

our criminal population. I regret to say that the last tables with reference to the criminal statistics of Scotland presented to Parliament do present an alarming increase. I have looked over these returns for quinquennial periods from the year 1836 to the present time, and I regret to say that the average number of criminals has greatly increased. In the first five years the numbers were 3349; in the second five years, 3696; and for the last five years they amounted to 4488; showing an increase in the first period of between nine and ten per cent., and in the second period of upwards of twenty-one per cent. This is by no means a satisfactory statement; but it is one which we ought to look in the face. We cannot be surprised at the increase of crime when we look to the great want of Educational and Religious instruction in respect to the population, and to one great cause of demoralisation in Scotland, I mean the enormous consumption of ardent spirits. It appears from the Returns that the duty, actually paid on ardent spirits in Scotland, amounts annually to upwards of two millions; and it is calculated in an able and admirable paper prepared by Mr. Porter, of the Statistical Society of London, that the actual cost of ardent spirits to the people of Scotland (I mean to the consumers) amounts to the enormous sum of £6,000,000 sterling, which is several hundred thousand pounds more than the whole revenue which the public derive from Scotland. Looking at this enormous increase in the population of Scotland, let us simply ask what has been actually done during the last sixty or seventy years in order to supply the spiritual destitution either in town or country? I must say that the increase in the number of our churches has been most fractional as regards the great mass of the population on whom they were to operate. There has been a considerable increase, arising partly from the divisions which have taken place in Scotland; but that multiplication of churches has not kept pace with the spiritual wants of the people. Take the case of the Highlands for illustration. I do not blame any particular church in this respect, for, if any incurred blame at all, it is perhaps that one of which I am myself a member, because the other bodies had first to provide churches for themselves, whereas we had all along enjoyed the benefits of an Establishment, and from our voluntary exertions we ought to have provided on the Endowment principle for the spiritual wants of the population. (Cheers). We are bound to look this question very narrowly in the face for the purpose of establishing a great principle of social, political, and religious economy. I say this bears specially on the object of the meeting to-night, which proceeds on the principle that the various Voluntary churches have utterly failed to provide any remedy for this state of spiritual destitution. Referring to the cases of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, there are many parishes, 20 or 30 miles in length, divided by arms of the sea and mountain ridges, having perhaps one or two churches in which the clergyman officiates alternately, thus leaving half the population without service for a fortnight. One would naturally suppose that the various Voluntary Churches would have taken up these waste fields and planted their churches there; but they have been unable to do so, simply because they had first to provide for themselves; and the question always has been, where could they put down a church which would pay itself? This is naturally and essentially the principle on which they proceeded. Let me mention a specific instance. It is an instance with which I am acquainted, for I am myself interested by property in the district. At the period of the Secession of the Free from the Established Church there was in Mull, as in many parts of the Highlands, a district of twenty or thirty miles in length, divided by mountain ridges and arms of the sea; there had been a division of the parish, and a *quoad sacra* church had been erected in a little island which you all know by name, and many of you, I dare say, by sight, I mean the island of Iona. The population was thicker in the island of Iona and its immediate neighbourhood

than in other parts of that district; but nevertheless a great part, even after the division, remained, in which the clergyman had to preach every alternate Sabbath at different ends of the parish. When the excellent clergyman settled in Iona became a member of the Free Church (I don't allude to this case with any invidious intention), the natural process in my mind would have been that the new church should have been erected in that part of the parish where regular service could be kept up for the benefit of the population. This was the course most consistent with the necessities of the case; but nevertheless the second church has been erected in the same little island of Iona, and about three hundred yards from the other; the consequence is that the spiritual destitution of that great district is not one whit better since the Secession than it was before. (Cheers). Let us now take the great cities. Of course there the efforts and exertions of the purely Voluntary churches have been more energetic, and consequently their success has been greater. A very much larger number of churches have been built, and so far a certain portion of the spiritual destitution, which otherwise would have been neglected, has been actually provided for. Still I have no doubt many of you have seen the statement lately made by an eminent clergyman in this city, a member of the Free Church, for whose personal character and exertions I have the highest respect—I mean Dr. Buchanan. (Cheers). He states in some speeches lately made to his own body, "I am thoroughly convinced that at least a fourth part of the population of the city of Glasgow is in a state, both socially and religiously, substantially similar to that which I have described," [he had described them as not frequenting any place of worship, as totally ignorant of Religion, and as not even nominally connected with any church]—"and that another fourth part is only one or two degrees better. In other words my belief is that one half of the population are living in the utter neglect of the Ordinances of God's House." In another speech Dr. B., in reference to education in the wynds of the city, says that in the Tron parish, containing a population, according to the census of 1851, of 10,000, the total number of children above six and under sixteen years of age is 1,586; and, calculating all the children of different ages, there are only 567 attending any school. He further says, in comparing and contrasting the east with the west end of the town, that, while out of the 1,586 children in the Tron parish there are only 567 attending school, in the west end out of 1,606 children there are no fewer than 1,508 at school, showing the great deficiency existing in the former in proportion to the population. I am sincerely of opinion (though I have a great respect for the many bodies separate from the Church of Scotland, and for the principles on which the various Secessions have taken place) that the means hitherto provided are not adequate to overcome the spiritual destitution of the masses. (Cheers). It has been thought that the figures of Dr. Buchanan are somewhat in excess, and I observe, in a Report lately drawn up by the City Chamberlain, Dr. Strang, that he makes various statements with regard to education in Glasgow, to which I wish to direct your attention. He says, with regard to the number of children attending school, that the total number of children in this city, according to the last census, between 5 and 15, a fair educational period, is 71,000, and that the total number attending school is about 31,000, leaving 40,000 on the list. Dr. Strang evidently thinks this is an over-strained estimate, and I beg to draw your attention to the principle on which he reduces the relative numbers. He says that in this great city, chiefly manufacturing and mercantile, it would be manifestly absurd to conceive than any very large number of those children regularly entered at school would continue there beyond ten years of age. I do not know whether this is a fact or not. I do not know whether it is absurd to expect children to remain at school after ten years of age or not, but I know that it is absurd to expect in our present condition the

moral and social elevation of the people, if children are not to remain at school after they arrive at the age of ten years. (Cheers). Just suppose children sent to school, perhaps for one, or two, or even three years, between the ages of five and ten, and suppose farther that they are then withdrawn from school, and that from ten to fifteen their education is utterly neglected, attending no school, in all probability attending no church, I ask you to consider how much of that education which they received during the previous three or four years, they will retain when they reach eighteen or twenty? However, even following out that view, which I cannot consent to do except for the sake of argument, and striking off the whole number of children above ten years, and making other necessary deductions, it appears from Dr. Strang's own showing that the number of children between five and ten not attending any school was reduced to 6,000 or 7,000. Now I have asked what has been done to remedy the present state of things, Scotland having rapidly outgrown her means of education and religious instruction? I do not mean to say that the plan which we advocate is the only one which can be adopted; other parties must co-operate with us, other parties must assist us; the legislature must assist us, municipalities must tender their aid, and I rejoice that the municipal power of this city has been conscientiously of late directing its energies, as I trust they will continue to be directed, to the remedying of one great evil of our country, I mean the vice of drinking. I do trust these exertions will be supported by the public feeling and sentiment of the citizens of this great city (Cheers). I trust also that the Legislature may to some extent assist us, but I am bound to say that the evils, which we all deplore, can never be put down by mere force of statute. Such measure of repression are not consistent with our constitutional views of the liberty of the subject. In a constitutional monarchy we go on the broad principle of moral and social improvement, on moral and religious education, as the one grand and only basis on which sound social progress can be made. (Cheers). We hold that the various Churches of Christ must take up this work, that Christianity, of which the Church is the great agent in the world, must be brought to bear on the great masses of the population, and that through the thorough organisation of all the powers and all the various parties that compose the Christian Church. What we want is, that the energetic exertions of the Christian churches should be brought to bear by the thorough and complete organisation of their members upon the masses of society in all its three great divisions of the family, the school, and the church. (Cheers). And for this organisation a Presbyterian Church admirably fits us. It is now many years ago since the great and good Dr. Chalmers earnestly endeavoured to put into operation the machinery of a Presbyterian church upon a given district in this great city; and the recollection has not yet died away from many of us, and will not die away from the memory of future generations, with what eminent success, both in a moral, spiritual, and physical point of view, these exertions were brought to bear on the parish in which he was the minister. By the active exertions, not only of the minister, but of the laity, and his eldership, and by an agency almost peculiar to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, it was the intention of Dr. Chalmers to bring the message of the Gospel into every single house, to every single family, and by the energy and exertion of individual love thus brought to bear on each single parishioner to bring them out of the depths of the spiritual and moral degradation into which they had been unfortunately sunk by the neglect of previous generations. But, although Dr. Chalmers did work this system most admirably, we do not owe it to him but to the original founders of our Church, who have given us that organisation which it will be our own fault if we do not effectually work out, by the Divine blessing, in the elevation of the masses of this and the other cities of Scotland. Now I have said that I conceive