

**THE YOUNG POET'S
ASSISTANT. A FEW HINTS
ON THE COMPOSITION OF
POETRY**

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The young poet's assistant. A few hints on the composition of poetry by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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BY
AN OLD REVIEWER.

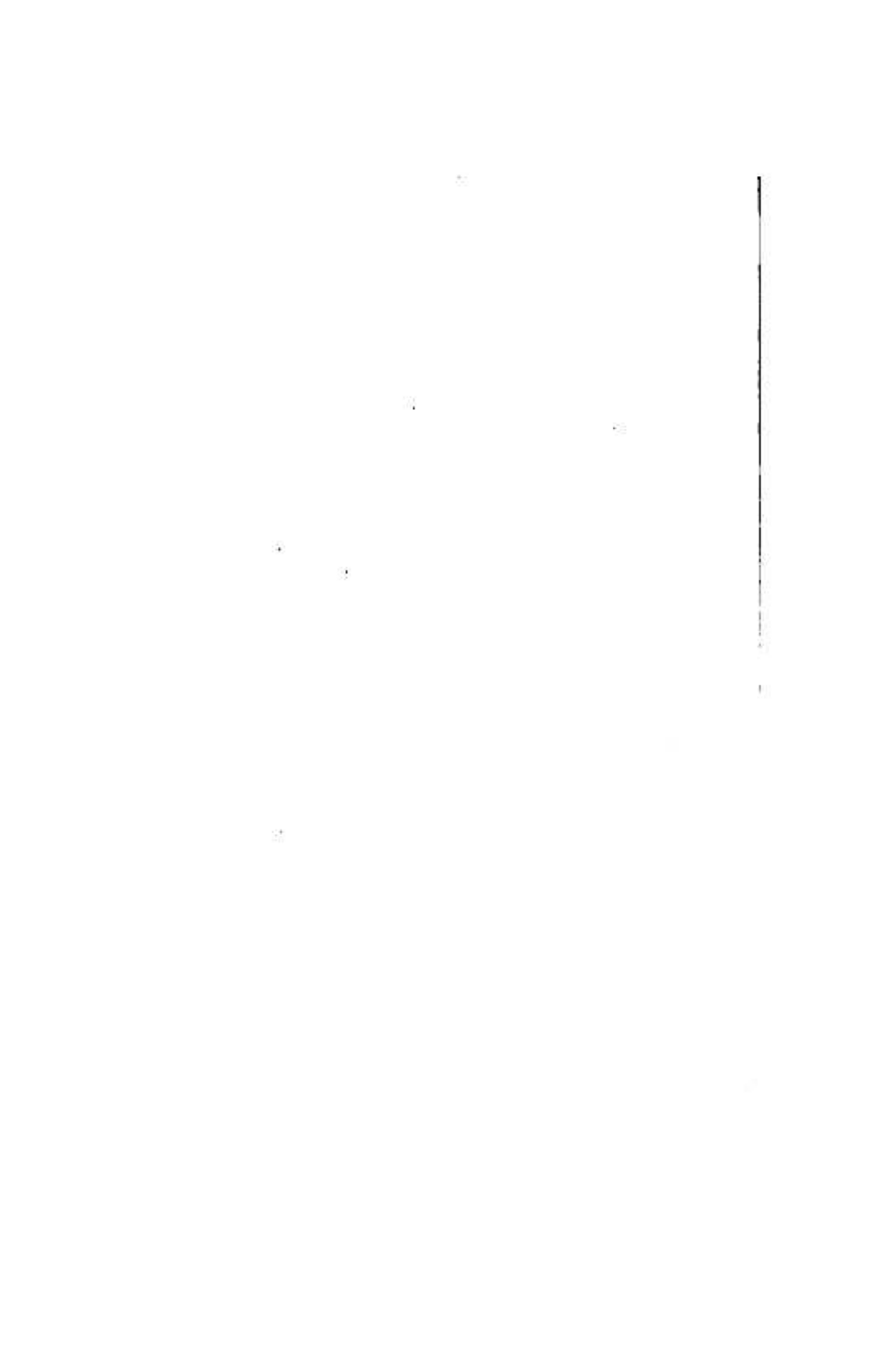


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THE
YOUNG POET'S ASSISTANT.

How should Poetry be written, and what are the qualifications which Poetical Writers should seek, to render their productions successful?

The importance of this question increases as we reflect upon it, and the longer we do so, the more does its field enlarge.

What is meant by this phrase 'successful?' we answer, that glad acceptance of the Poet's strains which amounts to popularity in his own day, and that grasp of truth and congeniality of feeling which often leads posterity to confirm the verdict first recorded, thus deepening present favour into future fame.

In endeavouring to answer the important question here indicated, it will not be necessary to trace the History of Poetry from the earlier ages, because the ever varying aspect of human affairs, continually tends to render that obsolete which was once admired, and that common which was once considered remarkable and extraordinary. Society, like individuals, has its "seven ages." The Poetry of its infancy is not the Poetry of its manhood. The lullaby of its cradle is not the majestic epic of its mature existence. Thus it follows that Poetry uniformly changes in its character with the age in which it is written. It progresses as society progresses. This is no where more felt than in reading the various Collections of our Poets, where we meet with many descriptions of life and manners which have scarcely any resemblance to those of our present observation or past experience.

Nevertheless, while modes and manners change as society advances in refinement, human nature is still the same as in the first

generation of man's existence, his passions being identical; and thus every trait of genuine nature, breaking through the crude formations of half barbaric times, finds an instant response, although surrounded by obsolete constructions.

These instincts of the life within us are the freemasonry of the Poet in every age. This is the true electric current which vitalizes the world; for be it remembered, all who receive the Poet's thoughts are touched with his fire. The individual who has never indited a single line of verse, having within him the capability of responding to the power of the moving principle, is himself in his degree most truly invested with the spirit of brotherhood; were it not so, for whom would Poets write?

There are, however, certain integral qualities belonging to Poetical composition, which are common to every age; the vivid conception and delineation of which must at all times be regarded as essential to true Poetry. These know neither decay nor