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...the thing he could not do was to bring himself to act unless when surprised by a sudden impulse of suspicion—as where he kills Polonius, and there he could not see his victim. He discourses admirably of suicide, but does not kill himself; he talks daggers, but uses none. He puts by his chance to kill the king with the axe that he will not do it while he is praying, lest his soul(75) be saved thereby, though it be more than doubtful whether he believed himself that, if there were a soul to be saved, it could be saved by that expedient. When Goethe made his famous comparison of the acorn planted in a vase which it bursts with its growth, and says that in like manner Hamlet is a nature which breaks down under the weight of duty too great for it to bear, he seems to have considered the character too much from one side. Had Hamlet actually killed himself to escape his too onerous commission, Goethe's conception of him would have been satisfactory enough. But Hamlet was hardly a sentimentalist, like Werther(76)...The primary object of a tragedy is not to inculcate a formal moral. Representing life, it teaches, like life, by indirection, by those nods and winks that are thrown away on us blind horses in such profusion(77)...Shakespeare knew human nature too well not to know that one thorn of experience is worth a whole wilderness of warning...He did not mean his great tragedies for Scarsdale, or for the sailing school, or for the business barn-door would prevent the heart from coming down close into the hen-yard. No, it is not the poor blanching victim hung up to scold its draggled feathers in the rain that he wishes to show us(78)...If we must draw a moral from Hamlet, it would seem to be, that Will is Fate, and that, Will once addicting, the inevitable successor in the regency is Chance(80)

WORDSWORTH: He became not only the partisan of a system, but of William Wordsworth as its representative(86)...He was theoretically determined not only to be a philosophic poet, but to be a great philosophic poet, and to this end he must produce an epic...It may be doubted whether the history of a single man's mind is universal enough in its interest to furnish all the requirements of the epic machinery(88)...It is only the episodes in "The Excursion" that are universally read, and the effect of these is diluted by the connecting and accompanying lectures on metaphysics. Wordsworth had his epic mould to fill, and, like Benvenuto Cellini in casting his Perseus, was forced to throw in everything, debasing the metal lest it should run short(89)...Crabb Robinson tells us that he read Resolution and Independence to a lady who was affected by it, even to tears, and then said, "I have not heard anything for years that so much delighted me; but, after all, it is not poetry"(90)...His finest passages are always monologues...That sequestered nook, the sonnet form, forced upon him the limits which his fecundity (if I may not say his garrulity) was never self-denying enough to impose on itself(92)...His absolute want of humor...seems to have been indicative of a certain dulness of perception in other directions...Nowhere is this displayed with more comic self-complacency than when he thought it needful to rewrite the ballad of Helen of Kithorn...---a poem hardly to be matched(93).

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Antony Alpers, *The Life of Katherine Mansfield* (1960)

During this book reviews a faithful work of mine published in 1955. It drew on more than twenty lines of material. It is true that constant in many directions; and it now contains personal information obtained from friends and colleagues of its subject, and historical research done at a suitable distance in time. The reviewer, however, published who Katherine Mansfield would have been only 64, was written with assistance freely given by both of her husbands and the close friends whom she used to call her "wife." In (iii) 1947, when I went to London with the book, I had two, very busy, one of the most important men to be found in the world of English letters. After the book was published, he and some others with excellent taste had told me much that he had not known, (viii) today, the papers of the literary generation have acquired still more value. Some remain in the hands of those who have crossed the threshold—some to be learned, some to be loved, some to be loved, some to be loved with care and made available to scholars. Deaths have increased the need for private and reliable; our very notions of what is desirable in biography have changed. (ix) To witness gratitude goes to all the same.

Kate had a penetrating gaze which disconcerted grown-ups. Her mother had no affection for her. She took to reading far more than was good for her eyes. She attended classes (12) only made the gaze more disconcerting still (14). What set Dr. W. H. Rindall, head of the school, eventually of the story The Garden Party, surprised its size and its raised position. The lower order was not nearly in full view, not within a school, not in and days (15). She whole atmosphere of "Miss Sedgwick's" school, perhaps its pupils for a life which looked on England as "home," and New Zealand as "not here." It was seldom that a girl left it for anything but a "finishing school" in England or Europe. Mrs. Henry Smith (a cousin of Charles (Kipling) said Kate Mansfield was "blatant," "a sure sort of girl," and "imaginative to the point of untruth." (19)

Queen's College, in Harley Street, was the first institution to be created in England for the higher education of women. A young lady of the Victorian middle class was neither handsome, clever, or capable of much, but she was a good girl; for slavery which led her to be called a "governess." There was nothing else that she could see the only acceptable profession for women then who married, but women in England for centuries had, small children were to be seen and not heard while their parents enjoyed themselves, and so the governess was "a special victim of Victorian society," always widely recognized for her task, and exploited because she was "feminine." (22) The first school, called her name, and she helped to open the (24) medical profession to women. These four, with "Katherine Mansfield," are the school's most famous pupils. Of necessity, Queen's College had had two professors. Arthur Hayslow, making his name as an innovator in language teaching, taught German with seductive charm. Verbalism and Richard Dainton (25). Kathleen was chosen, or rather more than Ida Constantine. Her personality and a sort of subtle charm, which, besides printing, she at once had a crush on Vera, Kathleen's sister. "I used to find her lying on the floor outside my room waiting to see if she could help me undress" — remark that could easily be misunderstood in the case of the girl, Kathleen, if she didn't happen to explain that it was a matter of admirable looks and eyes. So she knew Ida well. She had a subtle appetite for mischief, and in one so

84 The Oxford Dictionary of English Biography, p. 512. To p. 946. The  
Katherine Mansfield. This is the best in Katherine Mansfield's long & life journey  
that brought me, joined of them but not full!

all of his superfluous wealth, is only deceiving himself if he calls it charity (546)...One is merely the fallacy of ambiguity—the assumption that 'doing good' (that is, benefiting somebody) is necessarily a good thing to do (that is, a right thing). The other is the assumption that, if one of the two specified acts is better than another, it is necessarily a good act in itself. I should like to call this the fallacy of comparison—meaning that it assumes that what is comparatively good is therefore positively good.... Suppose I find two children drowning in a pond. I rush in, and save one of the children, and then walk away, leaving the other to drown. Clearly I have 'done good'; in saving a child's life? But—again, supposing I meet an inoffensive stranger, and knock him down, and walk on. Clearly that is 'better' than if I had proceeded to jump upon him and break his ribs? But—(547)...For utterly inappropriate and irrelevant quotations, you are 'skilled by few and exalted by none' (550).

Ch. 9: "In that case, kindly send those peaches down here," said a fat red-faced man. "I've been wishing for them—disgustingly—for some time" (599).

Ch. 10: The pompous man began one of his favorite orations. "They are charming, no doubt; charming, but very frivolous. They—" "Do not all pronouns require an antecedent noun?" the Earl gently enquired (604). In eager little man shrilly interposed: "For richness of general tone I don't say that cherry-jam has a rival. But for delicacy of modulation—for what one may call the 'harmonies' of flavour—give me old raspberry-jam!" (605) "Allow me one word!" The fat red-faced man broke into the dialogue. "...I can give you the views of...the most experienced jam-taster now living...His words were 'cherry-jam is best, for mere chic resource; raspberry-jam ends itself best to those resolved disards that linger so lovingly on the tongue; but, for rapturous utterance of saccharine perfection, it's apricot-jam first and the rest nowhere!" (606). "A mile or two, I think," Sylvie said doubtfully. "A mile or three," said Bruno. The young lady said: "It isn't usual to say a 'mile or three.'" "It would be usual—if we said it often enough," said Bruno (607). There was an almost-perfect mechanical correctness—and there was nothing else! (610)... "Isn't it beautiful?" Lady Muriel whispered to Arthur, with a mischievous smile. "Such execution, you know!" "That's what she deserves," Arthur doggedly replied. "But you do like music, don't you?" "Do I like music? My dear Lady Muriel, there is music and music. Your question is painfully vague. You might as well ask 'Do you like people?'" (610).

Ch. 15: Bruno opened the hamper and—saw nuffin in the hamper! So Bruno said "Eldeset little Fox, have you been eating yourself, you wicked little Fox!" And then Bruno saw there was only its mouth in the hamper! So he took the mouth, and opened it, and shook, and shook! And at last he shook the little Fox out of its own mouth! And then he said "Open your mouth again, you wicked little thing!" And he shook, and shook! And he shook out the second little Fox! And he said "Now open your mouth!" And he shook, and shook! And he shook out the youngest little Fox, and all the Apples, and all the Bread. (658)

Ch. 17: The Professor's Song: "In nature the Marlet was dwarfish—/So burly big Blunderbore he; And he warmly gazed on the crawfish/His wifelet had dressed for his tea, /How rich he, sweetest, on my gumlet, /And hurl the old shoelet for luck; /Let me hie to the back of the rumlet, /And shoot thee a Duck! /.../.../.../Where the Ducklet is sought by the Froglet; /Where the Froglet is pursued by the Duck; /Where the Ducklet is chased by the Doglet—/So runs the world's luck! /.../.../ (674) Are you not, as Bruno would say, 'my very mine' (678)?

Ch. 20: The Gardener's Song: "He thought he saw an Argument /That proved he was the Pope; /He looked again, and found it was /A Bar of Mottled Soap. /A fact so dread, /He faintly said, /'Extinguishes all hope!'" (701).

Ch. 21: The Professor's Lecture. "A Neurologosop. You know you can't see a Flea,

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# 錢鍾書手稿集



## No.176

...that is to say, the aesthetic pleasure, the aesthetic effect, of the reader's attention determined by the poet's... "Paradise Lost" is a poem, as is every too. (2) ... cannot remove the poem by its being...  
*Paradise Lost* (1667-1674), pp. 15-17. For more on the history of the poem, see...  
 ...the poem is a poem, as is every too. (2) ... cannot remove the poem by its being...  
 ...the poem is a poem, as is every too. (2) ... cannot remove the poem by its being...

Norman Foerster, ed., *American Critical Essays: 19th & 20th Centuries* ("The World's Classics").  
 EDGAR ALLAN POE *24th August*

THE POETIC PRINCIPLE: I held that a long poem does not exist. I maintained that the phrase, "a long poem", is simply a flat contradiction in terms... A poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitement is, through a psychical necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags--falls--a revulsion ensues--and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such. There are, no doubt, many who have found (1) difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the *Paradise Lost* is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of art, unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its unity--its totality of effect or impression--we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which as critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again, omitting the first book--that is to say, commencing with the second--we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned--that damnable which we had previously admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity... In regard to the *Iliad*, we have, if not positive proof, at least a very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based on an imperfect sense of art... But the day of these artistic anomalies is over (2)... Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered--there can be nothing in mere bulk, so far as a volume is concerned which has so continuously elicited admiration from these satiric pamphlets [the *Quarterly Review*] as a mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, does impress us with a sense of the outline--but no man is impressed after this fashion by the material grandeur of even *The Columbiad*... As yet, they have not insisted on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollock by the pound (3) ... On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A very short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax... [Böhringer's poems], as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind. A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem is [Shelley's "I arise from dreams of thee"] (4). Willis: "For her heart was cold..."

*Journal of Hawthorne at Cambridge, June 1859, 1846*





\* that is to say, the rhythmic flow, diastole & systole, of the reader's attention determine the true poetry of "platitude" as a poem. This is really too crude. Croce reminds the critic by the theory of "amicizia di petti" (see *Poesia*, 5<sup>a</sup> ed., pp. 75 ff.). For Croce's high estimate of Poe's essay, see *Introduction* by Borges in *Comparative Literature: Proceedings of the Second Congress of ICLA*, II, pp. 510 ff.

\*\* Croce's *Pluralismo* in his anthology *Survey of the Modern Comedy*, etc. (cf. A. Menzies's *poesie*)

Norman Foerster, ed., American Critical Essays: 19th & 20th Centuries ("The World's Classics").

✓ *un po' di legno per  
papaveri e all'alta epica*

EDGAR ALLAN POE *meravigliante*

THE POETIC PRINCIPLE: I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem", is simply a flat contradiction in terms... A poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags---fails---a revulsion ensues---and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such. There are, no doubt, many who have found (1) difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the Paradise Lost is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical, only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity---its totality of effect or impression---we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again; omitting the first book---that is to say, commencing with the second---we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned---that damnable which we had previously admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity.... In regard to the Iliad, we have, if not positive proof, at least a very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based on an imperfect sense of Art... But the day of these artistic anomalies is over (2).... Surely there can be nothing in mere size, abstractly considered---there can be nothing in mere bulk, so far as a volume is concerned which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets [the Quarterly Review]! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, does impress us with a sense of the sublime---but no man is impressed after this fashion by the material grandeur of even The Columbiad.... As yet, they have not insisted on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollok by the pound (3) O... On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A very short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax.... [Béranger's poems], as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind. A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem is [Shelley's "I arise from dreams of thee"] (4). Willis: "~~For her heart was col~~

in *Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, June 1954, p. 456)

Gregory Ballough, Mirror of Minds (1962), p. 214: "Poe's Theory ... like Pater's, ignored the poetic as well as the psychological importance of phases of lowered tension, the rise before & the recuperatory fall after the moment of 'hard genuine flame'. As Wm James wrote of 'the stream of consciousness': 'Like a bird's life, it seems to be an alternation of flights & perchings'." cf. Johnson, Lives of the English Poets, & "Dryden", à propos of On the Death of Mrs Killigrew: "All the stanzas indeed are not equal. An imperial crown cannot be one continued diamond; the gems must be held together by some less valuable matter." T.S. Eliot, To Criticise the Critics, p. 34:

"[Poe] could conceive only a poem which has a single simple effect: for him, the whole of a poem had to be in one word ... these parts can form a whole which is more than the sum of the parts ... In a long poem some parts may be deliberately planned to be less 'poetic' than others: these passages may show no lustre when extracted, but may be intended to elicit, by contrast, the significance of other parts, & to unite them into a whole more significant than any of the parts."



*\* Perhaps for the first time the time-honoured theory which, among other things, justifies allegory (cf. *Infancy*, XI:41; *Geographical Fictions*, I:3, etc.) is openly refuted. Fiction: "It's all a bit of a trick"*

*\* Crocean*

"She kept with care her beauties rare/From lovers warm and true,/For her heart was cold to all but gold,/And the rich came not to woo---/But honoured well are charms to sell/If priests the selling do." While the epic mania---while the idea that, to merit in poetry, prolixity is indispensable---has, for some years past, been gradually dying out of the public mind, by mere dint of its absurdity---we find it succeeded by a heresy...which...may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of The Didactic (6). It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth....Under the sun there neither exists nor can exist any work more thoroughly dignified---more supremely noble than this very poem---this poem per se---this poem which is a poem and nothing more---this poem written solely for the poem's sake... The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All that which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all that with which she has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox, to wreath her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, impassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical (7)....He must be theory-mad beyond redemption who...shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth (8)....I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever with Duty or with Truth (10)....It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve, incidentally in various ways, the general purposes of the work:---but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem. The Proem to Mr Longfellow's "Waif": "The day is done, and the darkness/Fall from the wings of Night,/As a feather is wafted downward/From an eagle in his flight (11). // I see the lights of the village/Gleam through the rain and the mist,/And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,/That my soul cannot resist:// A feeling of sadness and longing,/That is not akin to pain,/And resembles sorrow only/As the mist resembles the rain. //...// Not from the grand old masters,/Not from the bards sublime,/Whose distant footsteps echo/Through the corridors of Time. //... (12) // Then read from the treasured volume/The poem of thy choice,/And lend to the rhyme of the poet/The beauty of thy voice. // And the night shall be filled with music,/And the cares that infest the day,/Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,/And as silently steal away" (13). Bryant: "June": "...But if, around my place of sleep,/The friends I love should come to weep,/They might not haste to go./Soft airs, and song, and light and bloom/Should keep them lingering by my tomb. // These to their soften'd hearts should bear/The thought of what has been,/And speak of one who cannot

\* From Goethe's review of Manzoni's *Conte di Cleopatra*. As I. Babbitt points out in connection with Spengler's "The New Criticism", Goethe kept the 3 questions bodily from the first paragraph of Manzoni's preface to his work; Spengler in his introduction omits the second question & Babbitt takes him to task: "Mr Spengler owes the public an explanation of how he came to reduce Goethe's 3 questions to 2, with the result of transforming him from an Aristotelian humanist into a Crocean idealist" (CMB 19).

share/The gladness of the scene(14);/Whose part, in all the pomp that fills/The circuit of the summer hills,/Is---that his grave is green;/... "...The impression left is one of pleasurable sadness....This certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless, "A feeling of sadness and longing/That is not akin to pain,/And resembles sorrow only/As the mist resembles the rain"(15). It has been the fashion, of late days, to deny Moore imagination, while granting him fancy...Never was a grosser wrong done the name of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly---more weirdly imaginative, in the best sense, than the lines commencing(18)---"I would I were by that dim lake"---which are the composition of Thomas Moore....One of the noblest...one of the most singularly fanciful of poets modern, was Thomas Hood(19)...."The Haunted House"...is one of the truest poems ever written....Permit me to offer the universally appreciated "Bridge of Sighs"(20). Among the minor poems of Lord Byron, is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves: "...Although human, thou didst not deceive me,/Though woman, thou didst not forsake,/.../I have found that whatever it lost me,/It could not deprive me of thee..."(24)....I call Tennyson, and think him the noblest of poets...not because the poetical excitement he induces is, at all times, the most intense---but because it is, at all times, the(25) most ethereal---in other words, the most elevating and the most pure. From The Princess: "Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,/.../And thinking of the days that are no more.//.../So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.//.../So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.//.../20 Death in Life, the days that are no more"(26).

R.W. EMERSON

MONTAIGNE; OR, THE SKEPTIC: Every fact is related on one side to sensation, and on the other to morals. The game of thought is, on the appearance of one of these two sides, to find the other: given the upper, to find the underside. Nothing so thin but has these two faces, and when the observer has seen the obverse, he turns it over to see the reverse. Life is a pitching of this penny,---heads or tails(29)...He has a conception of beauty which the sculptor cannot embody. Picture, statue, temple, railroad, steam-engine, existed first in an artist's mind, without flaw, mistake, or friction, which impair the executed models(30). Is not marriage an open question, when it is alleged, from the beginning of the world, that such as are in the institution wish to get out, and such as are out wish to get in?(35).

J.R. LOWELL

HAMLET: Goethe...tells us that a poem is like a painted window. Seen from without...they seem dingy and confused enough; but enter, and then, "Da ist's auf einmal farbig helle, /Geschicht' und Zierath glänzt in Schnelle." He says elsewhere: "...Productive criticism...asks, What did the author propose to himself? Is what he proposes reasonable, and comprehensible? and how far has he succeeded in carrying it out? It is in applying this latter kind of criticism to Shakespeare that the Germans have set us an example worthy of all commendation(57). I find two passages in Dante that contain the exactest possible definition of that creative, R 29; Spengler's truncated question occurs in *Creative Criticism*, 2nd ed. 1931, p. 17 & in the present vol. p. 431. Forster in *American Criticism*, p. 119 also notices Spengler's omission.