

life shall be righted, and all apparent discords shall be lost in the perfect harmony of a fuller truth.

We can by no particular examples test the power, or understand the varied applications of genius. It is not talent, skill, nor imagination, because it is all of them, the whole that includes all the parts. The great poets, statesmen, and orators were not such as they were of necessity so much as of choice, not to say chance. Pope tells us that he became enraptured with reading the "Fairy Queen" at the age of six years, and believes that the study of this gave the bent to own poetic genius, and Cobbet, a writer perhaps more versatile than reliable, attributes what he calls the birth of his intellect to a similar circumstance. These are instances of circumstances which, though powerless to create or repress genius, are yet powerful to mould and direct its course.

That genius should not display its universality in the work of any particular individual, is not so much due to lack of capacity, as that having but a hand's-breadth of time on which to act, the brief day of life had ebbed out ere it had accomplished more.

Yet even within this narrow limit of time, a few men of transcendent genius have attained to some diversity in action. Solon was an executive statesman, as well as legislative. The commentaries of Cæsar were a worthy counterpart of his brilliant conquests, nor was the persuasive eloquence of Pizarro or Bonaparte surpassed by their military skill.

Not only is genius universal in its application, but also in its distribution. There are times, indeed, when nations seem to have called all their genius into action, and others again when it seems to slumber. Thus we find in their history a golden age, a silver age, and iron age succeeding and verging into each other.

Hallam says that the poverty of mediæval literature was not so much due to ignorance of letters, as that a servile habit of merely compiling from others is characteristic of the period. Yet of all the great men of

Greece, those whose influence will be longest felt came to the front when the noon of her glory had far receded, and her sun had all but set. Long, too, after the fierce northerner had transfixed in his own breast the talons of the Roman eagle, and even in the cast-iron age of the Medici, lived some of the truly great men of *Italia*; and when Rome's greatest warriors who rode into fame in the blood-red car of conquest, are forgotten, Dante, Galileo, and Raphael will continue to instruct and please generations yet to be. So the Dutch, considered the most harsh and prosaic of men, have developed the finer intellects of a Rembrandt and a Beethoven.

Instances, such as the foregoing, might be enumerated, *ad libitum*, but at present we forbear; suffice it to say that what we owe to men in the past, we owe chiefly to the man of genius. Other men have lived nobly and usefully in their way, but their influence does not reach us; but the true genius is continually broadening our sphere of knowledge, and bringing into common property of man those thoughts of God which are the mainspring of all human thought and action.

At his touch latent thought becomes sensitive, and assuming definite form, remains to all time for a memorial of its discoverer. With powers of mind akin to inspiration, and differing in kind than in degree—since to him is given the priesthood of the commonwealth of humanity, and exclusive privilege to tread the holy of holies of truth—he renders us invaluable assistance in building up the intellectual and moral man. His soul, attuned to the perfect harmony of nature, has in it a chord to vibrate in sympathy with every heart-throb of the sentient creation. For, as the great orator, on being asked what were three principal requisites of his art, replied: "First, action, second, action, third, action," so the three grand essentials of genius are, first, soul, second, soul, third, soul. In his presence we are conscious of a superior power, but knowing that this power is couched in a still stronger sympathy, we shrink not from him as from an