

# WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

Devoted to the Intellectual and Moral Improvement of the Young.

Vol. 1. Halifax, N. S. Thursday, November 26, 1863. No. 23.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT \$1 PER YEAR

IN ADVANCE, BY

W. Campbell, 155 Upper Water Street.

Subscriptions received by the Agents, and at the office of publication.

HALIFAX, N. S. NOVEMBER 26, 1863.

## A LITTLE LEARNING.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing." So says Pope, but we must suppose that he designed the expression to have only a particular application. This, and some other popular sayings have just enough of plausibility in them to exercise an imperfect authority among men; not sound enough to be confidently acted upon, and capable sometimes of a little obstruction to the progress of truth. It has been taught up by the world and quoted on all sorts of occasions, and when followed up by the use of the words "smattering" and "smatterers," it can hardly be resisted.

The plain truth is that there is no danger in any degree of learning. The danger is only when people think that they know more and understand things better than they do. The child must totter before it can walk, and it would be as wise to dread mischief from its tottering as from the first steps in learning. Many have risen, by the acquirement of knowledge, from the humblest and most ignorant condition to positions of high eminence in Colleges, in the Church and in the State, and none of them in early years of learning betrayed any dangerous symptoms or showed viciousness of nature. Many artisans and clerks possess but "a little learning," and what danger do they incur or threaten to their neighbours?

But what is a little learning? The wisest of our inspired men said that the wisest he could know was that he knew nothing. And we cannot doubt that as yet but a small part of what is knowable is known. The high and mighty persons who talk of the danger of a little learning must be possessed of very little learning themselves. The blessing of knowledge

in all its shapes and degrees is so well appreciated by the most of mankind, that these supposedly learned, but really ignorant persons, who clamour about its being accompanied by danger, may well be despised.

It ought however to be thoroughly understood that the cultivation of the intellectual faculties *only* may often advance with no improvement to the moral sentiments. Knowledge is power only when combined with morality; and if the ruling aim of our acquirements is not to enable us to pursue good and shun evil, to promote our own happiness and that of our fellow creatures, we learn either in vain or to our loss. The intellectual improvement of a nature inclined originally to evil, (as we all are,) unprovided with moral checks, can only confer greater powers of mischief. The moral faculties require a separate cultivation from the intellect; and if a corresponding cultivation is given to them as well as to the intellectual faculties, no learning—unless of a kind more pernicious than any now in reputation amongst mankind—could be attended with evil consequences.

## THE OAK AND THE SQUIRREL.

It is not generally known how much we, as a maritime nation, are indebted to our little friends the squirrels. These active little fellows render important service to our navy; for most of the fine oak trees, which are so important in ship-building, especially for vessels of war, are planted by the squirrels.

A gentleman, walking one day in the wood belonging to the Duke of Beaufort, in the county of Monmouth, England, had his attention attracted by one of these crackers of nuts; the squirrel sat very composedly upon the ground, and the gentleman paused to watch his motions. In a few moments the creature darted with wonderful swiftness to the top of the tree beneath which he had been sitting. In an instant he returned, carrying an acorn in his mouth; this acorn he did not eat; but he began to dig a hole in the ground with his paws. When the

hole was large enough and deep enough to please him he dropped the acorn into it, seemed to eye the deposit with great satisfaction, and then he sat down to work and covered up his treasure. When his task was accomplished the squirrel again darted into the tree, and again returned in his character of acorn-bearer; and this load he disposed of just as he had done the former. This he continued to do as long as the observer thought fit to watch him.

This little animal's industry was certainly not with the intention of providing us with oaks, but with that of providing for himself when food would be less plentiful; the holes were his winter store-houses. As it is probable that the squirrel's memory is not sufficiently retentive to enable him to remember all the spots in which he deposits these acorns, the industrious little fellow, no doubt, loses a few every year; these spring up, and, in due time, supply us with the timber that our shipyards require.

**LITTLE THINGS.**—Life is made up of little things. He who travels over a continent must go step by step. He who writes a book must do it sentence by sentence. He who learns a science must master it fact by fact, and principle after principle. What is the happiness of our life made up of? Little courtesies, little kindnesses, pleasant words, smiles, a friendly letter, good wishes and good deeds. One in a million, once in a lifetime, may do a heroic action; but the little things that make up our life come every day and every hour. If we make the little events of life beautiful and good, then is the whole life full of beauty and goodness.

The "Port Wallace Hotel" at Wallace, owned by Mr. John Dotten, together with a barn and a quantity of hay owned by Mr. Stephen Green, are reported to have been consumed by fire on the 19th inst. The hotel premises were probably covered by insurance. It is supposed to have been an act of incendiarism. *Register.*