

intimate connection with that community of dissenters. The British and Foreign School Society had greatly contributed to the spread of Education in England. He did not say that such an organization might not be devised for and applied to Scotland; but he did, think if any new educational experiment were to be undertaken, that it ought to be brought into operation in fields not already occupied, and that the Legislature ought not to interfere with a system already well tried until the success of the experiment had been well tested. He was very far from entertaining any hostility to schools connected with the seceding bodies of Scotland, particularly to those connected with the greatest and most recent secession—the movement which formed the Free Church—but he should much regret if the exertions of both ecclesiastical bodies could not be united for the purpose of advancing the general cause of education in Scotland. (Hear, hear.)

The Marquis of Lansdowne thanked the Noble Duke for his able and lucid statement. He had himself had occasion to be officially in communication with the representatives of the Scottish parochial schools, and to have heard much of them. And, although he was far from saying that they were in a perfect state, or sufficiently developed to meet the wants of the country, still he should much regret seeing any system of education attempted or adopted in Scotland, the basis of which should not be founded on the principles of the parochial schools—(hear, hear)—schools which had been the means of founding in Scotland that great national pre-eminence in education which for a long time that country had held in the eyes of the world. (Hear, hear.) He could not sit down without stating to their Lordships that both the Free and the Established Churches of Scotland had met the efforts of the Committee of Privy Council in that spirit of harmony, confidence, and toleration which had made those efforts more successful than they would otherwise have been, and that there existed a cordial and practical co-operation on educational subjects between both Churches and her Majesty's Government. (Hear, hear.)

Lord Brougham concurred in the eulogy which had been pronounced upon the parochial school system of Scotland, and expressed his hope that no step would be taken which should not tend to the promotion, the development, and the extension of the system in question.

#### EDUCATION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

We owe our readers no apology for the number of our extracts relative to the Parochial School System of Scotland; as the struggle is an important one, and fraught with weighty consequences to the future. The following extract from a speech delivered recently by Dr. McLeod of Glasgow, presents a lively picture of the whole subject, and is characterised by much earnestness and vigour:

As to Highland education, let me just observe that the whole parochial system of education throughout Scotland is acknowledged to be inadequate to the wants of the people. The parochial system was fixed and stereotyped for Scotland a very long time ago; while the population since then has become threefold or fourfold. But not merely does the increased population throughout Scotland, and in the Highlands in particular, call for additional schools; but the physical character of the country to which my remarks more especially apply renders a vast increase of schools necessary to meet the wants of the people. Every parish in the Highlands, no doubt, has its parish school; but how little good can one school, however well taught, do for the entire population of a Highland parish? There are very many parishes in the Highlands varying in extent from fifty miles in length by twenty-four in breadth to near seventy by thirty miles; and not only are they of that immense extent, but the districts, the glens and valleys of those immense parishes are

separated by bleak tracts of mountain, covered for a great part of the year with snow—by unfordable rivers without bridges—and by stormy arms of the sea that are often impassable. (Cheers.) Now, Sir, may I not ask what can a parish school effect under such circumstances? I am thankful to say these islands are not, however, altogether destitute of schools; the proprietors of some of them have done much and are doing much. The venerable society in Edinburgh have done a vast deal more than any other association for the good of the Highlands—expending upwards of £4000 a-year for the spiritual improvement of the Highlanders. The Education Committee of the General Assembly are doing a very great deal, and many thousand children are now taught in their schools, though I cannot recollect the precise number. I think it cannot be under 12,000. The Gaelic School Society has also been of great service; but our subject confines us to the parochial schools which are miserably incommensurate with the wants of the people—so much so that, in the year 1818, it was found that 2220 supplementary schools were required, and there has been no great improvement since then. The Free Church have shown every desire to promote education in these districts. I give them credit for what they have done, and for the liberality of their people in this respect—[cheers]—but, by a statement which I lately read in the *Witness* newspaper [the organ of their Church.] their Educational Scheme was declared to be in a very deficient condition, if not, to use the word of the writer, in a state of bankruptcy." Do I rejoice in this? Verily, I do not—for I say, as Abraham said to Lot, "Let there be no strife betwixt the herdsmen of Abraham, and those of Lot; if they go to the right hand we shall go to the left, and if they go to the left we shall go to the right." Would that this principle had been acted upon—and I stop not to inquire what side infringed it—there would have been less strife among our herdsmen than there has been. (Cheers.)

I have thus very hurriedly spoken of the state of the parochial school system in the Highlands and Isles, and the necessity of increasing the number. But the clamour against the parochial system is not confined to the inadequacy of the supply. This is not the only reason why the Church of Scotland is abused, and the whole machinery of the system threatened to be broken down. The complaint also extends to the incompetency of the teachers for performing the duties assigned to them. Now, let me just remind you that by what I would call a most unfortunate clause in the Schoolmasters' Act, the salaries of the teachers are generally divided. I take the county of Argyll, and I find that the average salary there is £17 per annum, and when the salary is thus divided, the proprietors are not bound by law to give any accommodation as to house, school-house, or garden. This £17 per annum gives 28s. 4d. per month, or 7s. 1d. per week to the teachers; the fees in general do not amount to above £3 per annum. Take fifty of the lowest on the General Assembly Scheme, and these do not amount to above 5s. per annum. What then is expected of this teacher to whom you give this allowance of 7s. 1d. per week? He is expected to be qualified for instructing his pupils in Gaelic, English, Latin, and Greek; and as the advertisements for new teachers express it, if they can teach French so much the better. (A laugh.) The teachers are required to teach writing, arithmetic in all its branches, algebra, geography, mensuration, mathematics, navigation, and I may say, theology, in the explanation of the Bible and Catechisms. I ask, with due respect to my friend Dr. Hill, if he were present, is there any Professor within the University of Glasgow who will be found qualified for undertaking all the duties? (A laugh.) Sure I am that none of them are qualified; for Gaelic is a *sine qua non*, and none of them could teach a word of it, or are capable of being taught to pronounce the Gaelic word for a calf. And yet the Church of Scotland is blamed for not having men better qualified than the present teachers, and the cry is, separate the school from the Church

of Scotland. And what have all those clamorous liberals—that wish to destroy our parochial establishment—what have they themselves done to supply the deficiency? The opponents of the parochial school system have had, said Dr. Chalmers, upwards of 2000 years given to them to show their philanthropy, and yet, said that great and good man, "I know of only two or three Gaelic churches which have been erected in the Highlands, and as to schools, I know of none." To whom, then, is the godly upbringing of the youth of Scotland to be entrusted, if you destroy the present system? I hold in my hand testimonies to the peculiar fitness of the Church of Scotland for this purpose by three of the greatest men that ever adorned our country—Robert Hall of Leicester, the late Francis or Lord Jeffrey, to whose honoured memory Scotland is at present raising a monument, and the late Dr. Chalmers; but to read their testimonies would occupy too much of our time. Need I remark that the poor Highlanders are well deserving of any privilege that may be conferred upon them? No people in the kingdom value education more than they do, and none make greater progress in learning, especially when taught through the medium of their own beloved language. (Cheers.) I shall never forget a scene which I witnessed in one of the Western Islands, accompanied by my friend Principal Baird, whose name will ever be associated with Highland education. We had, during the day, been examining one of the General Assembly's schools; the whole population of the village and district around the school were present. We found it necessary to intimate that the school must be removed to a more populous part of the island, when a venerable patriot came forward, in the name of the people, to remonstrate against such a measure. A widow woman, then present, not thinking he had urged the case in sufficiently strong terms, advanced, holding a young child by the arm, and with a power of simple but impassioned eloquence, said, pointing to her child. "From the lips of that young child have I first heard the Word of God read to me; you have opened a well in this parched island, and are you now come to close it; you have erected a beacon of light on this rocky coast, and are you come to extinguish it." (Cheers.) In this style she continued to address us, her eyes streaming with tears, till we found it necessary at last to yield, and to assure the people that the school would not be removed. (Cheers.) We proceeded to the shore to embark for another island; it was a lovely summer evening; not a ripple was on the water; the red sun was passing away to set in the west far beyond the rocks of St. Kilda. After taking our seats in the boat, and looking back to the rock from whence we had embarked, we there saw the whole population, betwixt us and the horizon in the attitude of prayer for our safety, and invoking the blessing of Heaven on our undertaking. (Cheers.) I cannot bring myself to believe that the Government have any intention whatever of forcing a system of education on the people of Scotland, from which religious instruction is to be excluded. (Cheers.) My earnest hope and belief is, that, instead of destroying the parochial school machinery under the superintendence of the Church of Scotland, they will enlarge and amend it, and in the supplementary schools which the country so much requires, they will not exclude Bible instruction in any regulations they may think proper to adopt. (Cheers.) Come anything upon us rather than a system which would put Christianity on a footing with secular science, or teach it in such form as that all parties and all denominations could approve of. Come anything upon us rather than a national system of education without the recognition of a Mediator, an atoning sacrifice, a Trinity, and the One True God. Come anything upon us rather than a system of national education of which Christianity is not the basis and the substance, for such a system would be nothing else than infidelity and the parent of anarchy. (Loud cheers.) But, as I have already said, I do not believe that the Government have any such intention. Those