"The only consolation which we have in reflecting upon it is that it will never be generally read."

--J. Lorimer reviewing

*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte, 1847
"His fame is gone out like a candle in a snuff and his memory will always stink."

-- Wm. Winstanley, 1687 on Milton
"Monsieur Flaubert is not a writer."

-- *La Figaro*, 1857
"This is a book of the season only."

-- NY Herald Tribune on

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
"We do not believe in the permanence of his reputation... our children will wonder what their ancestors could have meant by putting Dickens at the head of the novelists of today."

-- Saturday Review, 1858.
"Shakespeare's name, you may depend on it, stands absurdly too high and will go down."

-- Lord Byron, 1814.
The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

'an irresponsible holiday story'
*Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

'an absurd and uninteresting fantasy which was rubbish and dull.'
Sylvia Plath

'There certainly isn't enough genuine talent for us to take notice.'
Lust for Life by Irving Stone

(which was rejected 16 times, but found a publisher and went on to sell about 25 million copies)

‘A long, dull novel about an artist.’
Carrie by Stephen King

'We are not interested in science fiction which deals with negative utopias. They do not sell.'
The Spy who Came in from the Cold
by John le Carré

‘You’re welcome to le Carré – he hasn’t got any future.’
Animal Farm by George Orwell

‘It is impossible to sell animal stories in the USA.’
Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll:

“We fancy that any real child might be more puzzled than enchanted by this stiff, overwrought story.”

--Children’s Books
On Jane Austen

“I am at a loss to understand why people hold Miss Austen’s novels at so high a rate, which seem to me vulgar in tone, sterile in artistic invention, imprisoned in the wretched conventions of English society, without genius, wit, or knowledge of the world.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Journal*, 1861
“It is no discredit to Walt Whitman that he wrote *Leaves of Grass*, only that he did not burn it afterwards.”

On *Absalom, Absalom!* by William Faulkner:

“Seriously, I do not know what to say of this book except that it seem to point to the final blowup of what was once a remarkable, if minor, talent.”

— Clifton Fadiman, *The New Yorker*, 1936