

LETTER--To Edgar Allan Poe

In his letter to Edgar Allan Poe, the author addresses the enduring and perplexing animosity towards Poe's legacy, particularly from his contemporaries and certain elements within the American literary critique. Despite being celebrated as one of the greatest literary figures in America, Poe is uniquely disparaged in his homeland, partly due to his critical role in the literary world. The author reflects on the unfortunate circumstances that led Poe to become a reviewer, arguing that such a position for a man of his talent was lamentable. By offering candid and often harsh critiques of his peers, Poe alienated many, including the minor figures who never forgave his attacks. This letter discusses how these actions contributed to the long-lasting defamation Poe has suffered posthumously.

The author sympathizes with Poe's struggles, highlighting the extreme poverty and the professional challenges he faced, exacerbated by his uncompromising pride. The letter also touches upon how the literary environment has evolved since Poe's time, suggesting that Poe might have enjoyed greater success and recognition had he been born later. It emphasizes the transformation in the literary profession in America, which now offers respect and rewards that were inaccessible to Poe.

Despite his controversial role as a critic, Poe's enduring legacy as a poet and a writer of tales is undisputed. The author dismisses the need to elaborate on Poe's poetry, suggesting that Poe's own definition of poetry as "the rhythmic creation of the beautiful" speaks for itself and perfectly encapsulates his work. The letter critiques Poe's exclusion of the "didactic" in poetry, juxtaposing his views with the traditional acceptance of moral instruction in literature.

However, the letter acknowledges the deep imprint Poe left with "The Raven," a poem that, despite Poe's theory favouring vague exaltation in poetry, became his most

renowned piece. The author challenges Poe's aesthetic philosophy by comparing it with the universally acclaimed works of Homer and Moliere, demonstrating that Poe's restrictive view of poetry does not align with the broader literary canon's valuation.

In essence, this letter offers a nuanced reflection on Edgar Allan Poe's legacy, examining the complexities of his critical reception, the adversities he faced, and his contribution to literature. It emphasizes the contradiction between Poe's theoretical ideals of poetry and the broader, lasting appreciation of diverse poetic expressions.



Summaryer