

LITERARY.

“Portia”

GUS NEWTON.

OF ALL the female characters that Shakespeare has pictured to us, surely “Portia” is the most beautiful, refined and accomplished; and when we add to this the fact that she was immensely rich it is no wonder that the wide world was not ignorant of her worth and that the four winds blew in renowned suitors from every coast.

Some of these suitors were perhaps attracted by her beauty; some by her refinement and culture; some by her superior mental capacity, and some, who may properly be called fortune-hunters—of whom we have a goodly number in our so called “bon ton” society circles—were doubtless very much in love with her immense fortune; but none of them seem to have taken into consideration as many of her excellent qualities as does Bassanio when he says:

“In Belmont is a lady richly left,
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia; and nothing undervalued
To Cato’s daughter, Brutus’ Portia;
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors;” etc.