

patience : it is unwise for us to chafe and fret under these conditions. They cannot be changed by any power we can exert. Many a one has blamed providence, or revolted against fate, because the conditions of life are as they are. But no profit has been found in this way. Many another by quiet submission to nature's ordinances has found strength and enlargement of soul. A lesson of faith : we believe where we cannot know. The wise man will mark the difference between faith and presumption and look well to the ground of his faith. But we must believe that somehow these limitations are for our good, and thus strength and hope come out of conscious weakness.

But if the result of a proper course of liberal studies is to awaken this wholesome sense of the limited range within which thought can act effectively, it ought also to evoke some invigorating sense of the large powers of the human mind within its appropriate sphere of action. You have been impressed by a sense of this power as you have reviewed the record of man's achievements in bringing natural forces under his control, his progress in government from the domination of brute force to the rule of reason, his works in literature and art, and his advancement in morals and religion. You have been moved to admiration as you have observed how by a simple faith in the constancy of natural laws the student of nature, bringing fact after fact into systematic relations and then bringing system after system into still higher relations, has built up the vast realm of knowledge ; and yet you have been in doubt whether to admire more such great and harmonious creations of human thought or the power of mind by which they were produced. You have seen how a single thought on some important subject held by a clear thinker with some persistence before the men of his neighborhood has gradually, but inevitably, changed modes of thought and conditions of life throughout wide regions and for many generations, as a new planet, if it were introduced into the sun's system must compel every large body and every particle of matter within the system to adjust themselves to new relations. Such has been the power of a single thought. A single benevolent impulse rising in a true heart has found expression in some practical form and has softened the asperities and ennobled the intercourse of life, at first within a narrow area, and afterwards, as the lines of its influence were extended, it has exalted the thoughts and imparted a brighter life to the customs of distant times and countries, as a gulf-stream moving constantly from its warm source meets and tempers the currents that flow from some icy sea. Such has been the power of a single life.

The sympathies which have been awakened in your own minds will not permit you to forget this lesson. But here again other lessons unfold themselves : a lesson of responsibility and of use. Let us still cherish the habit of the child whose insistent question, as he begins to think, is, What is this for? For what do you possess these large powers of mind? The possession means something. For what is it to be used? Not for self exclusively, not for others exclusively. We would rather say, for self for the sake of others and for others for the sake of self. But how shall such a paradox be reduced to practice? By subordinating both of these motives to the higher instincts of duty and love, which point to a ground of obligation on which all duties may rest and an object of love whose service includes all right loves and right service. This question of the right use of these powers of mind, I beg of you to consider thoughtfully. Cherish your noblest ideals. Let your