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Genius and the Artist



No more misleading definition was ever formulated than the familiar one which declares genius to be an infinite capacity for taking pains. That is the one thing that genius is not. A capacity for taking pains may be a characteristic of every conscientious worker, but is in no way an essential distinctive trait of genius.

The very essence of genius is its spontaneity, its inspiration, its power of instant and inexplicable coördination and achievement. Its processes are incomprehensible even to itself. It cannot take pains, for it is an immediate force like gravity, and works without effort or consciousness of exertion. It is indeed an