

In the presence of this vast achievement of human energy, the most thorough idealist cannot but stand in awe; for such power, such energy, such efficacy of will, on whatever objects it may be exerted, is awful. Here, assuredly, it has been exerted almost wholly on what is material, on what is simply useful. Look on these lofty buildings, observe the eager throngs hurrying through these busy thoroughfares and ask yourself what it all means. Why have these edifices been erected? Why are these streets filled with people, who hasten on as though pursued by Death? One thought, one purpose, dominates the whole. This city, with its population of two millions, has been created for commercial and industrial ends. It exists to provide the useful, to feed, clothe, house, warm, and carry men, and it does this work with such enterprise and skill, with such unremitting toil, that it is not possible to withhold admiration. All honest work is sacred, and they who labor with the hands, not less than they whose mightier instrument is the brain, are, if they are filled with the right spirit, God's workmen; and since it has not yet been found possible to teach the multitude to make efficacious use of their nobler endowments, manual labor is their salvation, and therefore the *base* guard and basis of civilization.

But there are higher things than those which are merely useful, and consequently there are men whose function is of vastly more importance than that of the toilers who provide us with food and drink and clothing. These are indispensable; all must have them and the whole world takes care that they shall not lack; but genuine human life emerges, not when we eat and drink, for this we do as mere animals. We first become men and women when

we think and love, when we hope and believe, when we listen to the voice of Duty, however hard its command; when we rise through aspiration and imagination to those inconceivable heights where time and space are no more and the soul is alone with God. In this world, which is the proper human world and man's true home, it is not easy to dwell. It is within us, it is likeliest unto what we really are, but to become conscious of it and to feel the need of the blessings it holds, man must ascend from his primitive to his ideal nature; and the effort to do this with method and system is education, which is a conscious striving to fulfil in one's self the ideal of the perfect, and as a means to this end, to transform both one's self and one's whole environment. The aim is to make one's self the best it is possible for a man to become, and the world he lives in the most suitable to the development and play of the higher faculties. Even the savage succeeds in getting what is simply useful—food and drink—and, when it is necessary, some sort of clothing; but there must be at least a beginning of civilization if man is to undertake the task of raising himself from his primitive to his ideal nature—endless task, not to be accomplished by any one individual or people. It is the work God imposes on the whole race for all time; and the highest individuals and races are those that contribute most to this Divine consummation.

In this metropolis created by the very spirit of the wide-spreading and teeming Mississippi Valley, to be a purveyor and provider of whatever ministers to man's material needs and comforts, to the wants of his primitive nature, it is altogether right and desirable that a centre of intellectual light and moral influ-