

an intense human interest from the group. But what classical artists and authors were born to accomplish has been accomplished already ; and no man ever became great, nor ever will, by servilely following in their track. The more an author or artist copies them, the less is he like them ; for the imitative turn, which delights in catching their manner, is altogether incompatible with the originality of their genius. And hence it is that our modern classics, whether painters or sculptors, or manufacturers of unreadable epics, rank invariably among the men of neglected merit. They overshoot those sympathies of a common humanity to which their masters could so powerfully appeal in the past, and which their contemporaries are scarcely less successful in awakening in the present, each in a track of his own opening. The sculptors of Great Britain were classical and imitative for a whole century ; and all they produced in that time, in consequence, was a lumbering mass of unreadable allegories in stone, which no one cares for ; groupes of Prudences with fine necks ; of Mercies, too, with well-turned ankles ; and of Cupids looking sly ; and, had they been employed in cutting them in white-sugar or gingerbread, all would have now agreed that the choice of the material mightily heightened the value of the work.

Among the rising painters of our country I know no artist whose pictures better serve to corroborate the truth of remarks such as these than the pictures of Thomas Duncan. Brown justly reckons the principle of contrast, or contrariety, among the causes which suggest and connect ideas. One of Duncan's living pictures,—“ Prince Charles and the Highlanders entering Edinburgh after the battle of Preston,”—a picture exquisitely Scotch, instinct with character, and rich in interest,—shows more powerfully, on this principle, the folly of toiling in the dead school of classical imitation, than even the *effete* of the artists who irrecoverably lose themselves