

himself a certain number of sensations correspondent with the different existences or states through which he has passed ; and these sensations, by the comparison which the mind forms between them, at length become a succession, and a series of ideas. In this comparison of sensations consists the idea of time ; and indeed all other ideas. But this series of ideas, this chain of existences, is often presented to us in an order very different from that in which our sensations reached us ; and in this it is that the difference principally consists in the genius and disposition of mankind.

Some men have minds particularly active in comparing and forming ideas. These are invariably the most ingenious, and, circumstances concurring, will always distinguish themselves. There are others, and in a greater number, whose minds are less active, allow all sensations which have not a certain degree of force to escape, and who only compare those by which they are strongly agitated. In points of ingenuity and vivacity these yield to the former. Others still there are, and they form the multitude, in whom there is so little activity of mind, so little propensity to think, that they compare and combine nothing, at least at the first