

WHITMAN AND CÉZANNE

into geniuses. It is the specializing on ideas which shuts the stream of its flow. I have felt the same gift for life in a still-life or a landscape of Cézanne's that I have felt in any of Whitman's best pieces. The element in common with these two exceptional creators is liberation. They have done more, these modern pioneers, for the liberation of the artist, and for the "freeing" of painting and poetry than any other men of modern time. Through them, painting and poetry have become literally free, and through them it is that the young painters and poets have sought new fields for self deliverance. Discipleship does not hold out long with the truly understanding. Those who really know what originality is are not long the slave of the power of imitation: it is the gifted assimilator that suffers most under the spell of mastery. Legitimate influence is a quality which all earnest creators learn to handle at once. Both poetry and painting are, or so it seems to me, revealing well the gift of understanding, and as a result we have a better variety of painting and of poetry than at the first outbreak of this so called modern esthetic epidemic.

The real younger creators are learning the difference between surface and depth, between exterior semblances, and the underlying substances. Both Whitman and Cézanne stand together in the name of one common purpose, freedom from characteristics not one's own. They have taught the creators of this time to know what classicism really is, that