Culture and Anarchy in Ireland, 1890-1939

F. S. L Lyons

Culture and Anarchy, major work of criticism by Matthew Arnold, published in 1869. In it Arnold contrasts culture, which he defines as the study of perfection, with anarchy, the prevalent mood of England's then new democracy, which lacks standards and a sense of direction. No summary can do justice to Culture and Anarchy, however; it is written with an inward poise, a serene detachment, and an infusion of subtle humour that make it a masterpiece of ridicule as well as a searching analysis of Victorian society. The same is true of its unduly neglected sequel, Friendship's Garland (1871).