

# JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

FOR

## Upper Canada.

Vol. I.

TORONTO, JULY, 1848.

No. 7.

### OBLIGATIONS OF EDUCATED MEN.

An Address delivered before the Senate and Students of Victoria College, May 2nd, 1848, by the Chief Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada.

(CONCLUDED.)

II. Our second illustration of the *Obligations of Educated Men*, is derived from their relation to the coming generation—they are its guardians and mentors, and should impress upon it the characteristics of virtue and patriotism. The successive generations of men are connected with each other by moral and civil, as well as natural laws. Revelation teaches the first; legislative decrees and statutes, the second; the impulses of parental and filial affection, the third. But there is no such thing as hereditary education. By mere physical accident and statute-laws, a child may succeed to parental titles and wealth; but he succeeds not in the same way to parental morals and knowledge. Education is an affair of each individual mind, and is the work of each generation. Some of the finest literary productions of ancient Greece and Rome have, indeed, come down to us, and the discoveries and inventions and institutions and writings of past ages have been transmitted to the present age; but no man is born with the knowledge of them. NEWTON was born as ignorant of mathematics as though PYTHAGORAS and DESCARTES had never lived; and LA PLACE was born none the wiser on account of the discoveries of KEPLER and NEWTON. The knowledge and skill possessed by the men of the present age are the *fruit of labour*, and not the *inheritance of descent*. So the race of men of the coming age—the Statesmen and Divines—the Scholars and Merchants, the Agriculturists, and Mechanics, and Labourers of thirty or forty years hence, are now children and infants—depending upon the present generation for physical nourishment, intellectual and moral instruction, and forming their character from the lessons they are now receiving. It remains then with the educated men of the present age, to say what the character of our successors shall be. Let each educated man in the land put the question to himself—“What characteristics shall I impress upon those who come after me? Shall they be those of virtue or vice—of knowledge or ignorance—of industry or idleness—of selfishness or patriotism”—and, I may add, of happiness or misery? The helplessness and innocence of infancy look up to us for its future destinies. Will we give it bread or scorpions? A whole generation are