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Note

Criticism Editors

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NOTE

In the first (Winter) issue of *Criticism*, 1959, Professor G. Inglis James, on page 63, says that "Mr. [Cleanth] Brooks once described himself to me as the hangman of Romanticism." This statement has elicited an expression of concern from Mr. Brooks about the way in which his apparent acceptance of the title "hangman of Romanticism" might be construed. Professor James has commented as follows in a letter: "The conversation took place sometime during the academic year 1953-1954 when I was doing independent research work at Yale as a Commonwealth Fellow. As far as I can remember W. K. Wimsatt, Jr. and René Wellek were also present. The occasion was (obviously) a more memorable one for me than for them." And in a general statement he has added, "I cannot believe that any serious or careful reader would conclude from what I said that I had heard Professor Brooks confess to the title 'hangman of Romanticism' without any kind of qualification or reservation. The whole point of my article was that there is more than one kind of Romanticism, and that it is primarily the critical tradition which tends to define poetry almost exclusively in terms of the expression of emotion which the New Critics usually seem to have in mind when the talk gets around to heresy and hanging. I was—and still am—under the impression that it is the Romantic tradition defined thus. . . ."

The Editor