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Polemical Introduction

THIS BOOK consists of “essays,” in the word’s original sense of a trial or incomplete attempt, on the possibility of a synoptic view of the scope, theory, principles, and techniques of literary criticism. The primary aim of the book is to give my reasons for believing in such a synoptic view; its secondary aim is to provide a tentative version of it which will make enough sense to convince my readers that *a* view, of the kind that I outline, is attainable. The gaps in the subject as treated here are too enormous for the book ever to be regarded as presenting *my* system, or even my theory. It is to be regarded rather as an interconnected group of suggestions which it is hoped will be of some practical use to critics and students of literature. Whatever is of no practical use to anybody is expendable. My approach is based on Matthew Arnold’s precept of letting the mind play freely around a subject in which there has been much endeavor and little attempt at perspective. All the essays deal with criticism, but by criticism I mean the whole work of scholarship and taste concerned with literature which is a part of what is variously called liberal education, culture, or the study of the humanities. I start from the principle that criticism is not simply a part of this larger activity, but an essential part of it.

The subject-matter of literary criticism is an art, and criticism is evidently something of an art too. This sounds as though criticism were a parasitic form of literary expression, an art based on pre-existing art, a second-hand imitation of creative power. On this theory critics are intellectuals who have a taste for art but lack both the power to produce it and the money to patronize it, and thus form a class of cultural middlemen, distributing culture to society at a profit to themselves while exploiting the artist and increasing the strain on his public. The conception of the critic as a parasite or artist *manqué* is still very popular, especially among artists. It is sometimes reinforced by a dubious analogy between the creative and the procreative functions, so that we hear about the “impotence” and “dryness” of the critic, of his hatred for genuinely creative people, and so on. The golden age of anti-critical criticism was the latter part of the nineteenth century, but some of its prejudices are still around.

However, the fate of art that tries to do without criticism is

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instructive. The attempt to reach the public directly through “popular” art assumes that criticism is artificial and public taste natural. Behind this is a further assumption about natural taste which goes back through Tolstoy to Romantic theories of a spontaneously creative “folk.” These theories have had a fair trial; they have not stood up very well to the facts of literary history and experience, and it is perhaps time to move beyond them. An extreme reaction against the primitive view, at one time associated with the “art for art’s sake” catchword, thinks of art in precisely the opposite terms, as a mystery, an initiation into an esoterically civilized community. Here criticism is restricted to ritual masonic gestures, to raised eyebrows and cryptic comments and other signs of an understanding too occult for syntax. The fallacy common to both attitudes is that of a rough correlation between the merit of art and the degree of public response to it, though the correlation assumed is direct in one case and inverse in the other.

One can find examples which appear to support both these views; but it is clearly the simple truth that there is no real correlation either way between the merits of art and its public reception. Shakespeare was more popular than Webster, but not because he was a greater dramatist; Keats was less popular than Montgomery, but not because he was a better poet. Consequently there is no way of preventing the critic from being, for better or worse, the pioneer of education and the shaper of cultural tradition. Whatever popularity Shakespeare and Keats have *now* is equally the result of the publicity of criticism. A public that tries to do without criticism, and asserts that it knows what it wants or likes, brutalizes the arts and loses its cultural memory. Art for art’s sake is a retreat from criticism which ends in an impoverishment of civilized life itself. The only way to forestall the work of criticism is through censorship, which has the same relation to criticism that lynching has to justice.

There is another reason why criticism has to exist. Criticism can talk, and all the arts are dumb. In painting, sculpture, or music it is easy enough to see that the art shows forth, but cannot *say* anything. And, whatever it sounds like to call the poet inarticulate or speechless, there is a most important sense in which poems are as silent as statues. Poetry is a *disinterested* use of words: it does not address a reader directly. When it does so, we usually feel that the poet has some distrust in the capacity of readers and critics to

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interpret his meaning without assistance, and has therefore dropped into the sub-poetic level of metrical talk (“verse” or “doggerel”) which anybody can learn to produce. It is not only tradition that impels a poet to invoke a Muse and protest that his utterance is involuntary. Nor is it strained wit that causes Mr. MacLeish, in his famous *Ars Poetica*, to apply the words “mute,” “dumb,” and “wordless” to a poem. The artist, as John Stuart Mill saw in a wonderful flash of critical insight, is not heard but overheard. The axiom of criticism must be, not that the poet does not know what he is talking about, but that he cannot talk about what he knows. To defend the right of criticism to exist at all, therefore, is to assume that criticism is a structure of thought and knowledge existing in its own right, with some measure of independence from the art it deals with.

The poet may of course have some critical ability of his own, and so be able to talk about his own work. But the Dante who writes a commentary on the first canto of the *Paradiso* is merely one more of Dante’s critics. What he says has a peculiar interest, but not a peculiar authority. It is generally accepted that a critic is a better judge of the *value* of a poem than its creator, but there is still a lingering notion that it is somehow ridiculous to regard the critic as the final judge of its meaning, even though in practice it is clear that he must be. The reason for this is an inability to distinguish literature from the descriptive or assertive writing which derives from the active will and the conscious mind, and which is primarily concerned to “say” something.

Part of the critic’s reason for feeling that poets can be properly assessed only after their death is that they are then unable to presume on their merits as poets to tease him with hints of inside knowledge. When Ibsen maintains that *Emperor and Galilean* is his greatest play and that certain episodes in *Peer Gynt* are not allegorical, one can only say that Ibsen is an indifferent critic of Ibsen. Wordsworth’s Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* is a remarkable document, but as a piece of Wordsworthian criticism nobody would give it more than about a B plus. Critics of Shakespeare are often supposed to be ridiculed by the assertion that if Shakespeare were to come back from the dead he would not be able to appreciate or even understand their criticism. This in itself is likely enough: we have little evidence of Shakespeare’s interest in criticism, either of himself or of anyone else. Even if there were

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such evidence, his own account of what he was trying to do in *Hamlet* would no more be a definitive criticism of that play, clearing all its puzzles up for good, than a performance of it under his direction would be a definitive performance. And what is true of the poet in relation to his own work is still more true of his opinion of other poets. It is hardly possible for the critical poet to avoid expanding his own tastes, which are intimately linked to his own practice, into a general law of literature. But criticism has to be based on what the whole of literature actually does: in its light, whatever any highly respected writer thinks literature in general ought to do will show up in its proper perspective. The poet speaking as critic produces, not criticism, but documents to be examined by critics. They may well be valuable documents: it is only when they are accepted as directives for criticism that they are in any danger of becoming misleading.

The notion that the poet necessarily is or could be the definitive interpreter of himself or of the theory of literature belongs to the conception of the critic as a parasite or jackal. Once we admit that the critic has his own field of activity, and that he has autonomy within that field, we have to concede that criticism deals with literature in terms of a specific conceptual framework. The framework is not that of literature itself, for this is the parasite theory again, but neither is it something outside literature, for in that case the autonomy of criticism would again disappear, and the whole subject would be assimilated to something else.

This latter gives us, in criticism, the fallacy of what in history is called determinism, where a scholar with a special interest in geography or economics expresses that interest by the rhetorical device of putting his favorite study into a causal relationship with whatever interests him less. Such a method gives one the illusion of explaining one's subject while studying it, thus wasting no time. It would be easy to compile a long list of such determinisms in criticism, all of them, whether Marxist, Thomist, liberal-humanist, neo-Classical, Freudian, Jungian, or existentialist, substituting a critical attitude for criticism, all proposing, not to find a conceptual framework for criticism within literature, but to attach criticism to one of a miscellany of frameworks outside it. The axioms and postulates of criticism, however, have to grow out of the art it deals with. The first thing the literary critic has to do is to read literature, to make an inductive survey of his own field and let his critical

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principles shape themselves solely out of his knowledge of that field. Critical principles cannot be taken over ready-made from theology, philosophy, politics, science, or any combination of these.

To subordinate criticism to an externally derived critical attitude is to exaggerate the values in literature that can be related to the external source, whatever it is. It is all too easy to impose on literature an extra-literary schematism, a sort of religio-political color-filter, which makes some poets leap into prominence and others show up as dark and faulty. All that the disinterested critic can do with such a color-filter is to murmur politely that it shows things in a new light and is indeed a most stimulating contribution to criticism. Of course such filtering critics usually imply, and often believe, that they are letting their literary experience speak for itself and are holding their other attitudes in reserve, the coincidence between their critical valuations and their religious or political views being silently gratifying to them but not explicitly forced on the reader. Such independence of criticism from prejudice, however, does not invariably occur even with those who best understand criticism. Of their inferiors the less said the better.

If it is insisted that we cannot criticize literature until we have acquired a coherent philosophy of life with its center of gravity in something else, the existence of criticism as a separate subject is still being denied. But there is another possibility. If criticism exists, it must be an examination of literature in terms of a conceptual framework derivable from an inductive survey of the literary field. The word "inductive" suggests some sort of scientific procedure. What if criticism is a science as well as an art? Not a "pure" or "exact" science, of course, but these phrases belong to a nineteenth-century cosmology which is no longer with us. The writing of history is an art, but no one doubts that scientific principles are involved in the historian's treatment of evidence, and that the presence of this scientific element is what distinguishes history from legend. It may also be a scientific element in criticism which distinguishes it from literary parasitism on the one hand, and the superimposed critical attitude on the other. The presence of science in any subject changes its character from the casual to the causal, from the random and intuitive to the systematic, as well as safeguarding the integrity of that subject from external invasions. However, if there are any readers for whom the word "scientific"

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conveys emotional overtones of unimaginative barbarism, they may substitute “systematic” or “progressive” instead.

It seems absurd to say that there *may* be a scientific element in criticism when there are dozens of learned journals based on the assumption that there is, and hundreds of scholars engaged in a scientific procedure related to literary criticism. Evidence is examined scientifically; previous authorities are used scientifically; fields are investigated scientifically; texts are edited scientifically. Prosody is scientific in structure; so is phonetics; so is philology. Either literary criticism is scientific, or all these highly trained and intelligent scholars are wasting their time on some kind of pseudo-science like phrenology. Yet one is forced to wonder whether scholars realize the implications of the fact that their work is scientific. In the growing complication of secondary sources one misses that sense of consolidating progress which belongs to a science. Research begins in what is known as “background,” and one would expect it, as it goes on, to start organizing the foreground as well. Telling us what we should know about literature ought to fulfil itself in telling us something about what it is. As soon as it comes to this point, scholarship seems to be dammed by some kind of barrier, and washes back into further research projects.

So to “appreciate” literature and get more direct contact with it, we turn to the public critic, the Lamb or Hazlitt or Arnold or Sainte-Beuve who represents the reading public at its most expert and judicious. It is the task of the public critic to exemplify how a man of taste uses and evaluates literature, and thus show how literature is to be absorbed into society. But here we no longer have the sense of an impersonal body of consolidating knowledge. The public critic tends to episodic forms like the lecture and the familiar essay, and his work is not a science, but another kind of literary art. He has picked up his ideas from a pragmatic study of literature, and does not try to create or enter into a theoretical structure. In Shakespearean criticism we have a fine monument of Augustan taste in Johnson, of Romantic taste in Coleridge, of Victorian taste in Bradley. The ideal critic of Shakespeare, we feel, would avoid the Augustan, Romantic, and Victorian limitations and prejudices respectively of Johnson, Coleridge, and Bradley. But we have no clear notion of progress in the criticism of Shakespeare, or of how a critic who read all his predecessors could, as

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a result, become anything better than a monument of contemporary taste, with all *its* limitations and prejudices.

In other words, there is as yet no way of distinguishing what is genuine criticism, and therefore progresses toward making the whole of literature intelligible, from what belongs only to the history of taste, and therefore follows the vacillations of fashionable prejudice. I give an example of the difference between the two which amounts to a head-on collision. In one of his curious, brilliant, scatter-brained footnotes to *Munera Pulveris*, John Ruskin says:

Of Shakspeare's names I will afterwards speak at more length; they are curiously—often barbarously—mixed out of various traditions and languages. Three of the clearest in meaning have been already noticed. Desdemona—“δυσδαιμονία,” *miserable fortune*—is also plain enough. Othello is, I believe, “the careful”; all the calamity of the tragedy arising from the single flaw and error in his magnificently collected strength. Ophelia, “serviceableness,” the true, lost wife of Hamlet, is marked as having a Greek name by that of her brother Laertes; and its signification is once exquisitely alluded to in that brother's last word of her, where her gentle preciousness is opposed to the uselessness of the churlish clergy:—“A *ministering* angel shall my sister be, when thou liest howling.”

On this passage Matthew Arnold comments as follows:

Now, really, what a piece of extravagance all that is! I will not say that the meaning of Shakspeare's names (I put aside the question as to the correctness of Mr. Ruskin's etymologies) has no effect at all, may be entirely lost sight of; but to give it that degree of prominence is to throw the reins to one's whim, to forget all moderation and proportion, to lose the balance of one's mind altogether. It is to show in one's criticism, to the highest excess, the note of provinciality.

Now whether Ruskin is right or wrong, he is attempting genuine criticism. He is trying to interpret Shakespeare in terms of a conceptual framework which belongs to the critic alone, and yet relates itself to the plays alone. Arnold is perfectly right in feeling that this is not the sort of material that the public critic can directly use. But he does not seem even to suspect the existence

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of a systematic criticism as distinct from the history of taste. Here it is Arnold who is the provincial. Ruskin has learned his trade from the great iconological tradition which comes down through Classical and Biblical scholarship into Dante and Spenser, both of whom he had studied carefully, and which is incorporated in the medieval cathedrals he had pored over in such detail. Arnold is assuming, as a universal law of nature, certain "plain sense" critical axioms which were hardly heard of before Dryden's time and which can assuredly not survive the age of Freud and Jung and Frazer and Cassirer..

What we have so far is, on one side of the "study of literature," the work of the scholar who tries to make it possible, and on the other side the work of the public critic who assumes that it exists. In between is "literature" itself, a game preserve where the student wanders with his native intelligence his only guide. The assumption seems to be that the scholar and the public critic are connected by a common interest in literature alone. The scholar lays down his materials outside the portals of literature: like other offerings brought to unseen consumers, a good deal of such scholarship seems to be the product of a rather touching faith, sometimes only a hope that some synthetizing critical Messiah of the future will find it useful. The public critic, or the spokesman of the imposed critical attitude, is apt to make only a random and haphazard use of this material, often in fact to treat the scholar as Hamlet did the grave-digger, ignoring everything he throws out except an odd skull which he can pick up and moralize about.

Those who are concerned with the arts are often asked questions, not always sympathetic ones, about the use or value of what they are doing. It is probably impossible to answer such questions directly, or at any rate to answer the people who ask them. Most of the answers, such as Newman's "liberal knowledge is its own end," merely appeal to the experience of those who have had the right experience. Similarly, most "defenses of poetry" are intelligible only to those well within the defenses. The basis of critical apologetics, therefore, has to be the actual experience of art, and for those concerned with literature, the first question to answer is not "What use is the study of literature?" but, "What follows from the fact that it is possible?"

Everyone who has seriously studied literature knows that the mental process involved is as coherent and progressive as the study

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of science. A precisely similar training of the mind takes place, and a similar sense of the unity of the subject is built up. If this unity comes from literature itself, then literature itself must be shaped like a science, which contradicts our experience of it; or it must derive some informing power from an ineffable mystery at the heart of being, which seems vague; or the mental benefits alleged to be derived from it are imaginary, and are really derived from other subjects studied incidentally in connection with it.

This is as far as we can get on the assumption that the scholar and the man of taste are connected by nothing more than a common interest in literature. If this assumption is true, the high percentage of sheer futility in all criticism should be honestly faced, for the percentage can only increase with its bulk, until criticizing becomes, especially for university teachers, merely an automatic method of acquiring merit, like turning a prayer-wheel. But it is only an unconscious assumption—at least, I have never seen it stated as a doctrine—and it would certainly be convenient if it turned out to be nonsense. The alternative assumption is that scholars and public critics are directly related by an intermediate form of criticism, a coherent and comprehensive theory of literature, logically and scientifically organized, some of which the student unconsciously learns as he goes on, but the main principles of which are as yet unknown to us. The development of such a criticism would fulfil the systematic and progressive element in research by assimilating its work into a unified structure of knowledge, as other sciences do. It would at the same time establish an authority within criticism for the public critic and the man of taste.

We should be careful to realize what the possibility of such an intermediate criticism implies. It implies that at no point is there any direct learning of literature itself. Physics is an organized body of knowledge about nature, and a student of it says that he is learning physics, not nature. Art, like nature, has to be distinguished from the systematic study of it, which is criticism. It is therefore impossible to “learn literature”: one learns about it in a certain way, but what one learns, transitively, is the criticism of literature. Similarly, the difficulty often felt in “teaching literature” arises from the fact that it cannot be done: the criticism of literature is all that can be directly taught. Literature is not a subject of study, but an object of study: the fact that it consists of words, as we

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have seen, makes us confuse it with the talking verbal disciplines. The libraries reflect our confusion by cataloguing criticism as one of the subdivisions of literature. Criticism, rather, is to art what history is to action and philosophy to wisdom: a verbal imitation of a human productive power which in itself does not speak. And just as there is nothing which the philosopher cannot consider philosophically, and nothing which the historian cannot consider historically, so the critic should be able to construct and dwell in a conceptual universe of his own. This critical universe seems to be one of the things implied in Arnold's conception of culture.

I am not, therefore, saying that literary criticism at present must be doing the wrong thing and ought to be doing something else. I am saying that it should be possible to get a comprehensive view of what it actually is doing. It is necessary that scholars and public critics should continue to make their contributions to criticism. It is not necessary that the thing they contribute to should be invisible, as the coral island is invisible to the polyp. In the study of literary scholarship the student becomes aware of an undertow carrying him away from literature. He finds that literature is the central division of the humanities, flanked on one side by history and on the other by philosophy. As literature is not itself an organized structure of knowledge, the critic has to turn to the conceptual framework of the historian for events, and to that of the philosopher for ideas. Asked what he is working on, the critic will invariably say that he is working on Donne, or Shelley's thought, or the 1640-1660 period, or give some other answer implying that history, philosophy, or literature itself is the conceptual basis of his criticism. In the unlikely event that he was concerned with the theory of criticism, he would say that he was working on a "general" topic. It is clear that the absence of systematic criticism has created a power vacuum, and all the neighboring disciplines have moved in. Hence the prominence of the Archimedes fallacy mentioned above: the notion that if we plant our feet solidly enough in Christian or democratic or Marxist values we shall be able to lift the whole of criticism at once with a dialectic crowbar. But if the varied interests of critics could be related to a central expanding pattern of systematic comprehension, this undertow would disappear, and they would be seen as converging on criticism instead of running away from it.

One proof that a systematic comprehension of a subject actually

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exists is the ability to write an elementary textbook expounding its fundamental principles. It would be interesting to see what such a book on criticism would contain. It would not start with a clear answer to the first question of all: "What is literature?" We have no real standards to distinguish a verbal structure that is literary from one that is not, and no idea what to do with the vast penumbra of books that may be claimed for literature because they are written with "style," or are useful as "background," or have simply got into a university course of "great books." We then discover that we have no word, corresponding to "poem" in poetry or "play" in drama, to describe a work of literary art. It is all very well for Blake to say that to generalize is to be an idiot, but when we find ourselves in the cultural situation of savages who have words for ash and willow and no word for tree, we wonder if there is not such a thing as being *too* deficient in the capacity to generalize.

So much for page one of our handbook. Page two would be the place to explain what seems the most far-reaching of literary facts, the distinction in rhythm between verse and prose. But it appears that a distinction which anyone can make in practice cannot be made as yet by any critic in theory. We continue to riffle through the blank pages. The next thing to do is to outline the primary categories of literature, such as drama, epic, prose fiction, and the like. This at any rate is what Aristotle assumed to be the obvious first step in criticism. We discover that the critical theory of genres is stuck precisely where Aristotle left it. The very word "genre" sticks out in an English sentence as the unpronounceable and alien thing it is. Most critical efforts to handle such generic terms as "epic" and "novel" are chiefly interesting as examples of the psychology of rumor. Thanks to the Greeks, we can distinguish tragedy from comedy in drama, and so we still tend to assume that each is the half of drama that is not the other half. When we come to deal with such forms as the masque, opera, movie, ballet, puppet-play, mystery-play, morality, *commedia dell' arte*, and *Zauberspiel*, we find ourselves in the position of the Renaissance doctors who refused to treat syphilis because Galen said nothing about it.

The Greeks hardly needed to develop a classification of prose forms. We do, but have never done so. We have, as usual, no word for a work of prose fiction, so the word "novel" does duty for everything, and thereby loses its only real meaning as the name of a genre. The circulating-library distinction between fiction and non-

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fiction, between books which are about things admitted not to be true and books which are about everything else, is apparently exhaustive enough for critics. Asked what form of prose fiction *Gulliver's Travels* belongs to, there are few critics who, if they could give the answer "Menippean satire," would regard it as knowledge essential for dealing with the book, although some notion of what a novel is is surely a prerequisite for dealing with a serious novelist. Other prose forms are even worse off. Western literature has been more influenced by the Bible than by any other book, but with all his respect for "sources," the critic knows little more about that influence than the fact that it exists. Biblical typology is so dead a language now that most readers, including scholars, cannot construe the superficial meaning of any poem which employs it. And so on. If criticism could ever be conceived as a coherent and systematic study, the elementary principles of which could be explained to any intelligent nineteen-year-old, then, from the point of view of such a conception, no critic now knows the first thing about criticism. What critics now have is a mystery-religion without a gospel, and they are initiates who can communicate, or quarrel, only with one another.

A theory of criticism whose principles apply to the whole of literature and account for every valid type of critical procedure is what I think Aristotle meant by poetics. Aristotle seems to me to approach poetry as a biologist would approach a system of organisms, picking out its genera and species, formulating the broad laws of literary experience, and in short writing as though he believed that there is a totally intelligible structure of knowledge attainable about poetry which is not poetry itself, or the experience of it, but poetics. One would imagine that, after two thousand years of post-Aristotelian literary activity, his views on poetics, like his views on the generation of animals, could be re-examined in the light of fresh evidence. Meanwhile, the opening words of the *Poetics*, in the Bywater translation, remain as good an introduction to the subject as ever, and describe the kind of approach that I have tried to keep in mind for myself:

Our subject being poetry, I propose to speak not only of the art in general but also of its species and their respective capacities; of the structure of plot required for a good poem; of the number and nature of the constituent parts of a poem; and likewise of

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any other matters in the same line of inquiry. Let us follow the natural order and begin with the primary facts.

Of course literature is only one of many arts, but this book is compelled to avoid the treatment of aesthetic problems outside of poetics. Every art, however, needs its own critical organization, and poetics will form a part of aesthetics as soon as aesthetics becomes the unified criticism of all the arts instead of whatever it is now.

Sciences normally begin in a state of naive induction: they tend first of all to take the phenomena they are supposed to interpret as data. Thus physics began by taking the immediate sensations of experience, classified as hot, cold, moist, and dry, as fundamental principles. Eventually physics turned inside out, and discovered that its real function was rather to explain what heat and moisture were. History began as chronicle; but the difference between the old chronicler and the modern historian is that to the chronicler the events he recorded were also the *structure* of his history, whereas the historian sees these events as historical phenomena, to be connected within a conceptual framework not only broader but different in shape from them. Similarly each modern science has had to take what Bacon calls (though in another context) an inductive leap, occupying a new vantage ground from which it can see its former data as new things to be explained. As long as astronomers regarded the movements of heavenly bodies as the structure of astronomy, they naturally regarded their own point of view as fixed. Once they thought of movement as itself explicable, a mathematical theory of movement became the conceptual framework, and so the way was cleared for the heliocentric solar system and the law of gravitation. As long as biology thought of animal and vegetable forms of life as constituting its subject, the different branches of biology were largely efforts of cataloguing. As soon as it was the existence of forms of life themselves that had to be explained, the theory of evolution and the conceptions of protoplasm and the cell poured into biology and completely revitalized it.

It occurs to me that literary criticism is now in such a state of naive induction as we find in a primitive science. Its materials, the masterpieces of literature, are not yet regarded as phenomena to be explained in terms of a conceptual framework which criticism

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alone possesses. They are still regarded as somehow constituting the framework or structure of criticism as well. I suggest that it is time for criticism to leap to a new ground from which it can discover what the organizing or containing forms of its conceptual framework are. Criticism seems to be badly in need of a coordinating principle, a central hypothesis which, like the theory of evolution in biology, will see the phenomena it deals with as parts of a whole.

The first postulate of this inductive leap is the same as that of any science: the assumption of total coherence. Simple as this assumption appears, it takes a long time for a science to discover that it is in fact a totally intelligible body of knowledge. Until it makes this discovery, it has not been born as an individual science but remains an embryo within the body of some other subject. The birth of physics from "natural philosophy" and of sociology from "moral philosophy" will illustrate the process. It is also approximately true that the modern sciences have developed in the order of their closeness to mathematics. Thus physics and astronomy began to assume their modern form in the Renaissance, chemistry in the eighteenth century, biology in the nineteenth, and the social sciences in the twentieth. If criticism is a science, it is clearly a social science, and if it is developing only in our day, the fact is at least not an anachronism. Meanwhile, the myopia of specialization remains an inseparable part of naive induction. From such a perspective, "general" questions are humanly impossible to deal with, because they involve "covering" a frighteningly large field. The critic is in the position of a mathematician who has to deal with numbers so large that it would keep him scribbling digits until the next ice age even to write them out in their conventional form as integers. Critic and mathematician alike will have somehow to invent a less cumbersome notation.

Naive induction thinks of literature entirely in terms of the enumerative bibliography of literature: that is, it sees literature as a huge aggregate or miscellaneous pile of discrete "works." Clearly, if literature is nothing more than this, any systematic mental training based on it becomes impossible. Only one organizing principle has so far been discovered in literature, the principle of chronology. This supplies the magic word "tradition," which means that when we see the miscellaneous pile strung out along a chronological line, some coherence is given it by sheer sequence. But even tradition does not answer all our questions. Total literary

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history gives us a glimpse of the possibility of seeing literature as a complication of a relatively restricted and simple group of formulas that can be studied in primitive culture. We next realize that the relation of later literature to these primitive formulas is by no means purely one of complication, as we find the primitive formulas reappearing in the greatest classics—in fact there seems to be a general tendency on the part of great classics to revert to them. This coincides with a feeling we have all had: that the study of mediocre works of art remains a random and peripheral form of critical experience, whereas the profound masterpiece draws us to a point at which we seem to see an enormous number of converging patterns of significance. We begin to wonder if we cannot see literature, not only as complicating itself in time, but as spread out in conceptual space from some kind of center that criticism could locate.

It is clear that criticism cannot be a systematic study unless there is a quality in literature which enables it to be so. We have to adopt the hypothesis, then, that just as there is an order of nature behind the natural sciences, so literature is not a piled aggregate of “works,” but an order of words. A belief in an order of nature, however, is an inference from the intelligibility of the natural sciences; and if the natural sciences ever completely demonstrated the order of nature they would presumably exhaust their subject. Similarly, criticism, if a science, must be totally intelligible, but literature, as the order of words which makes the science possible, is, so far as we know, an inexhaustible source of new critical discoveries, and would be even if new works of literature ceased to be written. If so, then the search for a limiting principle in literature in order to discourage the development of criticism is mistaken. The absurd quantum formula of criticism, the assertion that the critic should confine himself to “getting out” of a poem exactly what the poet may vaguely be assumed to have been aware of “putting in,” is one of the many slovenly illiteracies that the absence of systematic criticism has allowed to grow up. This quantum theory is the literary form of what may be called the fallacy of premature teleology. It corresponds, in the natural sciences, to the assertion that a phenomenon is as it is because Providence in its inscrutable wisdom made it so. That is, the critic is assumed to have no conceptual framework: it is simply his job to take a poem into which a poet has diligently stuffed a specific number of beauties or effects, and

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complacently extract them one by one, like his prototype Little Jack Horner.

The first step in developing a genuine poetics is to recognize and get rid of meaningless criticism, or talking about literature in a way that cannot help to build up a systematic structure of knowledge. This includes all the sonorous nonsense that we so often find in critical generalities, reflective comments, ideological perorations, and other consequences of taking a large view of an unorganized subject. It includes all lists of the “best” novels or poems or writers, whether their particular virtue is exclusiveness or inclusiveness. It includes all casual, sentimental, and prejudiced value-judgments, and all the literary chit-chat which makes the reputations of poets boom and crash in an imaginary stock exchange. That wealthy investor Mr. Eliot, after dumping Milton on the market, is now buying him again; Donne has probably reached his peak and will begin to taper off; Tennyson may be in for a slight flutter but the Shelley stocks are still bearish. This sort of thing cannot be part of any systematic study, for a systematic study can only progress: whatever dithers or vacillates or reacts is merely leisure-class gossip. The history of taste is no more a part of the *structure* of criticism than the Huxley-Wilberforce debate is a part of the structure of biological science.

I believe that if this distinction is maintained and applied to the critics of the past, what they have said about real criticism will show an astonishing amount of agreement, in which the outlines of a coherent and systematic study will begin to emerge. In the history of taste, where there are no facts, and where all truths have been, in Hegelian fashion, split into half-truths in order to sharpen their cutting edges, we perhaps do feel that the study of literature is too relative and subjective ever to make any consistent sense. But as the history of taste has no organic connection with criticism, it can easily be separated. Mr. Eliot's essay *The Function of Criticism* begins by laying down the principle that the existing monuments of literature form an ideal order among themselves, and are not simply collections of the writings of individuals. This is criticism, and very fundamental criticism. Much of this book attempts to annotate it. Its solidity is indicated by its consistency with a hundred other statements that could be collected from the better critics of all ages. There follows a rhetorical debate which makes tradition and its opposite into personified and contending forces,

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the former dignified with the titles of Catholic and Classical, the latter ridiculed by the epithet "Whiggery." This is the sort of thing that makes for confusion until we realize how easy it is to snip it off and throw it away. The debate is maintained against Mr. Middleton Murry, who is spoken of approvingly because "he is aware that there are definite positions to be taken, and that now and then one must actually reject something and select something else." There are no definite positions to be taken in chemistry or philology, and if there are any to be taken in criticism, criticism is not a field of genuine learning. For in any field of genuine learning, the only sensible response to the challenge "stand" is Falstaff's "so I do, against my will." One's "definite position" is one's weakness, the source of one's liability to error and prejudice, and to gain adherents to a definite position is only to multiply one's weakness like an infection.

The next step is to realize that criticism has a great variety of neighbors, and that the critic must enter into relations with them in any way that guarantees his own independence. He may want to know something of the natural sciences, but he need waste no time in emulating their methods. I understand that there is a Ph.D. thesis somewhere which displays a list of Hardy's novels in the order of the percentages of gloom they contain, but one does not feel that that sort of procedure should be encouraged. The critic may want to know something of the social sciences, but there can be no such thing as, for instance, a sociological "approach" to literature. There is no reason why a sociologist should not work exclusively on literary material, but if he does he should pay no attention to literary values. In his field Horatio Alger and the writer of the Elsie books may well be more important than Hawthorne or Melville, and a single issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal* worth all of Henry James. The critic is similarly under no obligation to sociological values, as the social conditions favorable to the production of great art are not necessarily those at which the social sciences aim. The critic may need to know something of religion, but by theological standards an orthodox religious poem will give a more satisfactory expression of its content than a heretical one: this makes nonsense in criticism, and there is nothing to be gained by confusing the standards of the two subjects.

Literature has been always recognized to be a marketable product, its producers being the creative writers and its consumers the culti-

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vated readers, with the critics at their head. From this point of view the critic is, in the metaphor of our opening page, the middleman. He has some wholesaler's privileges, such as free review copies, but his function, as distinct from the bookseller's, is essentially a form of consumer's research. I recognize a second division of labor in literature, which, like other forms of mental construction, has a theory and a practice. The practitioner of literature and the producer of literature are not quite the same, though they overlap a good deal; the theorist of literature and the consumer of literature are not the same at all, even when they co-exist in the same man. The present book assumes that the theory of literature is as primary a humanistic and liberal pursuit as its practice. Hence, although it takes certain literary values for granted, as fully established by critical experience, it is not directly concerned with value-judgements. This fact needs explanation, as the value-judgement is often, and perhaps rightly for all I know, regarded as the distinguishing feature of the humanistic and liberal pursuit.

Value-judgements are subjective in the sense that they can be indirectly but not directly communicated. When they are fashionable or generally accepted, they look objective, but that is all. The demonstrable value-judgement is the donkey's carrot of literary criticism, and every new critical fashion, such as the current fashion for elaborate rhetorical analysis, has been accompanied by a belief that criticism has finally devised a definitive technique for separating the excellent from the less excellent. But this always turns out to be an illusion of the history of taste. Value-judgements are founded on the study of literature; the study of literature can never be founded on value-judgements. Shakespeare, we say, was one of a group of English dramatists working around 1600, and also one of the great poets of the world. The first part of this is a statement of fact, the second a value-judgement so generally accepted as to pass for a statement of fact. But it is not a statement of fact. It remains a value-judgement, and not a shred of systematic criticism can ever be attached to it.

There are two types of value-judgements, comparative and positive. Criticism founded on comparative values falls into two main divisions, according to whether the work of art is regarded as a product or as a possession. The former develops biographical criticism, which relates the work of art primarily to the man who wrote it. The

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latter we may call tropical criticism, and it is primarily concerned with the contemporary reader. Biographical criticism concerns itself largely with comparative questions of greatness and personal authority. It regards the poem as the oratory of its creator, and it feels most secure when it knows of a definite, and preferably heroic, personality behind the poetry. If it cannot find such a personality, it may try to project one out of rhetorical ectoplasm, as Carlyle does in his essay on Shakespeare as a "heroic" poet. Tropical criticism deals comparatively with style and craftsmanship, with complexity of meaning and figurative assimilation. It tends to dislike and belittle the oratorical poets, and it can hardly deal at all with heroic personality. Both are essentially rhetorical forms of criticism, as one deals with the rhetoric of persuasive speech and the other with the rhetoric of verbal ornament, but each distrusts the other's kind of rhetoric.

Rhetorical value-judgements are closely related to social values, and are usually cleared through a customs-house of moral metaphors: sincerity, economy, subtlety, simplicity, and the like. But because poetics is undeveloped, a fallacy arises from the illegitimate extension of rhetoric into the theory of literature. The invariable mark of this fallacy is the selected tradition, illustrated with great clarity in Arnold's "touchstone" theory, where we proceed from the intuition of value represented by the touchstone to a system of ranking poets in classes. The practice of comparing poets by weighing their lines (no new invention, as it was ridiculed by Aristophanes in *The Frogs*) is used by both biographical and tropical critics, mainly in order to deny first-class rating to those in favor with the opposite group.

When we examine the touchstone technique in Arnold, however, certain doubts arise about his motivation. The line from *The Tempest*, "In the dark backward and abysm of time," would do very well as a touchstone line. One feels that the line "Yet a tailor might scratch her where'er she did itch" somehow would not do, though it is equally Shakespearean and equally essential to the same play. (An extreme form of the same kind of criticism would, of course, deny this and insist that the line had been interpolated by a vulgar hack.) Some principle is clearly at work here which is much more highly selective than a purely critical experience of the play would be.

Arnold's "high seriousness" evidently is closely connected with

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the view that epic and tragedy, because they deal with ruling-class figures and require the high style of decorum, are the aristocrats of literary forms. All his Class One touchstones are from, or judged by the standards of, epic and tragedy. Hence his demotion of Chaucer and Burns to Class Two seems to be affected by a feeling that comedy and satire should be kept in their proper place, like the moral standards and the social classes which they symbolize. We begin to suspect that the literary value-judgements are projections of social ones. Why does Arnold *want* to rank poets? He says that we increase our admiration for those who manage to stay in Class One after we have made it very hard for them to do so. This being clearly nonsense, we must look further. When we read “in poetry the distinction between excellent and inferior . . . is of paramount importance . . . because of the high destinies of poetry,” we begin to get a clue. We see that Arnold is trying to create a new scriptural canon out of poetry to serve as a guide for those social principles which he wants culture to take over from religion.

The treatment of criticism as the application of a social attitude is a natural enough result of what we have called the power vacuum in criticism. A systematic study alternates between inductive experience and deductive principles. In criticism rhetorical analysis provides some of the induction, and poetics, the theory of criticism, should be the deductive counterpart. There being no poetics, the critic is thrown back on prejudice derived from his existence as a social being. For prejudice is simply inadequate deduction, as a prejudice in the mind can never be anything but a major premise which is mostly submerged, like an iceberg.

It is not hard to see prejudice in Arnold, because his views have dated: it is a little harder when “high seriousness” becomes “maturity,” or some other powerful persuader of more recent critical rhetoric. It is harder when the old question of what books one would take to a desert island emerges from parlor games, where it belongs, into an expensive library alleged to constitute the scriptural canon of democratic values. Rhetorical value-judgements usually turn on questions of decorum, and the central conception of decorum is the difference between high, middle, and low styles. These styles are suggested by the class structure of society, and criticism, if it is not to reject half the facts of literary experience, obviously has to look at art from the standpoint of an ideally classless society. Arnold himself points this out when he says that “culture seeks

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to do away with classes." Every deliberately constructed hierarchy of values in literature known to me is based on a concealed social, moral, or intellectual analogy. This applies whether the analogy is conservative and Romantic, as it is in Arnold, or radical, giving the top place to comedy, satire, and the values of prose and reason, as it is in Bernard Shaw. The various pretexts for minimizing the communicative power of certain writers, that they are obscure or obscene or nihilistic or reactionary or what not, generally turn out to be disguises for a feeling that the views of decorum held by the ascendant social or intellectual class ought to be either maintained or challenged. These social fixations keep changing, like a fan turning in front of a light, and the changing inspires the belief that posterity eventually discovers the whole truth about art.

A selective approach to tradition, then, invariably has some ultra-critical joker concealed in it. There is no question of accepting the whole of literature as the basis of study, but a tradition (or, of course, "the" tradition) is abstracted from it and attached to contemporary social values, being then used to document those values. The hesitant reader is invited to try the following exercise. Pick three big names at random, work out the eight possible combinations of promotion and demotion (on a simplified, or two-class, basis) and defend each in turn. Thus if the three names picked were Shakespeare, Milton, and Shelley, the agenda would run:

1. Demoting Shelley, on the ground that he is immature in technique and profundity of thought compared to the others.
2. Demoting Milton, on the ground that his religious obscurantism and heavy doctrinal content impair the spontaneity of his utterance.
3. Demoting Shakespeare, on the ground that his detachment from ideas makes his dramas a reflection of life rather than a creative attempt to improve it.
4. Promoting Shakespeare, on the ground that he preserves an integrity of poetic vision which in the others is obfuscated by didacticism.
5. Promoting Milton, on the ground that his penetration of the highest mysteries of faith raises him above Shakespeare's unvarying worldliness and Shelley's callowness.
6. Promoting Shelley, on the ground that his love of freedom

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speaks to the heart of modern man more immediately than poets who accepted outworn social or religious values.

7. Promoting all three (for this a special style, which we may call the peroration style, should be used).

8. Demoting all three, on the ground of the untidiness of English genius when examined by French or Classical or Chinese standards.

The reader may sympathize with some of these "positions," as they are called, more than with others, and so be seduced into thinking that one of them must be right, and that it is important to decide which one it is. But long before he has finished his assignment he will realize that the whole procedure involved is an anxiety neurosis prompted by a moral censor, and is totally devoid of content. Of course, in addition to the moralists, there are poets who regard only those other poets as authentic who sound like themselves; there are critics who enjoy making religious, anti-religious, or political campaigns with toy soldiers labelled "Milton" or "Shelley" more than they enjoy studying poetry; there are students who have urgent reasons for making as much edifying reading as possible superfluous. But a conspiracy even of all these still does not make criticism.

The social dialectics applied externally to criticism, then, are, *within criticism*, pseudo-dialectics, or false rhetoric. It remains to try to define the true dialectic of criticism. On this level the biographical critic becomes the historical critic. He develops from hero-worship towards total and indiscriminate acceptance: there is nothing "in his field" that he is not prepared to read with interest. From a purely historical point of view, however, cultural phenomena are to be read in their own context without contemporary application. We study them as we do the stars, seeing their interrelationships but not approaching them. Hence historical criticism needs to be complemented by a corresponding activity growing out of tropical criticism.

We may call this ethical criticism, interpreting ethics not as a rhetorical comparison of social facts to predetermined values, but as the consciousness of the presence of society. As a critical category this would be the sense of the real presence of culture in the community. Ethical criticism, then, deals with art as a communication from the past to the present, and is based on the conception of the total and simultaneous possession of past culture. An exclusive de-

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votion to it, ignoring historical criticism, would lead to a naive translation of all cultural phenomena into our own terms without regard to their original character. As a counterweight to historical criticism, it is designed to express the contemporary impact of all art, without selecting a tradition. Every new critical fashion has increased the appreciation of some poets and depreciated others, as the increase of interest in the metaphysical poets tended to depreciate the Romantics about twenty-five years ago. On the ethical level we can see that every increase of appreciation has been right, and every decrease wrong: that criticism has no business to react against things, but should show a steady advance toward indiscriminating catholicity. Oscar Wilde said that only an auctioneer could be equally appreciative of all kinds of art: he had of course the public critic in mind, but even the public critic's job of getting the treasures of culture into the hands of the people who want them is largely an auctioneer's job. And if this is true of him, it is *a fortiori* true of the scholarly critic.

The dialectic axis of criticism, then, has as one pole the total acceptance of the data of literature, and as the other the total acceptance of the potential values of those data. This is the real level of culture and of liberal education, the fertilizing of life by learning, in which the systematic progress of scholarship flows into a systematic progress of taste and understanding. On this level there is no itch to make weighty judgements, and none of the ill effects which follow the debauchery of judiciousness, and have made the word critic a synonym for an educated shrew. Comparative estimates of value are really inferences, most valid when silent ones, from critical practice, not expressed principles guiding its practice. The critic will find soon, and constantly, that Milton is a more rewarding and suggestive poet to work with than Blackmore. But the more obvious this becomes, the less time he will want to waste in belaboring the point. For belaboring the point is all he can do: any criticism motivated by a desire to establish or prove it will be merely one more document in the history of taste. There is doubtless much in the culture of the past which will always be of comparatively slight value to the present. But the difference between redeemable and irredeemable art, being based on the *total* experience of criticism, can never be theoretically formulated. There are too many Cinderellas among the poets, too many stones

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rejected from one fashionable building that have become heads of the next corner.

There may, then, be such things as rules of critical procedure, and laws, in the sense of the patterns of observed phenomena, of literary practice. All efforts of critics to discover rules or laws in the sense of moral mandates telling the artist what he ought to do, or have done, to be an authentic artist, have failed. "Poetry," said Shelley, "and the art which professes to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together." There is no such art, and there never has been. The substitution of subordination and value-judgment for coordination and description, the substitution of "all poets should" for "some poets do," is only a sign that all the relevant facts have not yet been considered. Critical statements with "must" or "should" in their predicates are either pedantries or tautologies, depending on whether they are taken seriously or not. Thus a dramatic critic may wish to say "all plays must have unity of action." If he is a pedant, he will then try to define unity of action in specific terms. But creative power is versatile, and he is sure to find himself sooner or later asserting that some perfectly reputable dramatist, whose effectiveness on the stage has been proved over and over again, does not exhibit the unity of action he has defined, and is consequently not writing what he regards as plays at all. The critic who attempts to apply such principles in a more liberal or more cautious spirit will soon have to broaden his conceptions to the point, not of course of saying, but of trying to conceal the fact that he is saying, "all plays that have unity of action must have unity of action," or, more simply and more commonly, "all good plays must be good plays."

Criticism, in short, and aesthetics generally, must learn to do what ethics has already done. There was a time when ethics could take the simple form of comparing what man does with what he ought to do, known as the good. The "good" invariably turned out to be whatever the author of the book was accustomed to and found sanctioned by his community. Ethical writers now, though they still have values, tend to look at their problems rather differently. But a procedure which is hopelessly outmoded in ethics is still in vogue among writers on aesthetic problems. It is still possible for a critic to define as authentic art whatever he happens to like, and to go on to assert that what he happens not to like is, in terms of that definition, not authentic art. The argument has the great

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advantage of being irrefutable, as all circular arguments are, but it is shadow and not substance.

The odious comparisons of greatness, then, may be left to take care of themselves, for even when we feel obliged to assent to them they are still only unproductive platitudes. The real concern of the evaluating critic is with positive value, with the goodness, or perhaps the genuineness, of the poem rather than with the greatness of its author. Such criticism produces the direct value-judgement of informed good taste, the proving of art on the pulses, the disciplined response of a highly organized nervous system to the impact of poetry. No critic in his senses would try to belittle the importance of this; nevertheless there are some caveats even here. In the first place, it is superstition to believe that the swift intuitive certainty of good taste is infallible. Good taste follows and is developed by the study of literature; its precision results from knowledge, but does not produce knowledge. Hence the accuracy of any critic's good taste is no guarantee that its inductive basis in literary experience is adequate. This may still be true even after the critic has learned to base his judgements on his experience of literature and not on his social, moral, religious, or personal anxieties. Honest critics are continually finding blind spots in their taste: they discover the possibility of recognizing a valid form of poetic experience without being able to realize it for themselves.

In the second place, the positive value-judgement is founded on a direct experience which is central to criticism yet forever excluded from it. Criticism can account for it only in critical terminology, and that terminology can never recapture or include the original experience. The original experience is like the direct vision of color, or the direct sensation of heat or cold, that physics "explains" in what, from the point of view of the experience itself, is a quite irrelevant way. However disciplined by taste and skill, the experience of literature is, like literature itself, unable to speak. "If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off," said Emily Dickinson, "I know this is poetry." This remark is perfectly sound, but it relates only to criticism as experience. The reading of literature should, like prayer in the Gospels, step out of the talking world of criticism into the private and secret presence of literature. Otherwise the reading will not be a genuine literary experience, but a mere reflection of critical conventions, memories, and prejudices. The presence of incommunicable experience in the

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center of criticism will always keep criticism an art, as long as the critic recognizes that criticism comes out of it but cannot be built on it.

Thus, though the normal development of a critic's taste is toward greater tolerance and catholicity, still criticism as knowledge is one thing, and value-judgements informed by taste are another. The attempt to bring the direct experience of literature into the structure of criticism produces the aberrations of the history of taste already dealt with. The attempt to reverse the procedure and bring criticism into direct experience will destroy the integrity of both. Direct experience, even if it is concerned with something already read hundreds of times, still tries to be a new and fresh experience each time, which is clearly impossible if the poem itself has been replaced by a critical view of the poem. To bring my own view that criticism as knowledge should constantly progress and reject nothing into direct experience would mean that the latter should progress toward a general stupor of satisfaction with everything written, which is not quite what I have in mind.

Finally, the skill developed from constant practice in the direct experience of literature is a special skill, like playing the piano, not the expression of a general attitude to life, like singing in the shower. The critic has a subjective background of experience formed by his temperament and by every contact with words he has made, including newspapers, advertisements, conversations, movies, and whatever he read at the age of nine. He has a specific skill in responding to literature which is no more like this subjective background, with all its private memories, associations, and arbitrary prejudices, than reading a thermometer is like shivering. Again, there is no one of critical ability who has not experienced intense and profound pleasure from something simultaneously with a low critical valuation of what produced it. There must be several dozen critical and aesthetic theories based on the assumption that subjective pleasure and the specific response to art are, or develop from, or ultimately become, the same thing. Yet every cultivated person who is not suffering from advanced paranoia knows that they are constantly distinct. Or, again, the ideal value may be quite different from the actual one. A critic may spend a thesis, a book, or even a life work on something that he candidly admits to be third-rate, simply because it is connected with something else that he thinks sufficiently important for his pains. No critical theory known to me takes any real account of the different systems

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of valuation implied by one of the most common practices of criticism.

Now that we have swept out our interpreter's parlor in the spirit of the law, and raised the dust, we shall try it again with whatever unguents of revelation we may possess. It should hardly be necessary to point out that my polemic has been written in the first person plural, and is quite as much a confession as a polemic. It is clear, too, that a book of this kind can only be offered to a reader who has enough sympathy with its aims to overlook, in the sense not of ignoring but of seeing past, whatever strikes him as inadequate or simply wrong. I am convinced that if we wait for a fully qualified critic to tackle the subjects of these essays, we shall wait a long time. In order to keep the book within the bounds that would make it possible to write and publish it, I have proceeded deductively, and been rigorously selective in examples and illustrations. The deductiveness does not extend further than tactical method, and so far as I know there is no principle in the book which is claimed as a perfect major premise, without exceptions or negative instances. Such expressions as "normally," "usually," "regularly," or "as a rule" are thickly strewn throughout. An objection of the "what about so-and-so?" type may always be made by the reader without necessarily destroying statements based on collective observations, and there are many questions of the "where would you put so-and-so?" type that cannot be answered by the present writer.

Still, the schematic nature of this book is deliberate, and is a feature of it that I am unable, after long reflection, to apologize for. There is a place for classification in criticism, as in any other discipline which is more important than an elegant accomplishment of some mandarin caste. The strong emotional repugnance felt by many critics toward any form of schematization in poetics is again the result of a failure to distinguish criticism as a body of knowledge from the direct experience of literature, where every act is unique, and classification has no place. Whenever schematization appears in the following pages, no importance is attached to the schematic form itself, which may be only the result of my own lack of ingenuity. Much of it, I expect, and in fact hope, may be mere scaffolding, to be knocked away when the building is in better shape. The rest of it belongs to the systematic study of the formal causes of art.

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