What Is Genius?

In every age the whole world regards the rising of a genius with wonder, admiration, and praise. His very presence brings to our minds this question: Why should this man rise above us, when we have had the same advantages. The best answer is incomplete. That genius is hereditary few people doubt, but there arises this question. Why is genius suddenly present in facilities who for generations before could neither read nor write! That genius is a divine gift, no popular ideas requiring no special effort on the part of its possessor to produce marvellous results in Art, Life, Science is often proved to be a mistake. Does anyone suppose that Newtons valuable discoveries were the result of but a moment's thought? Newton it is said worked thirteen years before publishing the most famous of his discoveries. Do you suppose that the battle plan of Gen. Grant was impromptu? The famous saying, "We will fight it out"
indicates some hard thinking. Old masters in painting have studied hard and continuously on the mysteries of light and shade and the details of anatomy and physics. Mrs. Eliot took years to play and elaborate the schemes of her novels. But I do not wish you to think that I mean that genius does not depend on natural gifts for certainly it does, but the greatest quality of these gifts is the gift of application. A genius is an untiring searcher after truth and perfection in his chosen work, caring little for the encouragement and applause of his friends. A genius studies profoundly in everything and has an unquenchable desire to perfect himself in his chosen work. Genius has a tendency to develop itself early in life. Statistics show that of noted musicians nineteen-twentieths give promise before the age of twenty years. Yet in arts, 57 novels 30 and med 58
Science three fourths and of philosophy two thirds. Lord Byron, Jan. Webster, Gen. Grant, Duke of Wellington, and Napoleon Buonaparte did nothing to distinguish themselves in youth. To be a genius in this last decade of the nineteenth century means infinitely more than it did one hundred years ago. The genius of the present time must be able to add to what the geniuses of the past have done. The minds of the people on this earth may be likened to an intellectual firmament which is ever increasing in brilliancy and each star vying with the other in shedding light. Where there are so many strong intellectual lights it is difficult to select those of superior radiation until they have far outshone their companions.

No mind is a genius after it ceases to assert creative power, and few minds have the insight of a genius or his patience to follow him to the end of his theories. True genius has the power of striking root...
in the by-paths of knowledge, and returning to the main path laden with new and valuable truths.

The mind of genius is independent and self-reliant. Genius has fine sensibilities, and great imaginative power, and the greater the amount of work he performs, the greater his liability to brain disease.

A review of the number of noted men who have permanently influenced the world of thought, strongly impresses the reader with the number who have died from brain disease or have gone insane! But let us hasten past this record, even regarding that such is the futility of man's human decease who have dared possess immortal fame.

It is interesting to note the number of opinions which differ on this subject. Buffon says that by diet of indefatigable industry, perseverance, and labor, nearly everything can be accomplished. Another writer says, "patience is
genius, and her. "It is an infinite capacity for doing work," Gallon an
Eng. writer says. "That genius is hereditary. Johnson inclines to the view
that genius is an untiring effort in a definite direction. Newton seemed to
think that he did nothing whichever
man might not do is the world
have patience and concentration
mind, one thing for an unlimited length of time. Not all of
we are possessed of genius, but
everyone of us is capable of im-
proving his present condition
and whether we will or not every
individual must settle for him-
self. To escape from the dungeon
of intellectual darkness is not as
difficult as it first supposed:
for our Creator made the Sun
by Knowledge to give light and heat
to every human being and by
natural right we are entitled
to accomplish as much in
this life as we have ability for.
Sure do not succeed if what
we undertake we must bear
The humiliation of seeing others step into places which might have been ours and taking places which we might have held. If we succeed we must conquer our difficulties and this we can do if we have within our soul enough patience, intellect and will.

Carmine Louis Daly.