

for the expression of ideas, or for purposes of reasoning; behold Laura, with irrepres- sible curiosity, seeking a knowledge of external objects, performing mental opera- tions, and actually framing words!

The story of Laura suggests many useful reflections. How pliant is the human constitution. How easily it adapts itself to the hardest conditions, and finds enjoyment in the most multiform circumstances. Poor Laura, "for whom the sun has no light, the air no sound, and the flowers no color nor perfume,"—who would seem by her hard lot to be shut up to hopeless misery,—is yet a contented and cheerful being; as happy as the most envied possessor of the gifts of nature and of fortune! How little, after all, does happiness depend upon external things! Let the story of Laura teach us all to be content with such things as we have.

One reflection more. Behold how mind can rise upward, against all that tends to repress it! If ever there was one who would seem by the condition of her existence doomed to hopeless imbecility, Laura Bridgman was that one. See her, with faculties unfolding and intellect developing, rising step by step from darkness to light, and eagerly seeking truth. Let no one despair whose senses are perfect. Aided by hearing and sight alone, how easy, comparatively, the progress to knowledge. Counsels of wisdom may address your ear. Your eye may glance over the "ample page, rich with the spoils of time." Arise—make the effort. *I cannot*—never accomplished anything great. *I will try*—has done wonders. That simple resolve carried Bacon, and Newton, and Franklin, forward in the career of invention and discovery. Let that resolve be yours.—"Though you may never achieve what they did, you may at least acquire energy, independence, balance of mind, and freedom from the thralldom of vulgar prejudice and mere traditional authority; which shall fit you for usefulness and enjoyment as individuals, members of society, and subjects of God's moral government.

How forcibly these motives address us, who live in the afternoon of this nineteenth century. The whole world is rocking and heaving. Hoary despotisms are breaking up. Walls of separation between nations are falling. Old things are passing away.

New things are emerging. Whether we will or not, each one must share, actively or passively, in the vast procession of events. Be it our ambition to *act* an intelligent part; to be, not the mere tools, but the instruments of Providence. How many there are, even in this time of boasted enlightenment, who, instead of being able to sound the mighty problem now, solving, can but look on their grand evolutions with stupid wonder! How many, not merely unable to explore, a little way, the labyrinth of the past, fail even to catch a glimpse of the startling significance of the pregnant *now!* How many—whose self-complacency would not be much flattered if the truth was told—cannot read, with even tolerable appreciation, the truth of that potent organ of modern society, the newspaper.—*N. Y. Observer.*

LABOUR AND WAIT.

The child who sows flower seeds in his garden at night, is apt to weep in the morning if the expected flowers do not appear. It is well if he do not impatiently destroy his first labour, by raking after the seeds, to see if they have sprouted. With a spirit very similar to this, do many Christians labour for God. With zeal they sow the seed; but when the fruit delays its coming, with childlike impatience they fret, and pronounce their labour lost.

This is not only childish conduct, it is worse; it betrays an undisciplined spirit, an unsanctified will, and an impatience unworthy of a disciple of Christ. It savours not a little of selfish vanity, which yearns to feed itself on the proofs of its power to accomplish moral results. It indicates that earthly aims are mixed with his religious labours; otherwise the mind would find its reward in the consciousness of duty done, of God's approval! It would not fret itself because the seed delayed to show its shoots above the soil.

The man of faith learns to *wait* as well as to labour. He comprehends that it is his mission to sow, to plant, and to water. He knows that the tardiness of the seed to throw out its shoots is not always a proof that its vitality is lost—that a moral harvest is often reaped a long time after it is sown, frequently after its sower has gone to his long home. Therefore, he *waits in hope.*