

its pursuit until it has gained the object of its desire. "Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her;" and such must be the ardent and self-sacrificing devotion of every one who aspires to the possession of knowledge. Truth will not yield herself to every chance-comer who seeks her hand. Before she surrenders herself she will demand, and must receive, the most unquestionable proofs of devotion.

There is no knowledge gained without labour; and, generally speaking, the value of the attainment will be in strict proportion to its cost. A motto, attributed to S. Francis of Assisi, which was early adopted by the great Italian Savonarola, and evidently cherished by him throughout his life, deserves to be inscribed upon the memory of every true student: "A man knows as much as he works."* It need not be said how widely this truth is forgotten or ignored. Many seem to forget that knowledge, like all other possessions, which are worth having, costs a great deal. It is a great mistake, one of the greatest, to imagine that it will fall into our laps while we sit below the tree of knowledge with folded hands. "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat," is a maxim as true in the world of mind as in the world of matter. In both departments alike, idleness and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

We have spoken of hindrances of two kinds, moral and intellectual, and we have indicated the remedies for those of the first class in deep humility and ardent toil. It is never quite easy to mark off these two spheres of human activity. We must, however, still make an effort to point out the intellectual hindrances to the acquisition of knowledge, and

thus furnish some rules and hints which may aid us in its pursuit. In a field so vast we must make selections, and in doing so we will follow some of the cautions offered by Lord Bacon in various works, and more especially in his invaluable book on the "Advancement of Learning," and in the "*Novum Organum*."

1. One of the notions against which he utters the most earnest warning is the opinion that because we have learnt to use *words*, therefore we have acquired knowledge. He calls it "The first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter."* It is a danger which needs only to be pointed out. It was the evil which Dr. Johnson condemned when he told Boswell to "clear his mind of cant," and not go on using language which was utterly unreal, and which he believed, or thought he believed, only because he had given no serious attention to its meaning. It is an evil which gives no sign of diminution in our own days. We could hardly deceive ourselves more grossly than by supposing that the amount of our knowledge was in proportion to our power of using words.

2. Another caution which Bacon gives is against *precipitancy*. "Another error," he says, "is an impatience of doubt, and haste to assertion without due and mature suspension of judgment."† This warning covers very large ground. It rebukes our tendency to "jump to conclusions," to draw inferences from inadequate premises, to save ourselves the labour of thought by adopting the opinions of others, and many other such devices. It presses home upon us the great need of deliberation and discrimination in the acquisition of knowledge. This is a lesson which

*Tanto sa ciascuno quanto opera.

**Adv. of Learning*. Works iii., 284.

†*Adv. of Learning*. Works iii., 293.