

Literary.

Poetry.

IN one of the marvellous tales contained in one of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," we are told of a robbers' cave whose heavy stone doors were wont to fly open at the sound of the magic words "Open Sesame." As they opened, the untold treasures of the cavern were revealed—gold, silver, pearls and diamonds in rich profusion.

The realm of poetry is like that cave of treasures. The magic word which will open it is not known to all men; but those who have seen within the gates know what stores of delight are laid up there; and after they have gazed, they carry a joy on their faces which others cannot comprehend. For to these others the door remains closed; for to them there is no charm in poetry. In their estimation it is merely a peculiar arrangement of words in lines, containing a regular number of syllables, and terminating in the recurrence of similar sounds. How poor their view! Truly they see only the cold stone door; the rich interior is concealed from their sight.

If the ability to arrange words in the form of verse were all that is implied in the poet's art, the most contemptible rhymester would be worthy of being classed with Spenser, Milton and Shakespeare. No; there must be something infinitely higher than this in poetry, or he who called it "the divinity of all arts" must have greatly overrated its value.

It is true that the poet generally chooses to express himself in verse; but the verse is, after all, only the form of expression. The thought expressed is that in which the poetry lies. The charm of a diamond ring centres not in the setting of gold, but in the sparkling jewel, so the charm of