

of the mind, such as memory, abstraction, judgment and taste. But this theory again is thought by most metaphysicians to be wrong, inasmuch as Imagination possesses one great element which is wanting in all the other powers of the mind, viz., the ideal element. The other faculties deal with simple facts, ideas of the actual only, while Imagination deals with the possible. But if Imagination is merely a faculty made up of other faculties, and its function is, merely to analyse and reconstruct ideas already existing, where is its creative element? If this were all the functions of Imagination, in what respect would it differ from simple invention or the power of combining ideas of already existing objects into new forms. Thus, when an artist produces a fine painting, should we say that it was nothing more than a mere combination of colours according to certain laws? Has he simply arranged the paints which he had on his palette in due proportions upon his canvas? If this be all the power that an artist displays in a great masterpiece, why can we not all be Raphaels and Michael Angelos? No! it is evident that another power than that of simple combination is needed, if one would produce works to equal those of the great masters.

It is true that Imagination calls in to its aid other mental powers, such, for instance, as association and reasoning, but that it is simply a compound of these principles and has no independent power of its own, is a theory which but few philosophers entertain.

This creative faculty, in its highest form, is one which cannot be acquired. It may be greatly improved by use, and also by the diligent study of nature and of great works of art. It is, however, only to a certain degree that it can be cultivated, and unless a person naturally possesses a large share of this power, it is not probable that he will ever be able to produce any great imaginative work. The more he possesses it also, the better will he be able to appreciate the works of others, but a great amount of it is required if he would produce great original works himself.

This faculty is not entirely under the control of the will, as are many of the other mental powers, but is to a great extent spontaneous, causing thoughts to rise up in the mind at times when they appear wholly uncalled for. But, at the same time, it is slightly controlled by the will, for you may at such times, by a voluntary effort, turn your attention to things around you, and thus stop the train of thought which Imagination has caused. In its highest form, it partakes of the nature of inspiration: the greatest poets and artists compose their finest works, not by a mere effort of the will, but as their imagination presents its pictures to their mental vision.

Without this Creative Power, we should be deprived of much