

ADDRESS

ON THE

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. JOHN MOIR, A. M.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF HIS PUPILS

1826.

THE REV. JOHN MOIR, A. M. of *King's College and University of Aberdeen, Alumnus of the Grammar School of that City, continues to give Lessons in Classical, Commercial, and General Literature, on such moderate terms, as may be embraced by many families of Toronto, who may feel ambitious to inspire our youth, with a love of learning, and make use of the powerful auxiliary of private tuition, in the acquisition of knowledge.*

REFERENCES.—*The Parents and Guardians of his present Pupils, the Honourable Gentlemen, under whose Patronage this Address is presented to the Public, &c. &c. &c.*

Toronto, 29th July, 1836.

Quis est nostrum liberaliter educatus, cui non educator, cui non magister—suus atque doctor, cui non locus ille mutus, ubi ipse altus aut doctus est, cum grata recordatione in mente versatur?

To the Honorable and Venerable John Strachan, D. D. L. L. D.,
Archdeacon of York—the Honorable John Henry Dunn, His
Majesty's Receiver General of this Province—the Honorable
William Allan, of His Majesty's Executive and Legislative Councils—and Mercer Jones, Esquire, Canada Commissioner.

GENTLEMEN,

I was recently introduced to your friendship, by distinguished individuals, whom you esteem and respect; and your philanthropy, beneficence and condescension to all, may be conceived, but not adequately expressed.

I am fully aware, that you appreciate the promotion and universal extension of piety, of education, of virtue, of loyalty, among all classes of His Majesty's subjects in this Province, and I humbly, submissively and respectfully submit, for your inspection and approbation the following Address, published at the request of my esteemed and respected Pupils.

I have the honor to be,

With due deference and respect,

Gentlemen,

Your very obedient Servant,

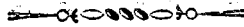
JOHN MOIR.

Toronto, 1st July, 1836.

MY DEAR PUPILS,

As your vacation and recess approaches, I am to relinquish the important trust and responsibility committed to me, by your affectionate Teacher, and I return you my sincere, unfeigned and grateful acknowledgements, for the uniform diligence, assiduity and talent evinced by you, in the various branches of knowledge, to which your attention has been directed, during the last six months. Before I proceed to animate you, in the prosecution of your studies, allow me to offer my humble tribute of thanks to all, without exception, for that degree of kindness, of civility, of regard and respect, which you have on all occasions manifested, whilst I endeavored to unfold, illustrate and explain the principles of science. To your able and assiduous Teacher, you are deeply indebted, for that love of learning, that desire of improvement, that ambition of excellence, which you have displayed.

Permit me to say, that your acquirements in Grammar, Composition, Writing and Arithmetic, the principles of Geography, History and Astronomy, are not surpassed by any Ladies of this Province, of the same standing. Your advancement has been progressive, creditable and meritorious. If you are of opinion upon mature and deliberate reflection, that I have not neglected your interests, you can represent my conduct to my worthy friends, whose names are prefixed, who may be able to procure for me some permanent situation.



The powers and faculties of mankind were bestowed by an all wise Creator, for the best, wisest and noblest purposes. It is therefore your duty, as well as interest to cultivate them to the best advantage. They were conferred upon you, for your improvement in knowledge. They admit of extended, indefinite and unlimited progression. They afford a source of pure, dignified and intellectual felicity.

From infancy to manhood, there is a progression, perhaps a gradual scale of intellectual advancement. The greatest Philosopher of the age, in which we live, was once a child amused and delighted with the toys of childhood. The individual who can calculate the periodical revolutions of the planets and their distances once commenced the simple rules of arithmetic and the first principles of numbers. Hence we lay it down as an axiom, as a fact which cannot be called in question, that from the zeal and ardour any of you shall evince, in the pursuit of science, it is not only probable, but also apparent, also demonstrable, that the greater attainment will be made in that particular branch of knowledge, to which your attention shall be directed.

Who has not heard of the fame of Handel? Did this celebrated individual excel in music? His whole ambition was exerted in the acquisition of eminence, and his memory is transmitted to posterity, as having acquired and merited just applause, fame and renown. Who has not heard of Sir Isaac Newton, the Philosopher, the boast and pride of man? With what assiduity, ardour, zeal and energy did he persevere in the attainment of science?

Where is the difficulty, which exertion will not surmount?— Where is the danger which fortitude will not brave? Where is the obstacle in the pursuit of knowledge which assiduity will not conquer? It is a question which remains to be determined, whether the exertions of genius and talent have done more to promote the advancement of science, than the united and combined auxiliaries of perseverance, industry and application.

Without assiduity, without labour, without exertion, without the cultivation of those talents, with which we are endowed, we shall not attain eminence and distinction. There is perhaps a gradual scale of mental power, of mental ability possessed by mortals. All have wisely allotted them their different pursuits, and all may perhaps be enabled to brave and conquer those difficulties and barriers to which they are subjected, in the attainment of knowledge.

How then, shall I animate, inspire and invigorate you to make advancement in knowledge, in science, in literature? How shall I impress upon you the advantages you possess? How shall I incite you to eminence and superiority? Let me place before you examples of

distinction for your imitation. Let me hold up to view, those individuals, who have acquired for themselves a name and memorial, more valuable than gold, more permanent than the wealth of the possessions of the world.

Miss Edgeworth has beautifully depicted virtue and vice in their true and genuine colours. The poetry of Mrs. Hemans, is sublime, beautiful and affecting. The works of Mrs. Hannah More, on Literary, Moral and Theological subjects have tended to promote the best interests of mankind. An eminent individual has attested the value and importance of their writings; and did our limits permit, we could hold up for your imitation many who have been successful in their attempts to elucidate the principles of piety, virtue and morality.

Time with its rolling tide is hastening all things to decay, all material objects to dissolution; but the works of genius, the labours of these distinguished individuals shall not be lost. Though dead, they continue by their writings to instruct mankind; and by their labours to facilitate the dissemination of those principles which tend to improve the condition of the human race. Periods shall roll. Time itself shall terminate, but whilst celestial ages innumerable, vast and inconceivable by mortals, shall continue their courses, the joys of knowledge shall increase and shall admit of no diminution, of no termination.

The possessions of the world are uncertain and unsatisfying in their attainment. The candidate for honor, for fame, for wealth, is often unsuccessful and often deprived of all by many incidents of human life. But the acquisition of knowledge is power, liberty and peace and affords to the individual a source of pure, intellectual, dignified and permanent delight.

To animate and inspire you with zeal, with activity, and with fortitude in the pursuit of knowledge, it is expedient for me to point out the path to honor, to glory, to victory, and to place before you the distinguished individuals we have mentioned. The dormant faculties of the mind will doubtless be exercised, and the certainty of the conquest determined, from a determination to conquer.

The muses celebrate in sublime, lofty and patriotic strains the deeds of the warrior, who has returned from the field of battle, with victory, with glory, with renown. The muses hold up to imitation

with brilliant colours, with attractive display the Philosopher who has trodden the paths of science, with success. The muses extol the Philanthropist, who has long exerted himself in improving the condition of his fellow mortals.

The Hero in the field, in defence of his country, braving dangers with zeal and fortitude. presents to us a scene of admiration, and commands our approbation. The Philanthropist in the city, alleviating distress, misery and woe, exhibits a scene of disinterested benevolence, and calls for acknowledgement and gratitude. The Philosopher in his study, consuming the midnight oil, in search of knowledge, in search of truth, presents a scene worthy of regard and demands the esteem of all.

Youth is the season for obtaining knowledge and forming religious impressions. Youth is the season for impressing and determining those principles which in future life will regulate the conduct. Youth is the season for acquiring the habits, dispositions and tempers which will accompany us to the latest period of existence. Youth is the season in which modesty, ductility, and pliability predominate in a greater or less degree, actual guilt has not debased the understanding, the prejudices of more advanced years have not established their dominion and sway.

Confiding that you will excuse these few observations on the value and importance of the advantages you possess. You will perceive that I have endeavoured to express myself in language, simple, concise, energetic and familiar, and that each paragraph, perhaps forms a distinct whole, containing such motives as may be expedient to animate you in the pursuit of knowledge. I conclude with every sincere wish for your present and future success.

I am,

My dear Pupils,
Your's very sincerely,

JOHN MOIR.