

work of a painter is comparable to a single chord of music *** The story a picture tells is the literature it illustrates *** The failure of painting as compared to music is that it can't make one forget the real world *** If a beautiful building were a painting it would be tedious."

And then as a last contribution "Toward a Realistic Aesthetic" come four pages (one-third of the preceding) in development of a theme given out as—

"In contemplating the stupendous achievements of such a man as Wagner—achievements so colossal that only a small minority of men specially trained can ever comprehend and appreciate them—one often finds oneself wondering how much further he would have gone had he not been harassed by his two wives."

II.

IMPURE PURE CRITICISM

Van Wyck Brooks49%

To Brooks, for the finding of sociological evidence, 98%.
For his use of it as literary criticism, 0.

Irving Babbitt20.5%

"Every madhouse, indeed, has inmates who are very imaginative in the fashion Poe here describes (in Hans Pfaal)."

If the mad differed not in kind but only in degree from artists, Babbitt should search the asylums for geniuses. I recall a footnote from Damon's Blake: Babbitt's saying that

"If Buddha was a mystic, Blake could not have been one."
is equivalent to saying that two men cannot both be drunk

(1) I spent considerable pains in obtaining these percentages, taking the votes of a great number of poets, novelists and essayists, but avoiding critics, whose judgment might be influenced by professional jealousy. There was extreme disagreement as regards some of the ratings. Eliot varied from 80 to 35; Stuart P. Sherman from 65 to 5, and Mencken from 15 to —79%. In other cases, like that of John Farrar, there was almost unanimity. The resulting percentages are a pretty fair index to the attitude of younger writers toward the older critics.

Examining these figures and Mr. Wheelwright's commentary, we observe that the critics fall broadly into four categories. (1) The highest in rating are academic critics, devoted to standards of morality and scholarship, whose fault is a superstitious reverence for these standards. Next in the scale come (2) the psychological and sociological critics. Their essays on Mark Twain or Leonardo read like a laboratory report. They can tell you why Poe took to drink, but not why he took to greatness. There follow (3) the editors and publicists, inclined to the conservatism of compromise; while at the bottom of the list are grouped (4) the impressionists, the "I feel" critics of all types, ending in that most rudimentary impressionist variety, the columnists. Here all positive ratings vanish, and we come to what many of the voters considered as positive—or in some cases negative—distress.

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