

## POEMS ON ART.

## THE GENUINE PORTRAIT.

"And really it is not more flattered than art ought to flatter. A painter should paint the picture as inventive nature (granting there is such a thing) designed it, repairing the imperfections which necessarily result from the resistance of the material worked in, repairing also the injuries done it by conquering time."— *Translated from the German of LESSING.*

Ask you why the portrait bears not  
The romance of those lips or lashes?  
Why that bosom's blush it shares not?  
Mirrors not her eye's quick flashes?  
Is it false in not revealing  
Her secret consciousness of beauty—  
The graceful, half-developed feeling—  
Desire opposing fancied duty?

For, on the canvass, shadowy hair  
Streams backward from an earnest face;  
The features one expression bear,  
The various lines one story trace.  
And what is that expression?— Love!  
Not wild-fire passion, bright but damp.  
A purer flame, which points *above*—  
Though kindled at an earthly lamp.  
Call it devotion— Call it Joy—  
'T is the true love of woman's heart—  
Emotion pure from all alloy—  
Action complete in every part.

Blame not the Artist, then, who leaves  
The circumstances of the hour,  
Within the husk the fruit perceives,  
Within the bud, the future flower.  
He took the one pervading grace  
Which charms in all and placed it here,  
The inmost secret of her face  
The key to her locked character.  
The spirit of her life which beats  
In every pulse of thought and feeling,  
The central fire which lights and beats—  
Explaining Earth, and Heaven revealing.

## THE REAL AND THE IDEAL.

## ON THE MARBLE BUST OF SCHILLER.

- A. No! This is not the portrait of my friend!  
Where is the graceful pensiveness of the eyelids?  
Where the sweet tremulousness of the mouth?  
Where the refinement, the tender sensibility,

The exquisite loveliness of posture and feature?  
Loftiness and antique majesty are here,  
But I find not my friend in his domestic character.

- B. And *should* the marble which lives through centuries  
Chronicle the fleeting interest of the Day?  
Let it rather speak the eternal language  
Of human nature in its noble simplicity.  
This is not Schiller, your companion and friend,  
But Schiller the Poet, his country's glory—  
Therefore is it proud, majestic and powerful,  
Expressing his Genius, not his character.

## HERMITAGE.

MEN change; that heaven above not more,  
Which now with white clouds is all beautiful,  
Soon is with gray mists a poor creature dull,  
Thus in this human theatre actions pour  
Like slight waves on a melancholy shore;  
Nothing is fixed,— the human heart is null,  
'T is taught by scholars, is rehearsed in lore,—  
Methinks this human heart might well be o'er;  
O precious pomp of eterne vanity,  
O false fool world, whose actions are a race  
Of monstrous puppets;— I can't frame one plan  
Why any man should wear a smiling face,  
World, thou art one green sepulchre to me,  
Through which, mid clouds of dust, slowly I pace.

## THE ANGEL AND THE ARTIST.

ANGEL. Back back must thou go,  
Spirit proud and poor!  
To be in the Essence, to love and to know,  
'Thou canst not yet endure.

ARTIST. Ah! but I did in that glorious hour  
When all was mine.—

ANGEL. No, not for a moment hast thou had power  
The Cause to divine.

ARTIST. Why despise forms from which Spirit doth speak?  
I will obey.  
Beautiful forms! in you will I seek  
The All-shining Day.