

doubt he will prove to be a valuable addition to Messrs. Seeley's directorate.

New Books.

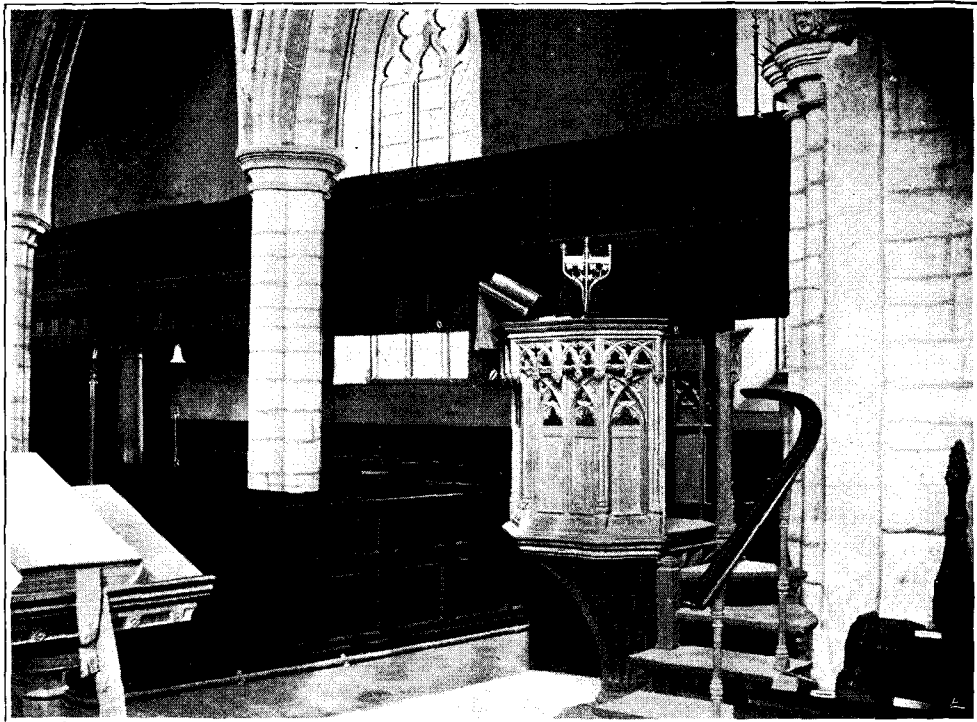
THE ATMOSPHERE OF MATTHEW ARNOLD.*

No better man could have been found to write the life of Matthew Arnold than Mr. G. W. E. Russell. Arnold is an atmosphere as much as a man; a quiet grey and silver atmosphere which grows upon the inhabitant like certain quiet kinds of scenery; and it is Mr. Russell's good fortune that he is steeped in it, that he is a real denizen of the Arnold landscape. It was the misfortune of the brilliant Mr. Herbert Paul that he wrote about Arnold a little as if he were reviewing an author he had never heard of before. He wrote splendidly, but scrappily, and did not seem to see the plan and meaning of the whole. Mr. Russell is luckier. Though Matthew Arnold cannot be called (in his creative work, at least) a literary classic, yet there was something so very classical about him that he has this great mark or note, as he would have said, of the classics, that the more you live with him the larger he grows. It is the essential of anything classically great, from Homer to Westminster Abbey, that familiarity breeds respect. Moreover, Mr. Russell has many peculiar advantages for the purpose of his task, besides the incidental advantage of being a clever man. He is a good Liberal, and so can understand the profound Liberalism which was really in the heart of Arnold, with all his anti-Radical satire; he is also an aristocrat and a High Churchman; so that his Liberalism is modified by forces not the same as, but somewhat analogous to, the forces from Oxford and the past which modified the Liberalism of Arnold, or to speak more correctly, which gave that Liberalism its peculiar and quiet tint. When an aristocrat is really a genuine Liberal he is a very good Liberal; because the habit of "the free man" of Aristotle is native to aristocracies. When a High Churchman is really a genuine Liberal, he is a very good Liberal, because the habit of holding doctrine firmly and as an infallible thing, makes him stand firm as Mr. Russell has stood, amid a whirlwind of ephemeral sophistry.

Instead of quoting, as might easily be done, many of Mr. Russell's more picturesque or individual fragments of criticism, I prefer to quote his more sober statement of the limits and nature of the effects which Arnold had upon young Liberals like himself. He is speaking of "Culture and Anarchy," that wonderful and valuable book in which Arnold most clearly uttered his plea for a responsible political philosophy as against a headlong and hugger-mugger politics.

"And from that memorable book what did we learn? To answer first by negatives, we did not learn to undervalue personal liberty or to stand aloof from the practical work of citizenship, or to despise Parliamentary effort and its bearing on the better life of England. To these lessons of a fascinating teacher we closed our ears, charmed he never so wisely. To answer affirmatively, we learned that our first object must be to attain our own best self, and that only so could we hope to help others. We learned to discard prepossessions, and try to see things as they really are. We learned that the liberty which we worshipped must be conditioned by authority—an authority not wielded by rank or bureaucracy, but by the State acting as a whole through its

* "Matthew Arnold." By G. W. E. Russell. 3s. 6d. (Hodder and Stoughton.)



Cowper's Pew in the Gallery of Olney Church.

"The only gallery now existing—and this it is proposed to remove—is the one erected in the north aisle by John Newton, which contains the pew of the poet Cowper."—Thomas Wright's "The Town of Cowper."

accredited representatives, and depending for its existence on the co-operation of the entire nation. In self-government so founded, however stringently it might exercise its power, there was no degradation for the governed, because in the wider sense they were also governors. In brief, Arnold's idea of the State was exactly that which in later years one of his disciples, Henry Scott-Holland, conceived, when, defending Christian Socialism against the reproach of 'grandmotherly legislation,' he said that in a well-governed commonwealth "every man was his own grandmother."

This summary appeals to one as singularly sane, because I think Arnold cannot altogether be cleared of the charge at which Mr. Russell hints, that he shrank from a great deal of practical political action which was quite as compatible with culture and quite as independent of it as the ploughing of fields or the selling of fish. Though he despised the absurd Irish Church Establishment as much as any other Liberal, he would scarcely help in its abolition because so many Liberals took a different view of Church matters to himself. His attitude towards religious dogma is another matter which naturally does not wholly satisfy Mr. Russell. This is no place for any statement of preference between Arnold's devout agnosticism and the uncompromising Catholicism of Mr. Russell, who says of Arnold's definition of God, "a stream of tendency, etc.," that "a prayer beginning 'Stream!' would sound as odd as Wordsworth's ode beginning 'Spade!'" But it is, I think, worth noting as a very typical fact that Arnold, who did not believe in the Church doctrines, was in favour of an Established Church, while Mr. Russell, who does believe in them, is a root and branch dis-establisher. The best that an Establishment has ever been is a refuge for reverent unbelievers. To the serious Churchman it is unendurable.

Arnold said that the best element of Germany was that it believed in "The elevation of a whole people through culture." "That," he said, "need not be your English motto, but at least you might find a better than your present one, 'the beatification of a whole people through clap-trap.'"

Literary and political fashions have passed away, but those words have not passed away. The Radical England of Arnold's day was vain of its civilisation. The Tory England of to-day is vain of its barbarism. Mr. Bottles looked complacently upon "the railroads he had built, the commerce he had extended, etc." The new Mr. Bottles looks forth at the iron-clads he has built and the provinces he has annexed. But the English fault has not changed, nor the England felicity. Across every newspaper office might still be written in letters

of gold "The beatification of a whole people through clap-trap."

When somebody or other called Matthew Arnold scornfully "an elegant Jeremiah" he was paying a compliment truer and subtler than he knew. For Matthew Arnold really was a prophet in the sound old Hebraic sense; that is to say, a person whose business it is to say exceedingly unpleasant things. He was far more of a prophet in this Hebraic sense than Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle was a poet; and the distinction is far too little realised. A poet is a man who sings the praise of things, who expresses the trend and affections of the people, who loves what his countrymen love, and loves them for loving it. A prophet is a man who is fighting his own people, and trying to turn them from their present course. And singular as it may seem to say so, Thomas Carlyle was the poet and not the prophet, was the encourager and not the discourager of the English trend. He shouted at his countrymen and lashed them, but it was along the road of their choice and destiny. He abused the English, but it was for not being English enough. The English are naturally proud, vague, lordly, lusty, fond of material achievement. Carlyle wished them to be more proud, more vague, more lordly and lusty, more fond of material achievement. He rebuked us as a trainer rebukes a prize-fighter; Arnold rebuked us as a chaplain rebukes a criminal. Therefore Arnold was unpopular, and Carlyle, in comparison, popular. He was popular because he was with all his gloom and violence at bottom prophesying smooth things, shouting smooth things, thundering smooth things. This is no disparagement of him, though it would probably make him turn in his grave; the poet, or man who praises, has his place as well as the prophet or man who blames. But since Carlyle's time the English with their simple vanity have more and more got into the dangerous habit of accepting as a bracing prophet the man who is only a violent eulogist, a kind of stormy flatterer. It is scarcely necessary to quote the name of Kipling. We like these national poets very much, and as I



From an original Drawing by
George Cruikshank.

John Gilpin.

"Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear,
For while he spoke a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear."

—"The Diverting History of John Gilpin."

say, they have their value. But when a real prophet came to tell us that we were not the only people on earth, that we could not do everything simply by exaggerating ourselves, that we failed nine times out of ten, not by rude Berseker faults, but by common cowardice and small-mindedness, that it was not "failing to speak out with promptitude and energy," that was the matter with us, but "having nothing consistent or valuable to say"—when a prophet said these really unpleasant truths, we did not like it at all. His method was mild and explanatory, his tone urbane, he roared like the sucking dove, but we did not like it at all. We did not compliment him by calling him a savage old prophet or a misanthropic old bear. We called him in the agony of our pulverised vanity "a trifler."

G. K. CHESTERTON.

BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE.*

In this, his third volume, Mr. Drummond Norie continues the story of the "Life and Adventures of Prince Charles," for a period of nineteen weeks, that is, from the time when the Highland army marched out of Carlisle for the north, until the fugitive Prince, with a handful of followers, reached the small island of Scalpa a fortnight after the crushing defeat at Culloden. Mr. Norie admits that it was a grave error to leave a garrison in Carlisle; but he believes that Charles had never for a moment relinquished the hope of resuming his march towards London; and holds that he was certainly right in opposing the retreat after his victory over Hawley at Falkirk. Details of the northward march of the Hanoverian forces under the Duke of Cumberland are ignored as being outside the subject; but there is, of course, an ample account of the battle of Culloden.

The atrocities perpetrated after the defeat of the Jacobite army are deservedly denounced; but Mr. Norie's language is tame compared with that of the extreme Covenanters who compiled "The Active Testimony," a rare little tract published in 1749. In their estimation, Prince Charles and Duke William were both "young pretenders"; the Jacobites were "a promiscuous multitude," "ignorant, covetous, pilfering"; and Cumberland's red-coats were "vermin of hell," whom Charles ought not to have spared. The red-coat vermin are described as having come "in shoals from Flanders and England," and as "bellowing forth their horrid curses and blasphemous oaths, and robbing, stealing, and ruining all where ever they came," defiling the land "with their abominable whoredoms and other uncleannesses." Cumberland himself, it is affirmed, "wrought all manner of wickedness with greediness and with a high hand." After Culloden, they not only barbarously murdered the wounded, and massacred the unarmed onlookers, but, "like incarnate devils, they raged through the country, murdering women and children and old infirm men in many places, and

* "The Life and Adventures of Prince Charles Edward Stuart." By W. Drummond Norie. In four volumes. Vol. III. 25s. net each vol. (The Caxton Publishing Co.)



From a Drawing by C. E. Brock.

John Gilpin.

"'Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house!
They all at once did cry;
'The dinner waits, and we are tir'd.'
Said Gilpin—'So am I!'"

(Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent and Co., from their illustrated edition of "The Diverting History of John Gilpin.")