

Principles of Literary Criticism

Chapter 3- The Language of Criticism

Whatever the disadvantages of modern aesthetics as a basis for a theory of criticism, the great advance made upon prescientific speculation into the nature of Beauty must be recognized.

Poetry

- Poetry and inspiration together is true, still dignify respectable quarters with their presence.
 - Poetry (like life) is one thing, essentially a continuous substance of energy,
 - poetry is historically a connected movement, a series of successive integrated manifestations.
 - Each poet from Homer or the predecessors of Homer to our own day, has been, to some degree and at some point, the voice of movement and energy of poetry.
 - Poetry has for the moment become visible, audible, incarnate.
 - Homer's extant poems are the record left of that partial transitory incarnation.
 - The progress of poetry, with its vast power and exalted function, is immortal.
-
- ❶ Construction, Design, Form, Rhythm, Expression are more often for which a theory of criticism should provide explainable substitutes.
 - ❷ While current attitudes of language persist, this difficulty of the linguistic phantom must still continue.
 - ❸ It has to be recognized that all our natural turns of speech are misleading, especially those we use in discussing works of art.
 - ❹ We are accustomed to say that **a picture is beautiful**, instead of saying it causes an experience in us which is valuable in certain ways.

Ex: This is beautiful

- The belief that there is such a quality or attribute namely Beauty.
- This belief is probably inevitable for all reflective persons at a certain stage of their mental development.
- Throughout all the discussion of works of art the drag exercised by language towards this view can be felt.

- ❶ Construction, form, balance, composition, design, unity, expression – Arts
- ❷ Depth, movement, texture, solidity – criticism of painting
- ❸ Rhythm, stress, plot, character – literary criticism
- ❹ Harmony, atmosphere, development – music

All these terms are currently used as though they stood for qualities inherent in things outside the mind, as a painting.

Language:

- ❶ Language has succeeded.
- ❷ Whatever we are discussing music, poetry, painting, sculpture or architecture, we are forced to speak as though certain physical objects vibrations of strings and of columns of air, marks printed on paper, etc.

Critics do not apply to such objects to states of mind, to experiences.

- ❶ Must be prepared, then to translate into phrases, all simple utterances which the conversation decencies.

The Critics

- ❶ The critic goes further and affirms that the effect in his mind is due to special particular features of the object. In this case , the critic is pointing out something about the object in addition to its effect upon.
- ❶ A clear demarcation between the object (with its features), and critic's experience (which is the effect of contemplating) is necessary.
- ❶ The bulk of critical literature is unfortunately made up of example of their confusion.

Critical Part and Technical Part:

- ❶ In a full critical statement which states not only that an experience is valuable in certain ways, but also that it is caused by certain features in a contemplated object. (the part which describes the value of the **experience** we shall call *the critical part*, object that shall call *the technical part*.)
- ❶ Metre is more suited to the tender passion as it stands a technical remark, a critical part might easily be also present.
- ❶ Critical remarks are merely a branch of psychological remarks, that no special ethical or metaphysical ideas need to be introduced to explain value.
- ❶ The distinction between technical and critical remarks is of real importance.