

The same development characterizes woman's influence in poetry. Take the poetry of passion and emotion. Shakespeare says of love:

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds,
Admit impediments. Love is not love,
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.

"Oh no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

"Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

"If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved."

In world literature there is no nobler, no profounder expression of concentrated emotion than this. The twenty-third of Mrs. Browning's Sonnets from the Portuguese is on the same theme; it has less majesty, less sweep of vision, but in it what longing and tenderness in the poignancy of the personal appeal!

"How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

"I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as men turn for Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

"I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints; I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears of all my life! And, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death."

It is as an interpreter that woman has influenced the world through the high drama. Such artists as Rachel and Signora Duse show that the genius for interpretation in literature is not a single power, but a combination of powers. It unites the talent for acquiring knowledge with the gift of imparting it. It not only grasps the thought in all its fulness, but re-creates it and invests it with its own highly tempered intellect. In Bunyan's immortal allegory there is no more wonderful passage than that which describes the