

ledge without wisdom seems poor, thin, and sometimes even meaningless.

We need, as it seems to us, to devote more consideration than we have hitherto done to the question, 'What is the true ideal of human life?' If we can fix upon the true ideal, we can proceed to educate toward that, and our work will then be directed toward something that is an end in itself. The knowledge we impart will be held by a different tenure, and applied in a different spirit. What each one knows will be his or her equipment toward a worthier fulfilment of social duties, a worthier realization of what is best in himself or herself, and not a mere stock-in-trade for the procuring of personal gratifications.

What we would chiefly insist upon at present, however, is that, were knowledge pursued in a right spirit, the intellectual gain would be very great. Minds would become more receptive, owing both to the superiority of the motive set before them, and the higher degree of rationality that the whole system of human life and thought would assume. Civilized speech would not show a constant tendency to degenerate into a jargon of slang, if people recognized in speech a social function, not merely a mode and means of self-assertion. It is impossible to find one's self in any fortuitous assemblage of average human beings without being led to reflect how much human intercourse might be improved and beautified if, by some means, we could implant in the mind of each individual a true respect for the rights and feelings of others, and a general sense of what is due to society, considered as the source of unnumbered advantages to all its members. At present it often

seems to be a distinct aim with many persons—and these not in any sense social outlaws, but on the contrary, what would be called "respectable people"—to show how little they care for anything beyond their own pleasure and convenience. The popular idea of "independence," indeed, is largely made up of swagger and aggressiveness; whereas the most primary notion of independence should embrace the making of an honest return for all good received. Thus viewed, the man who wished to be "independent" would see that society got back from him in service something like a compensation for the benefits with which it surrounds him by day and by night. But "independence" in this sense is absolutely inconsistent with swagger or any form of unsocial action or sentiment.

We can conceive of some philosophic mind saying to this great nation, "One thing thou lackest." Knowledge we have, and material power and business energy, and back of all this, no doubt, a great fund of true humanity. But the lack is in consciousness of the true aim of life, which is beauty and harmony in all social relations. The voice of Science itself bids us make a true generalization, a true synthesis, before we begin to work out our plans. We have hitherto stopped short too much at the idea of knowledge as an instrument of work and ambition, and have greatly hindered the growth of knowledge thereby. If we now set before us as our main object the building up of character in all its elements, we shall find our progress sure, if not rapid, and shall discover a deeper meaning and value in our labours from year to year and from age to age.—*Popular Science Monthly.*