes's own boyhood was not spent with the best set at Rugby. There were at this time Lake, C. J. Vaughan, Arthur Stanley, Bradley, Lushington, Matthew and Thomas Arnold, but of these, and of the intense intellectual strain in the Sixth form and the upper schoolhouse set, and of the aims by which they were inspired, Hughes appeared to have little or no knowledge.¹

Hughes, according to this authority, was never an intimate of Arnold; though he idolised him, it must have been from afar. Neither was he a member of that small inner circle bound to Arnold by close spiritual and intellectual ties. This does not mean to say he was not a member of the hierarchy of the School. He managed to get into the Sixth form, was made a school praepositor and became Captain of the school cricket eleven; he was even a member of Arnold's own

¹Ffitch, T. and M. Arnold, 105.

house, the Schoolhouse, and became Captain of its football team, Bigside. But he clearly was never accepted intellectually, even if he was just about academically competent.

This situation is betrayed by a passage in the novel; Tom Brown was musing over what the young master had revealed to him:

It was a new light to him to find that, besides teaching the Sixth, and governing and guiding the whole school, editing classics and writing histories, the great Headmaster had found time in those busy years to watch over the career even of him, Tom Brown, and his particular friends, and, no doubt, of fifty other boys at the same time, seeming to know, or letting anyone else know, that he ever thought particularly of any boy at all.²

This is the characteristic reaction of a Rugby boy who never really got to know Arnold, who never took advantage of the many opportunities Arnold provided for his boys to get to know him, who largely ignored the strenuous efforts Arnold made to let it be known that he cared for every boy, great and small. Neither is it likely, in view of Ffitch's claims, that Hughes was assuming an objective position just for the purpose of writing the novel. As his essay has attempted to show, he basically had nothing in common with what Arnold innermost desired to see in his pupils. The passage quoted above is characteristic of the Rugbyean who only saw something of Arnold's ideals and purposes after he left the school, possibly through Stanley's life of 1844; it is characteristic of Hughes himself.

In a sense Hughes's situation is the measure of the extent of Arnold's failure to communicate with many of his boys. The intellectual disciples of the Headmaster, with whom alone he really communicated, were few. Hughes

²Hughee; *T. B. S.*, (1958), 308.

belonged to the stolid and insensitive majority with whom he at most partially communicated; who can blame them if they basically misunderstood their Headmaster and imbibed only debased versions of his exalted spiritual and intellectual fare? It is sad, but ethically revealing, that this majority, Hughes first and foremost, rather than the Rugbisan intellectuals, became the credited nexus between Arnold and the Victorian world.

Hughes's lack of intimacy with the Headmaster meant not only was he never in sympathy with Arnold's exalted ideals, but he never got the chance to develop such a sympathy. In spite of this, Arnold still gave Hughes's life breadth and meaning; the latter was truly the product of Arnold's moral teaching, but only in an imperfectly understood form. Therefore the picture he drew of Arnold, though extremely adulatory, never rises above the embodiment of these popularly, yet imperfectly, understood moral forces which Hughes felt so strongly throughout his life.

Part of the reason for Hughes's distortion of Arnold's ideals in the novel is paradoxically a measure of the success of another aspect of the Headmaster's educational purpose. Arnold's authoritarianism has often been attacked because it produced a cult of conformity; in fact it only did this in the hands of his mid-century emulators in other schools. Arnold would have deprecated such a development; though he sought to mould and discipline the young boy, he tried to encourage self-expression and non-conformity amongst his older boys. The very individuality which Hughes manifested was typical of the Public Schools before their reform by Arnold's emulators in the 1850's and 1860's. In his individuality, he exemplified Arnoldian Rugby, and was never the stock product of the type produced by later Public Schools. This Arnold would have admired. Yet, in the evolving of his own set of values, this individuality had disastrous results for Hughes; his value system was not merely a variant of Arnold's

but a debasement of it, and what is worse, in his advanced eense of individuality, he was totally unaware of his act of debasement, and thought himself a true Arnoldian to the end of his days.

Hughes's individualism is what makes him very different from the Tom Brown who left Rugby at the end of the novel for the trial of life in the outside world. This transformed Tom Brown was the conformist stock product of the later Public Schools, unlike his creator. It is this historical anachronism which is another reason for Hughes's distortion of Arnold's ideals and of life in general at Rugby. The author introduces into his description of a Public School in the 1830's, elements of the reformed Public School system of the 1850's and 1860's which could not have existed there.

As we have already seen, Arnold's actual reforms at Rugby were conservatively, slowly and tactfully carried out. His educational influence was small, until his emulators began to carry out reforms in the later Public Schools which were often the logical conclusion of what Arnold accomplished at Rugby, but were never what he actually accomplished there and were often what he would have deprecated. So, the so-called Arnoldian elements of the later Public Schools were very frequently a bastardisation of Arnold's actual principles and policies at Rugby, and were sometimes even based upon reforms which Arnold reputedly made, but in fact did not make. To introduce, as Hughes does, these elements into the setting of Arnoldian Rugby, alongside pre-Arnoldian customs which the Headmaster swept away during his tenure of office, is not merely to be glaringly anachronistic, but to be incredibly inaccurate as well. The ideas attributed to Arnold in this novel are either gross distortions of the originals, or ideas he never, or in some cases, could not have held. Still other inaccuracies resulted from the fact that Hughes's novel contains rosetinted childhood memories, in the maturing process for over twenty years, of Rugby in

the 1830's. It is hardly surprising that the novel abounds with distortion of one sort or another.

Hughes's interpretation of Arnold's ideals and of life in the school, however much at odds with the Rugbaean reality of the 1830's it may have been, was at least true to the experiences and desires of the ruling classes as they existed two decades later in 1857, when the novel was written. This is what makes Tom Brown's Schooldays such an important document in the history of ideas: it graphically illustrates the fast-changing ethics which dominated early-Victorian society in England. As such a document, the novel is all the more vivid because of Hughes's assumption that the weltanschauung it describes and the weltanschauung it was written in and therefore reflects were the same. To make such a claim would be almost as absurd as Dickens saying that the world of Mr. Pickwick (1835) was unchanged from that of Edwin Drood (1871). The Victorian age, if it were nothing else for English society, was one of rapid transition.

Dr. Arnold himself had enough of the seer in him to perceive even in his own lifetime that people's outlooks were changing. He noted in a letter (5/X/1838):

an atmosphere of unrest and paradox hanging around many of our ablest young men of the present day... things which have been settled for centuries seem to be again brought into discussion.³

If Arnold represented the values paramount in society before the period of transition, Hughes in his novel undoubtedly represented the ruling values of Victorian society as they had been altered in that transition. That Arnold and Hughes came from very different generations partly accounts for the latter's

³Stanley, Life, II, 484, (Letter CCXVI, 5/X/1838).

lack of comprehension of the ideas of the former and hence the novelist's distortion. Vice-versa, Arnold would have almost certainly had little sympathy for the novel, had he lived to see its publication and wide currency. Hughes's conception of Rugby was hardly that of an agency of preservation of the noble tradition amidst all the crassness and acquisitiveness of a capitalistic-industrial economy, which Arnold would certainly have wished it to be; instead it was that of an institution transformed to meet the needs of, and reflect the dominant values of, such a society.

Therefore the distortions and omissions embodied in the novel were more palatable to, and hence had enormous influence in, the world of the 1860's, simply because they contained ideals coming then into favour in society as a whole, not merely into the Public Schools alone. In this period, with its return of comparative prosperity, there was a definite reaction against reform of the sort Arnold had always advocated; liberalism and the humanitarian movement, both Arnoldian causes, lost support, whilst religious zeal was crushed by the growth of a more scientific outlook. The stabilization and expansion of industrial capitalism after Arnold's death led to a materialistic philistinism amongst the middle classes who patronised the new Public Schools; typical of this development was a suspicion of intellectual breadth and an absence of spiritual ideals, both of prime importance to Arnold, as to his son Matthew. Hughes, in writing for this sort of audience, and being pre-eminently at one with their values, only sought to make his revered Headmaster more acceptable to them, and indirectly to promote the new Public Schools, supposedly based on his ideals. In an increasingly literate and democratic age, Hughes was an arch-popularizer who went the way of many of his ilk: he could not dissociate distortion from the act of popularization. Ironically the loser was he whose ideas were thought worthy of widespread advocacy, for their purity could not

help but be contaminated by such intellectual unsubtlety. In this process was the one sided Arnoldian legend generated.

Sire Joshua Ffitch hated the novel precisely because of the distortion involved in pandering to Victorian bourgeois opinion. He wrote:

(it) will probably be quoted in future years as illustrating the low standard of civilisation, the false ideal of manliness and deep-seated indifference to learning for its own sake....In short, the work will be held to explain and justify the famous epithet of "Barbarians" which Matthew Arnold was wont to apply to the English aristocracy, and to that section of society which was most nearly influenced by the great Public Schools.⁴

Had the concept any meaning for him, Hughes might have pleaded artistic licence as his defence against these charges. He was, after all, not primarily an historian, but ostensibly a creative writer. Yet both of these avocations have as their shared ultimate objective the pursuit of truth, if in this process, they use vastly different methods. Hughes's purpose in setting out to write about Arnold and his school was deliberately didactic, and though he consciously chose the form of the novel rather than that of the work of history, he is none the less culpable for his distortions. Perhaps he is all the more culpable in that he was well aware of choosing the form which stood more chance of being widely and popularly accepted. Yet, what he wrote in 1857 turned out only incidentally to be faulty history; even as literature—its primary raison d'être—it has proved nothing more than a sub-species. So on both counts, Hughes seems to have been something of a failure, nonetheless an intensely interesting one.

If the purist regrets that Hughes could not have fulfilled one or other

⁴Ffitch, T. and M. Arnold, 106.

avocations with a greater sense of responsibility to their common goal of truth, the historian of ideas rejoices in the opportunity presented to him for social insight into changing early-Victorian ethics, which such aberration from truth so faithfully mirrors.

Glossary of Public School Terms as Used in Arnold's Time

- Assistant Master: A teacher who assisted the Master with teaching duties; at Rugby each one had charge of a form and thus was also called a Form Master.
- Bigside: The name given to the football team of the Schoolhouse at Rugby.
- The Close: The large area of meadow behind Rugby School used by the boys as playing fields.
- A Crib: A means of cheating in an examination by use of a pre-prepared notes hidden on the schoolboy's person.
- The Eleven: The school or house cricket team.
- Fagging: The system widely employed in the Public Schools whereby a boy performed menial tasks for an older boy, a physically stronger boy or a more senior boy. Arnold regularised the system; only the With could employ fags; only the lower School could act as fags; the Vth could neither fag nor be fagged. The system was claimed to promote obedience and train character.
- Form: A class or division in an English school, equivalent to the "grade" in the U. S. At most Public Schools, including Rugby, the forms were labelled as follows: IIIrd form, Lower IVth, Upper IVth, Remove, Vth, The Twenty, VIth. A boy progressed through this system in accordance with his ability, not with his age. Arnold's Sixth Form

required very special abilities of responsibility and leadership.

Grammar Schools:

The anciently endowed schools of England, some of which, by reason of their preeminence, became the great Public Schools, others of which decayed and disappeared. Those which survived both the above either became government controlled in 1904 (State Maintained Grammar Schools) or government subsidised in 1926 (Direct Grant Grammar Schools). The State has ^{in the Private Sector both have} since created Grammar Schools of its own. All are now secondary schools, equivalent to the U. S. High School.

Half:

The Rugby School year was divided into two terms or "Halves" exactly like the U. S. University semester system.

Half-Holiday:

To have the afternoon free from lessons.

Hare and Hounds:

A cross-country run organised as a paper chase.

Housemaster:

An Assistant Master (or even the Headmaster) who had charge of a boarding house or dormitory.

House System:

Before Arnold arrived at Rugby, an independent system of boarding houses run by local landladies existed. He slowly abolished these, placing the boys under the care of Assistant Masters (Housemasters). Schoolhouse was the one run by Arnold himself; Anstey House by the Rev. C. H. Anstey, etc.

The Island:

A knot of trees in the Rugby close surrounded by a ditch- "the moat."

State system of education set up in the late nineteenth century.

Usher:

A school official with no teaching duties who assisted the Headmaster with administrative and discipline problems. He was not usually a Bachelor of Arts.

A Vulgus:

A means of cheating when translating Greek or Latin proses; somewhat like sorority or fraternity files in the U. S. Universities.

Wykehamist:

A pupil or old boy of Winchester, after William of Wykeham, the founder.

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THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE NOVEL
TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS, (1857), BY THOMAS HUGHES
ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE IDEAS, PURPOSES AND POLICIES
OF DR. THOMAS ARNOLD IN RUGBY SCHOOL, 1828-1842.

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AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Manhattan, Kansas

1967

AN ABSTRACT

Thomas Arnold was born in East Cowes, the Isle of Wight on June 13th, 1795. After a promising academic career at Winchester (1807-1811), Corpus Christi (1811-1814) and Oriel (1814-1819), he took Deacon's orders and opened up a small tutoring school at Laleham, Berkshire. In 1827, he applied for the vacant post of Master of Rugby, a well-known public school, and to his surprise, was elected. Taking Priest's orders and a Doctorate of Divinity, he remained at Rugby until his sudden death on June 12th, 1842, shortly after he had been made Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford.

Thomas Hughes was born at Uffington, Berkshire on October 12th, 1822, and was educated at Rugby under Arnold (1834-1842). He died on March 22nd, 1896. In 1857, his first novel, Tom Brown's Schooldays was published and it has proved extremely popular down to the present day, though it does not have great literary value. The book forms the expression of Hughes's hero worship for Dr. Arnold, and due to its popularity, it has been one of the main sources of the middle and working classes' ideas on Arnold. How accurately does it reflect Arnold's educational ideas and policies at Rugby in view of this wide influence?

Arnold stated that the aims of a Rugby education, as reformed by him, were (in this order only): to inculcate Christian morality, to induce gentlemanly conduct, to encourage academic excellence and lastly to promote enjoyment of sporting activities. Hughes in the novel demeaned Arnold's grand Augustinian view of morality into an eternal fist-fight with evil, in which the Headmaster was some sort of heroic captain; and he consequently misinterpreted

gentlemanly conduct to be the traditional aggressive manliness of the English gentry and aristocracy. This debasement has since become dubbed "muscular Christianity." Though Arnold put academic excellence third in his list of theoretical aims, in practice he thought highly of it and greatly encouraged boys who were intellectually bright. Hughes on the other hand was most pointedly anti-intellectual and classroom activities play almost no part in his novel. Sports play a greater part in the work, but this is marred by a sense of anachronism; they are unorganised, amateurish and not compulsory as was the case under Arnold, but yet they are played in the spirit of athleticism or the cult of games as an educational, character-building institution. Athleticism only developed after Arnold's death and would only have been deprecated by him as crass and barbarian.

Of Arnold's methods and reforms in the school, Hughes portrayed very accurately how the praepositorial system was transformed from the old chaotic version prior to Arnold's time to the new moralising instrument of boy self-government under Arnold. The novelist gave an extremely realistic account of the general level of bullying in the school, which was far more rife than Arnold thought it was; yet the novel's main bullying incident was melodramatised. Hughes also distorted Arnold's reasons for retaining flogging as the ultimate punishment and tended to exaggerate the amount of corporal punishment in the school.

There are several reasons for these differences between hero and worshipper. Hughes was never an intimate of Arnold, intellectual or otherwise, but represents the average, unacademic, sport-loving, unimaginative Rugbyman. He never really came to understand the Doctor and hence misinterpreted his ideas and purposes. The historical anachronism also contributed to this distortion. The novel not merely consists of Hughes's idealised childhood memories which

are not always accurate, but also his injection of Public School developments of the mid-century, based upon Arnold's reputed reforms or distortions of them, into Rugby conditions of the 1830's. Hughes, though trying to be a creative artist rather than an historian, is none the less culpable for distorting the truth. The very fact that he did distort is in itself socially revealing about the mid-Victorian period of history.