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 rest from the resistance of the material worked in, repairing also the injuries done by conquering time." — Translated from the German of Lessing.

Are you why the portrait bears not
The romance of those lips or lashes?
Why that bosom's blush it shares not?
MIRRORS not her eyes' 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 canvas, 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 desire, 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,

HERMITAGE.

Max change; that heaven above not more,
Which now with white clouds is all beautiful,
Soon is with gray mists a pour 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?

THE ALL-SHINING DAY.