

# SCIENCE

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## THE RESEARCH SPIRIT IN EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE AVERAGE MAN<sup>1</sup>

RESEARCH has been considered generally as a phase of effort quite distinctly set off from the natural course of human interest. It is my purpose to discuss the spirit or attitude of investigation as normally involved in the everyday working plans of the average person.

Of the significance of research in all fields of our endeavor the extraordinary advances and applications of science in the recent war have not left the world in doubt. For nearly half a century Germany had been known as a nation given to investigation in a great variety of little explored subjects, and governed in considerable measure in accordance with the results of such researches. The strength of German military organization, backed by scientific and economic interests welded into one powerful instrument, brought to all the Allied Powers full realization of the need for a supreme effort of intellect in many kinds of scientific and economic operation previously unknown. The result of this reaction was a stupendous contribution to application of research. Incidental failures, due to unpreparedness and to lack of organization, may not detract from the importance of what was thus produced.

No less clear is now in post-war reconstruction the evidence of need for entirely new views of old knowledge, for immediate answer to old questions not yet solved, and for quick results of investigation on problems of construction never before encountered. As had been predicted, we find ourselves to-day going forward to new plans of human organization, but more unsatisfactorily prepared for the complex situations of the new era than we

<sup>1</sup> Delivered as the address of the retiring president of the Pacific Division, American Association for the Advancement of Science at Seattle, Washington, June 17, 1920.