

It will be admitted by every one that the composition of a great musical work is one of the severest tests upon the creative and imaginative powers of man, indeed, is the work of true genius. If we recall for a moment the work of the great composers we find that some of them, like Mozart and Mendelssohn, did their work while young, but they also died young. They were early trees that bore early fruit of most luscious flavor and then perished from the way. But there were others, and they are many, who matured more slowly and gave to the world their masterpieces when comparatively late in life. Rossini composed his *William Tell* when 49; Beethoven wrote his ninth and greatest choral symphony when 52; Bach gave to the world his *Passion* when 44, *Christmas Oratorio* when 49, his *Preludes* when 65, and his *Art of Fugue* when 69, the latter two being considered among the great pieces of the world; Handel composed his *Messiah* in less than a month when 56, *Samson and Joshua* were written somewhat later in life, *Judas Maccabaeus* when 61, *Theodora*, which he regarded as his greatest production, when 64, and his *Jephtha*, held by many to excel the *Messiah*, when in his 67th year; Gluck gave out his *Orfeo* at the age of 50, his *Alceste* at the same age, his *Iphigenie en Aulide* when 60, his *Armide* when 63, and his *Iphigenie en Tauride* when 65; Hayden composed and wrote the creation when 66, and the seasons when 69; and, finally, Cherubini composed that marvelous production, his *Requiem* for male voices, when 75, two years before his death. Wagner composed *Parsifal*, his best oratorio, when old.

No one will doubt that great architectural designs, sculpture of the first rank and paintings that are the admiration of all ages, call for the exercise of the highest gifts of the human intellect. Minds that can afford to be measured by this standard must be regarded as having complied with one of the severest tests that could be employed. Sir Christopher Wren was 44 when he began on *St. Paul's Cathedral* and 79 when he saw it completed. During these 35 years he was constantly at work designing and superintending the erection of that great building. Michelangelo holds a place among the world's geniuses second to none. Between the ages of 59 and 74, or for fifteen years, he unceasingly wrought on his famous paintings of the last judgment, the conversion of *St. Paul* and the martyrdom of *St. Peter*. At the age of 60 he wrote his sonnets which are regarded as equal to those of Shakespeare, and at 70 sculptured and set up the *Moses group*. Rembrandt is another whose brush made him immortal. He died at 69, began his painting at 20. During these 49 years he produced about 700 pictures. At 35 he finished his *Night Watch*, at 40 the *Rest of the Holy Family*, at 50 the *Old Man*, at 54 *The Syndics of the Cloth Hall*, and at 56 *The Jewish Bride*. The latter two are considered his greatest paintings. Turner is a name of whom all Britain is proud. His *Crossing the Brook* was painted when he was