

This has always been my fortune when running after, or looking for, moods. There is a popular hallucination that makes of authors a romantic people who are entirely dependent upon moods and moments of inspiration for the power to labor in their peculiar way. Authors are supposed to write when they "feel like it," and at no other time. Visions of Byron with a gin-bottle at his side, and a beautiful woman hanging over his shoulder, dashing off a dozen stanzas of *Childe Harold* at a sitting, flit through the brains of sentimental youth. We hear of women who are seized suddenly by an idea, as if it were a colic, or a flea, often at midnight, and are obliged to rise and dispose of it in some way. We are told of very delicate girls who carry pencils and cards with them, to take the names and address of such angels as may visit them in out-of-the-way places. We read of poets who go on long sprees, and after recovery retire to their rooms and work night and day, eating not and sleeping little, and in some miraculous way producing wonderful literary creations. The mind of a literary man is supposed to be like a shallow summer brook, that turns a mill. There is no water except when it rains, and the weather being very fickle, it is never known when there will be water. Sometimes, however, there comes a freshet, and then the mill runs night and day, until the water subsides, and another dry time comes on.

Now, while I am aware, as every writer must be,