

"Dover Beach"

By Matthew Arnold

*Transcription, correction, editorial commentary, and markup by
Students and Staff at The University of Virginia, Tonya Howe*

- [TP] -

NEW POEMS
BY
MATTHEW ARNOLD

LONDON
MACMILLAN AND CO.
M DCCC LXVII

DOVER BEACH.

1 THE SEA is calm to-night,
2 The tide is full, the moon lies fair
3 Upon the Straits;--on the French coast, the light
4 Gleams, and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
5 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
6 Come to the window, sweet is the night air!
7 Only, from the long line of spray
8 Where the ebb meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
9 Listen! you hear the grating roar
10 Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling,
11 At their return, up the high strand,
12 Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
13 With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
14 The eternal note of sadness in.

15 Sophocles long ago
16 Heard it on the AEgean, and it brought
17 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
18 of human misery; we
19 Find also in the sound a thought,
20 Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

21 The sea of faith
22 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
23 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd;
24 But now I only hear
25 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
26 Retreating to the breath
27 Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
28 And naked shingles of the world.

29 Ah, love, let us be true
30 To one another! for the world, which seems
31 To lie before us like a land of dreams,
32 So various, so beautiful, so new,

33 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
34 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;

35 And we are here as on a darkling plain
36 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
37 Where ignorant armies clash by night.

