

according to Brunetière, the consummate tradition of the race. Before then all is preparation, after this period all is decay except in the domain of the novel and lyric poetry, which he would have us consider as inferior branches of literature. The extent to which his seventeenth century prejudices sway him may be illustrated in a sentence: "Il y a une connaissance des hommes et des choses plus profonde et plus sûre, un sens plus vif de la réalité dans les mémoires du moindre frondeur du dix-septième siècle que dans Diderot tout entier." Is it Brunetière's judgement or his taste that is speaking here?

The truth is that no critic can eliminate the personal equation. We may render our appreciation more catholic by multiplying our intellectual experiences, by breaking ourselves, as Sainte-Beuve did, on the wheel of spiritual metamorphosis. But appreciation and judgement advance *pari passu*; they cannot in honesty be divorced. And this it is which makes me suspicious of all attempts to erect a scientific system of criticism. Brunetière disavows the intention to make criticism a science, but the fact remains that he was always aiming at a scientific certitude for his judgements. He appeared to mistrust his own appreciation, and he therefore pressed into the service of criticism a series of laws or tests which should correct, if necessary, or confirm his original judgement. These we may call the laws of French literary tradition—a book must be clear, dignified and devoid of egotism; and—the laws of Catholic dogma—a book is to be condemned, for example, if it expounds a 'natural' philosophy as do the essays of Montaigne, or the comedies of Molière.

The result is that by his very theories Brunetière is condemned to be rigid and pedantic, and he abandons the qualities of flexibility, grace and a happy *insouciance* to critics whose methods he despises. He charges with intellectual levity men like Lemaitre, and Anatole France, who give their opinions for what they are worth, as an expression merely of their personal tastes. Undoubtedly Brunetière is as often right as they are, but he lacks the art of being gracefully in