

Lord Brougham was very enthusiastically received by the audience. He gave a species of historical *resumé* of the educational efforts of the last half century, in most of which, as is well known, he has taken an energetic and conspicuous part. His lordship said his Royal Highness had shown how much had already been done to promote the great cause of education; but his Royal Highness had also pointed out how much yet remained to be accomplished. Their maxim ought to be *Nil actum*—he begged pardon of the ladies for wandering into a Latin quotation in their presence—[laughter]—“Counting nought done, while aught remains to do.” That, he could assure the ladies, was a very literal rendering of the maxim he was about to have quoted. [Cheers and laughter.] The question was, what was it that “remained to do?” He was glad that the Conference had been wisely confined to one specific object, instead of going at large into all the matters connected with public and national education,—[hear,]—because of the unhappy differences and controversies of various kinds which existed. [Hear, hear.] He quite agreed with his Royal Highness in thinking that, even if they did not arrive at any very satisfactory solution of the problem, the mere inquiry, and the information which must be gained by the evidence placed before them, would be no light addition to their triumphs in this great cause. [Hear, and cheers.] His reverend friend the Secretary had reminded him that he took part in the very small beginnings of the movement in favour of popular education forty-six years ago. The Bell and Lancaster schools had then been established to a considerable extent; but it was necessary that a greater impulse should be given by a better plan of association. Accordingly, towards the latter end of 810, he recollected presiding over a meeting somewhere in that neighbourhood, composed of men whose merits deserve to be held in lasting remembrance, amongst whom were William Allan and Joseph Forster, and their friends, who by their pious and persevering labours, and their boundless generosity, had done a great deal to promote popular education. [Hear.] Then came his late lamented friend, Dr. Birkbeck—[hear, hear]—to whose generosity and labours it was impossible that any language of his could do justice. His lordship next referred to a private meeting, presided over by his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, and to the great exertions of his late lamented friend the Duke of Bedford, and this naturally brought him to the formation of the British and Foreign School Society, and in the labours of the “much calumniated” Education Committee. Out of their labours arose the present system which had been so happily applied under his noble friend, the president [the Earl of Granville,] and his right hon. friend behind him, the vice-president. The committee of Privy Council grants began with £30,000, and now happily amounted to half a million. [Hear.] The number of schools had increased from 5,000 or 6,000, in 1801, to 40,000 or 50,000. In olden times when he proclaimed that “the schoolmaster was abroad”—[laughter]—he had no expectation that he should ever meet with the second master—the employer of the labour of poor people’s children—against whom their present struggle was directed. They wanted to get employers to adopt some system of certificates to be required from children previous to giving them employment. They did not want the continental compulsory system, but they wanted some system of “gentle violence”—[laughter]—towards parents, to induce them to give their children the necessary education. [Cheers.]

The Bishop of Oxford said that, as one of the first to whom this movement had been suggested by his friend Canon Moseley, and one of the first who had acquiesced in the proposition, he begged to thank his Royal Highness for the part he had taken in furthering the objects of the conference. He believed that under the blessing of God, this great cause of education would be promoted by the conference which it was now proposed to hold. The great difficulty that now met them, was not to provide schools for the children, but children for the schools. [Cries of “Hear hear.”] This being the case, it became them, as practical men, to address themselves mainly to the remedy of that evil; and in order to do this, they should first ascertain what was the cause of it—[hear]—and how a remedy could best be applied. It was in vain to administer a medicine for a fever if there was some miserable gutter beneath the window of the patient’s sleeping apartment, sending forth the seeds of some new disorders. [Hear, hear.] One of the difficulties with which they had to deal, was the

necessity which so many of the parents had for the early labour of the children. He believed there was another, and, if possible, even a wider cause, striking its roots deep into the evil, and that was, the want of a certain authority on the part of the parents, and the want of a proper yielding obedience on the part of the children. [Hear, hear.] This was one of the great causes of evil which they all deplored. The parents were so much engaged in their daily toils that they had not time to look after their children, and to induce those who were indisposed to incur the labour and self-denial indispensable in all true education. [Hear.] There ought also to be, on the part of the parents, a settled belief that the education which was offered to them was worthy of their acceptance; and the great hindrance to this was the differences which existed amongst the various parties who furnished the means of education. [Hear.] He believed that such conferences as that which they were then about to hold would do a great deal towards lessening those unhappy divisions which at present existed amongst the various parties who were desirous of promoting the education of the working classes of this country. He believed that but for those differences, there would be one strong assertion of the moral sense of the people in this direction, which would remove the difficulties which stood in their way. [Hear, hear.] Their friendly discussions would tend to remove many of the difficulties with which this question was now surrounded. [Hear, hear.] It was intended that the various sections should have papers read to them, and that resolutions embodying the result of those discussions should be presented to the general meeting on Wednesday. On such an occasion as that, when there might be differences of opinion arising, it would be obviously inconvenient that his Royal Highness should preside—[hear, hear]—but as his Royal Highness desired to render what they were doing as practical as possible, he had given them his aid that day in his general statement of their case—[hear, hear]—and he would leave them, on the Wednesday, to come to the best conclusions they could after they had had the opportunity of discussion. [Hear.] In conclusion, the right rev. prelate expressed his gratification at the hopeful aspect of the educational movement at the present moment, and appealed to Lord Brougham as to whether matters had ever before appeared so cheering. “And,” said the right reverend prelate, “may the blessing of our God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, be vouchsafed to this endeavour, and, with his blessing, it shall not be fruitless.” [Cheers.]

The Rev. Canon Moseley, having long been connected with the educational movement, could bear testimony that a large portion of what was required towards a good system of national education had already been accomplished, and what had been done was that which properly should have been first done. It was necessary that schools should be erected—it was necessary that competent and well-instructed masters should be secured—it was necessary that their talents and acquirements should be tested—it was necessary that they should be provided with adequate stipends—and it was necessary that their efficiency should be insured by inspection. All this had been done; and what they had now to do was to impress upon the poor the value of the instruction offered them. His Royal Highness had alluded to the statistics of education as taken from the census of 1851, and which, until they were proved wrong, he [Canon Moseley] would assume to be correct. It appeared, from these statistics, that out of 5,000,000 children who ought to be at school only 2,000,000 were there; and of the remaining 3,000,000 only one-third were at work, leaving 2,000,000 who were either at home or in the streets. But the great misfortune was the youthfulness of those who were at school. It was found that between seven and eight the parents began to take them away, and that very few children of the labouring classes remained at school after twelve, the average age at which they left being 10½. Now he would ask them how it was possible that at such an age children could have attained a knowledge of even the elements of education; and yet, if there was an outbreak of the people the enemies of education would cry out and say, “See what your education has done!” whereas they should rather say, “See what the want of education has produced.” He asked those present, more especially those who had children at the age of 10½, to consider, however good the principles inculcated in a child—however much he might have been taught—however docile he might be—what would be