lyle, speaking of Scott, "lies the secret of the matter; such swiftness of mere writing, after due energy of preparation, is doubtless the right method; the hot furnace having long worked and simmered, let the pure gold flow out at one gush."

Although Chapman boasted that he had translated Homer's twelve books in only fifteen weeks, the translation might have been all the better had more time been taken with it. The finishing touches which give the grace and charm to poetic thoughts, can only be matured by patience and leisure. The happy turn of idea comes after long meditation, enabling it to take possession of the human mind and memory, and live there through all time.

Smollet ran a race with Hume in his *History of England;* he wrote four quarto volumes in fourteen months. As Johnson read, "tearing the bowels out of a book," so he wrote, with immense rapidity. One of his best productions, *The Life of Savage,* was written, according to his own account, in thirty-six hours; and his *Vanity of Human Wishes,* which contained about twelve pages of verse, was written in a day. *Rasselas* was composed during the evenings of one week, for the purpose of paying the expenses of his mother's funeral; and it was sent to the press as soon as written. The elder Dumas was one of the most rapid of modern writers. He wrote the first four volumes of *Monte Christo* in sixteen days, in a fisherman's cottage at Trouville, with his colleague M. Magnet sitting opposite him at the same table; and it was perhaps the most popular work that he ever wrote.

The great musical composers have, for the most part, been indefatigable workers. The elder Scarlatti produced no less than two hundred masses, a hundred operas, and three thousand cantatas. Haydn, besides his six oratorios, two of which were *The Creation* and *The Seasons,* composed a hundred and six symphonies, two hundred concertos, eighty-three violin quartettes, sixty pianoforte sonatas, fifteen masses, fourteen operas, sixty-two canzonets, besides a Te Deum and a Stabat Mater. Indeed, it might almost be said that some of his best works were written the fastest. Handel was a constant and rapid worker; even after he had been partially disabled by paralysis. He had a favorite harpsichord, every key of which, by incessant practice, was hollowed out like the bowl of a spoon. When the fury of composition was on him, he wrote with extraordinary vehemence. *The Messiah* was executed in twenty-three days, and the *Israel in Egypt* in twenty-seven. In one year he composed *Saul, Israel, Dryden's Ode, Jupiter in Argos,* and his Twelve Grand Sonatas—all first-rate works.

But Mozart was still more rapid. His *Nozze de Figaro* was composed within a month, the grand finale of the second act occupying him two nights and a day, during which he wrote without intermission. *Don Giovanni* was composed in six weeks, though the whole subject had already been thoroughly digested in Mozart's mind. The overture was not begun until the night previous to that fixed for the first performance of the opera. He began it about midnight, and it was ready in the morning. The sheets were then handed to the copyists, but their work was so heavy and prolonged, that in the evening, when the hour for the commencement of the performance had arrived the audience were kept waiting three quarters of an hour for the overture. At last the sheets were hurriedly brought into the orchestra covered with sand, and the music was at once played at sight, with immense applause. *Zauberflote* also was written with extraordinary rapidity; though Mozart's constitution was already breaking up, through irregularities and overwork. He worked at the opera night and day, and finished it in a few weeks. He afterwards composed his *Clemenza di Tito* with equal despatch, commencing it while travelling, and finishing it in about

eighteen days. His last work was the *Requiem,* which he wrote upon his death bed,—working upon it almost to his latest breath.*

It is also worthy of remark that Mozart's masterpieces were, for the most part, produced amidst a tumult of arrests, demands of duns, and petty cares and annoyances. Handel's great works were written amidst rage, vexation, and mortification; for his temper was furious and his health unsettled after his first heavy attack of palsy. Weber's liveliest strains were conceived and worked out amidst the annoyances of petty cares; and the most powerful ideas in *Oberon*—like those of Scott in the *Bride of Lammermoor*—while he was almost prostrate with pain and suffering. In these cases, the spirit dominated over the body, and bade defiance to the torments and miseries which assailed it.

It is not, however, through the preparatory efforts of labor and talent, however persevering, that such works are conceived and perfected, but through the influence of what we call Genius. It is difficult to define the word. It may be talent intensified, or the energizing of the imagination; but it is something more. Genius brings dead things to life. Hazlitt says it is the first impulse of genius to create what never existed before. Ruskin calls it the power of penetration into "the root and deep places of the subject." Mill defines it as "the gift of seeing truths of a greater depth than the world can penetrate." Coleridge said, it is "the faculty of growth"; John Foster believed it to be "the power of lighting one's own fire"; and Flourens described it as "the highest development of reason in a man." It was said of the genius of Molière that it was common sense sharpened until it shone.

But genius is more than this. It is intense energy;

* Holmes, *Life of Mozart.*

it is a man's *self,* something distinctive, and his own. Genius is more than intellect: it is inspired instinct.* There have been heaven-born generals, musicians, artists, and poets. *Poeta nascitur not fit,* is a well-known maxim. Ordinary men are imitators: men of genius are creators. Genius begins where rules end. Patience and labor seek a way: genius finds one. Intellect is but a tool: genius is an inspiration, a gift, an afflatus. Hence men in past ages regarded it as something supernatural and divine. The man of genius was the seer, the priest, the hero.

Michael Angelo saw with his mind's eye, without the help of either model or drawing, the statue hidden in the block of marble; he seized his chisel, tore away the cerements, and let out the god, to the wonder and admiration of all time. It is said that Paisiello, in his fits of composition,

[1] Hear what a distinguished physiologist, Dr. John Fletcher of Edinburgh, said of the relations of instinct with genius:—"The more nearly man, in attaining perfection in his works, is actuated in their production by Instinct, the greater is his Genius; the more by reason and volition, the greater in his Talent .... It is this consciousness of the existence in us of a power superior to any over which we have control, which has led poets in all ages to invoke Apollo and the Muses to inspire their verse—in other words, to call upon Passion or Instinct to supersede Reason; and that some such instinctive power at once absorbed the mind, and actuated the mighty hand of Michael Angelo and a Raphael, and excited, not only the conceptions, but the merely physical movements destined to develop works on which ages were to ponder with admiration and delight, is unquestionable.

It is true, the Instinct thus running riot over the Reason is, in man very liable to become morbid, and even to terminate in confirmed idiotcy or insanity; and it is this constant subserviency of many of the great actions of a great genius, and of a fatuous or furious person to the same blind impulse, which produces that close alliance of the sublime and the ridiculous, the lofty and the bombastic,—as well in their works as in their thoughts and words, which has furnished, in every age, so fertile a theme of animadversion .... It is a similar morbid preponderance of Instinct over Reason which leads men into every description of intemperance, although this results more frequently from the Reason being too weak, as in the case of ordinary debauchees, than from the Instinct being too strong, as in that of men of genius, who are unhappily so often characterized by this infirmity."—*Rudiments of Physiology.* Edinburgh, 1836.

buried himself under the bed-clothes, trying to banish from his memory all the rules and precepts of his art, and giving vent to his feelings in the exclamation, "Holy mother! grant me the grace to make me forget that I am a musician!" And Palestrina, in the MS. of his noble Mass of Pope Marcellus—considered the very perfection of art—wrote the words; "Domine, illumine oculos meos."

According to Avicenna, all things obey a human soul elevated into ecstasy. With concentrated attention the power of the mind becomes intense,—as warm rays thrown into a concave mirror become concentrated in one single point of heat. The force of a man's intelligence is equal to the force of his concentration. And concentration means exaltation, ecstasy, inspiration. It is this which mainly constitutes the difference between men and the results which they achieve—in poetry, oratory, science, invention, or art. This is the turning point of genius,—the point at which Archimedes arrived, when he ran half-clad through the streets of Syracuse during the siege, crying, "I have found it! I have found it!"—the passers-by thinking that he was mad. Thus Newton achieved his great discovery by "always thinking to it,"—that is, by his intense power of concentration of intellect on the subject of his search.

When men have been trained to a particular calling in life, they are put into a groove from which it is very difficult to escape. Their mind and habits become formed, their destiny seems to be shaped, and they are bound in trammels from which it seems next to impossible to escape. But the bent of a strong genius is not to be restrained. It bursts through the crust of circumstances; forcing itself up through the obstructions of difficulty, drudgery, and poverty. Thus Hans Sachs rose above cobbling, John Stowe above tailoring, Arkwright above barbering, Claude Lorraine above pastry cooking, Bunyan above tinkering, Molière above upholstery, Keats above drugs, and most great men above

the obstructions which seemed, at first sight, to render their distinction improbable.

Rabelais was a physician, and Locke a surgeon; but the one became a great wit and satirist, and the other a distinguished philosopher. Galvani was a doctor in large practice, when he made the discovery identified with his name, and to the prosecution of which he subsequently devoted his life. Schiller and Smollett were surgeons—the one to the Duke of Würtemberg's grenadier battallon, the other (as surgeon's mate) to a ship of the line, the life on board of which he describes in *Roderick Random.* Mungo Park, the traveller; Crabbe, the poet; Goldsmith, author of *The Vicar of Wakefield;* Farini, the Italian statesman; Rickman the English architect; Sir Thomas Browne, Sir Richard Blackmore, Wollcott, Akenside, and Keats,—all belonged to the same profession. Mr. Haden, while doing his finest work as an etcher, was successfully conducting a large London practice; and St. Beauve as was skilful with his dissecting knife as an anatomist, as he afterwards with with his dissecting pen as a critic.

Our greatest physiologist has said, "No man was ever a great man that wanted to be one." Indeed, men of the greatest genius are often unconscious. Such appears to have been the case with Shakespeare, who was content to appear in a subordinate part at the Globe Theatre, in Ben Jonson's tragedy of *Seganus,* and to commit to memory the heavy blank verses of his friend. Pope says of Shakespeare, that "he grew immortal in his own despite." In the beginning of life especially, the possessor of genius is no more conscious of it than others are. It is occasionally brought out by repeated trials, and sometimes by repeated failures. Thus Newton was led by his failures in judicial astrology to the study of natural philosophy and astronomy, by the pursuit of which his fame was eventually established. Yet Newton was, like Shakespeare, always

indifferent to fame. Even so great a sceptic as Voltaire has said of Newton, that if the whole human race could be assembled from the creation to his time, in the gradation of genius, Isaac Newton would stand at their head.

Though genius is sometimes a law unto itself, it more frequently accomplishes its objects by the labor which conquers all things. And the very capacity to labor intently and intensely is of itself of the nature of genius. It has even been said that the great difference between men consists less in their original endowment than in their power of continuous and persevering labor. There must, however, be the spark of creative power, otherwise labor by itself could avail little. Men of genius are not only laborious and persevering, but they are for the most part enthusiasts. In the case of discoveries and inventions nothing can be done without enthusiasm. The man of genius is usually before his age. He is not only unrecognized by his contemporaries, but he is often thwarted and baffled by them. This has been the case in the discovery of the law of universal gravitation, of the undulatory theory of light, of the application of steam for the purposes of labor and locomotion, and of the principle of evolution and new laws of growth and development in the world about us.

Genius, however, is not always so unconscious, as in the cases of Shakespeare and Newton. Some have not only recognized but asserted their own genius before the world recognized it. "When I am dead," said the great physiologist, "you will not soon meet with another John Hunter." Dante claimed a first place among poets, and confidently predicted his own fame. Kepler believed that the country to which he belonged would yet glory in him, and that his discoveries would be verified by succeeding ages. Of one of his books he says, "Whether it be read by posterity or by my contemporaries is of no consequence; it may well

wait for a reader during our century, when God Himself, during six thousand years, has not sent an observer like myself." Once, in the society of Conte and Vendôme, Voltaire exclaimed, "We are all kings, princes, or poets." Mirabeau claimed kinship with all genius. When he spoke of Admiral Coligny, he always took care to add, "and who (by parenthesis) was my cousin."

Goethe had the frankness to confess that he never accepted any praise that he had not already bestowed upon himself. Wordsworth anticipated with confidence the judgment of posterity on his poems, and held that it would yet be acknowledged that he had exerted his faculty of imagination upon the worthiest objects. And without the desire for appreciative sympathy from the minds of posterity, if not from the minds of contemporaries, men of imagination might not have possessed the necessary impulse to utter their thoughts in poetry.

Yet great men, to a certain extent, are but the product and offspring of their age. They are made and moulded by the times in which they live. While they influence, they are also influenced by their contemporaries. Their family surroundings, their education and upbringing, the political and religious opinion of their period, act and react upon their nature, give a direction to their character, and evoke their best powers. Hence great men, influenced by like causes, so often appear in so many groups or constellations. Such a group appeared in Greece in the time of Pericles; in Rome during the Augustan age; in Spain during the reign of Philip II.; and in France at the beginning of that of Louis XIV. The Elizabethan reign was emphatically the age of great Englishman—of Shakespeare, Spenser, Bacon, Jonson, Hooker, Sidney, Raleigh Hawkins, Drake, and Cecil. In the reign of Charles I. another group of great names occur—Jeremy Taylor, Clarendon, Falkland, Harvey, Milton, Hampden. Pym, Vane. Cromwell, Blake, and others.

In Italy, a constellation of great artists appeared almost simultaneously—Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Perugino, Raphael, Sebastian del Piombo, Titian, Correggio, Luini, and others; while in modern Germany a brilliant constellation of great poets and critics appeared—Klopstock, Goethe, Lessing, Wieland, Schiller, Schlegel, Fichte, Schelling, Richter, Herder, and the Humboldts. It may be mentioned that Alexander Humboldt first saw the light in 1769. The same year witnessed the birth of Napoleon I., Wellington, Mehemet Ali, Cuvier, Castlereagh, Brunel the elder; and in the same year, the first steam-carriage was made by Cugnot, the Frenchman, the patent for the spinning-jenny was taken out by Arkwright, the Englishman, and the patent for the condensing steam-engine by James Watt, the Scotchman.

In Scotland, also, there was an important group which, besides James Watt, included Adam Smith, Joseph Black, Robinson, Hume, Fraser-Tytler, and Dugald Stewart. Watt was only one of a group of great contemporary inventors, who were in a great measure evoked by the wants of their age. Yet they were not professional inventors, nor even engineers. Watt was a mathematical instrument-maker; Arkwright was a barber; Cartwright, the inventor of the power-loom, was a clergyman. Bell, who afterwards invented the reaping-machine, was a Scotch minister; Armstrong, inventor of the hydraulic engine, was a solicitor; and Wheatstone, inventor of the electric telegraph, was a maker of musical instruments. These great men eventually found their true vocation, and bore up right manfully through all their trials and difficulties.

Patience and perseverance are as much required in the conduct of public and philanthropic affairs as in the preparation of books or the invention of machines. Patience is not passive; on the contrary, it is active, sometimes it is concentrated strength. The great statesmen have, for the

most part, been patient and persevering. Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Webster, Lincoln, and other American statesmen, were distinguished for their laboriousness. Webster declared that he did not know how the bread of idleness tasted. "I have worked," he said to a friend, "for more than twelve hours a day for fifty years on an average,"

It has been the same with our own statesmen,—the men of Elizabeth's time, and the men of George the Third's and Victoria's time, as well as with the eminent statesmen of other lands, especially of Germany and Italy; but space prevents our dwelling upon their remarkable laboriousness.