



Education of Laura D. Bridgman (Classic Reprint)

Samuel Gridley Howe

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The reports and notes herewith given to the public contain the record of a wonderful labor, and an equally wonderful result. In the whole catalogue of human miseries, a greater can scarcely be imagined than the twofold privation, on the very threshold of existence, of the leading senses of sight and hearing. What parent, seeing an infant child so disabled, would not be apt to consider death a happy exchange for a life to be passed in darkness, ignorance and isolation? Such a fate was set before the little Laura Bridgman, who nevertheless lived not only to enjoy the greatest benefits of civilized society, but also, by her extraordinary experience, to elucidate the mysterious relations of the human faculties, and to illustrate, in her outer darkness, the nature of the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. When Dr. Howe first became aware of Laura sexistence, the double calamity of blindness and deafness had rarely been observed, and never relieved to any appreciable extent. The way by which knowledge from without should make entrance into her mind was as yet unexplored, and every step in it was purely tentative. The man whose genius led him to confront this difficult problem was of the order of those who so corre See page 348. (Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and don't occur in the book.)

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