

Ramsay Lane, in the Ragged School; and I feel myself before God as much bound to give that child what I believe to be God's truth as I feel myself bound to give to my own children. (Cheers.) The longer I live the more satisfied I am that that great battle which was fought in this hall some dozen years ago around the Word of God, and for that Word being taught in this school, it was a well fought battle. The longer I live the more am I satisfied of this, that if you wish to bring up these children to be valuable members of society, to love the British Constitution, to love our Queen, to set none before the Queen—(hear, hear, and cheers)—and, instead of being prepared to welcome Louis Napoleon and the Frenchmen on our shores, to meet them with the bayonet and the rifle in defence of our privileges,—the longer I live, if these are our objects, if we wish a religious people, a loyal people, a people that would repel invaders instead of welcoming them, and die, like our forefathers, for our civil and religious privileges,—the longer I live, I am the more satisfied, if these are our objects, that the day we fought the battle for the Bible was one of the best days I ever saw. (Cheers.) These being the principles on which our school is established, I rejoice at the success which has attended our efforts during the last twelve years that it has been in operation. Dr Guthrie then said that they had heard much about the Government to-day. He did not wish to speak evil of dignities, but there were some things in respect of which it was difficult to keep one's temper, and this was one of them. He should endeavour in anything he should say, to speak with all respect. He could honestly say that he believed Government was not to blame in this matter—he meant the heads of Government. This deed was done under the Palmerston Administration, and not under Lord Derby's—(hear hear, from Mr Orde)—Lord Derby's Government, however, did not undo it, and that was nearly as bad. (Laughter and applause.) He was, however, bound to say that the heads of Government knew nothing of it; for when he went up to London, along with a deputation, on the subject, he found that the heads of the Government repudiated it, one and all of them. They held up their hands in perfect astonishment, and were as ignorant and as innocent as sucking doves on the subject. (Laughter and cheers.) He believed that the whole matter was managed by one gentleman in the Education Office—(hear, hear)—a man of distinguished ability, but then ability was sometimes used to do ill as well as to do good. That gentleman sat in the Education Office, and the Government were mere tools in his hands. He was as great a despot in educational matters as Louis Napoleon himself; and he believed it was absolutely necessary that we should have a Minister for Education in this country, who should be answerable on the floor of the House of Commons for everything done in the matter of education. (Loud applause.) Some ten years ago he went along with Mr Duncan, Dr Bell, and Mr Smith, and through the kindness of Lord Palmerston—(applause)—who had always been a steady friend to their cause—they had an interview with Sir G. Grey, Lord Carlisle, Lord Lansdowne. They met with a courteous reception, but then the Government did not consider this such an important question, and there were many people in the country who treated it as the Government treated John Knox and his schemes at the Reformation—they thought it was a "devout imagination"—this of saving those wretched children. He did not at that time blame the Government for not committing themselves, as the movement was then a novel thing. There were some people had got so much accustomed to see the ragged children about the streets, that they did not think that Edinburgh was as well without them as with them. They were like the woman who got good water conveyed into her house from the Pentlands or some other place, in place of the bad water she had been accustomed to use all her days. When she was asked what she thought of the new supply, she said—"It's no worth drinkin'—it has neither taste nor smell." (Loud laughter and cheers.) There were people who seemed to be rather pleased with the miserable objects they had going about the streets. Others said they would never reduce crime by Ragged Schools, adding what they thought was a very clever

saying, that "as long as there are pockets to pick there will be pickpockets." Now, they did not see how far that argument could go; because he might just as well say, "What is the use of the Lords of Justice to prevent murder? As long as there are throats to cut, there will be cut-throats." (Laughter and applause.) "Or what is the use of lighthouses on the shore? As long as there are ships there will be shipwrecks." "Or what is the use of rifle corps?"—which he supported as a defensive army—"as long as the French remember Waterloo, there will be danger of an invasion." Such a mode of reasoning was arrant nonsense. It was about as logical as the idea that there was no use in providing good food, and clean cells, and wholesome atmosphere in our jails, because people would become ragues in order to enjoy the privileges of a lodging in the prison. To put that to the proof, they had only to proclaim liberty to the captive, and there would not remain one who would not to-morrow morning abandon the wholesome diet of the prison for the liberty of the High Street. It was said that workmen would become dissipated, and neglect their children, because they knew that they would be attended to, and educated in the Ragged Schools. But that was an equally false idea, for it was not the Ragged Schools that made ragged children, any more than it was the paper mills that made rags. It was through the public-house and the dram-shop that people went down to perdition. Well, had this state of feeling been the condition of matters now, he could have excused the Government for treating the Ragged Schools as they had done. But it was not so. The Edinburgh deputation who went up to Government last winter, were accompanied on that occasion by deputations from Carlisle, Newcastle, York, Liverpool, Manchester, and Aberdeen comprising men of all ranks and all conditions. They were under great obligation to Mr Black, their excellent representative, to Mr Dunlop, and to various English Members, who entered heart and soul into their case. They stated their case to Mr Adderley, complaining of this change, the effect of which was to land this institution in debt to the extent of £600, and he saw from the Report of the York Institution that it was in debt £500, and he had no doubt that it was the same in Manchester and other places to which he had referred, so that the whole Ragged School cause was at this moment thrown into great confusion. They discussed the matter with Mr Adderley, and told him what the Ragged Schools had done. The Ragged Schools in this city had (said Dr Guthrie), in the first instance, cleared off the whole race of juvenile beggars who used to infest our streets, and ply trade with great mendacity and dexterity. He had not seen a young ragged beggar in Edinburgh for six months, though, having been very lately in Manchester and Liverpool, he had plenty of them there. And what he would say was that, what with Mr Robertson's school, and the West Church school, and he would also say the other school, though he did not approve of its principles, they had swept the streets of Edinburgh of juvenile beggars, and they had swept them into their Ragged Schools. With regard to their prisons, they had heard what the Lord Provost had stated; and he would ask had any other cause existed to account for that effect but the Ragged Schools? As his friend Mr McLaren well knew, if it had not been for these schools, they would have had greatly to enlarge their prison—a step at one time contemplated, and which that gentleman, to his credit, had been the means of preventing. The same effects had followed in Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, York, and in other places where Ragged Schools had been established; and they were therefore not only entitled to say that they had put down juvenile mendicancy, but they had found out the real cure for juvenile crime. This school had returned to society as valuable members of it 530 individuals, at an expense of from £20 to £25 each; whereas, if Government had had to deal with any of them as criminals, it would have cost them at least £300 for each. He maintained that, if there was an institution in the land worthy of the liberal countenance and support of an enlightened Christian Government, it was this institution, which they had sent to the door with such a wretched pittance, that he was almost disposed to propose that it should be flung back in