

**REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE DICK
BEQUEST ON THE RURAL PUBLIC
(FORMERLY PAROCHIAL)
SCHOOLS OF ABERDEEN, BANFF, AND
MORAY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE HIGHER EDUCATION IN THEM**

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Report to the Trustees of the Dick Bequest on the Rural Public (Formerly Parochial) Schools of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray with Special Reference to the Higher Education in Them by Simon Somerville Laurie

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SIMON SOMERVILLE LAURIE

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R E P O R T

TO THE

TRUSTEES OF THE DICK BEQUEST

*ON THE RURAL PUBLIC (FORMERLY PAROCHIAL)
SCHOOLS OF*

ABERDEEN, BANFF, AND MORAY

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE HIGHER INSTRUCTION IN THEM

BY
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EDINBURGH; VISITOR FOR THE TRUSTEES

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TRUSTEES OF THE BEQUEST—MAY 1890.

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At a meeting of the Trustees held on 26th May
1890—*Inter alia*,—

“The Clerk mentioned that in terms of the Minute of 6th March, the Report to the Trustees by Professor Laurie, the Visitor of Schools, had been printed with a view to being published, and that proof copies were some time ago sent to the Trustees for perusal. The Trustees, having considered the matter, now resolve that the Report be published, that 500 copies be obtained, and that the Clerk retain, for future occasions, all copies not required for distribution.”

Extracted from the Minutes by

GEORGE BAYLEY, W.S.,
Clerk and Treasurer.

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CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM OF SCOTLAND—RELATION OF THE DICK BEQUEST TO IT, AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ADMINI- STRATION.

THE first Reformation Document of national importance bearing on the education of the Scottish people is contained in the "First Book of Discipline, or the Policy of Discipline of the Church," drawn up by John Knox and others, presented to the nobility of the kingdom in the year 1560, and afterwards subscribed by the Kirk and Lords. This most interesting of all documents in the early history of post-Reformation education in Europe proceeds on the preamble that it is the "office and duty of the godly magistrate" so to "provide at the utmost of his power how [the Church of God] may abide in some purity in the posterity following." It maintains the duty of the State to be "most careful for the virtuous education and godly upbringing of the youth of the realm," "for as the youth must succeed to us, so we ought to be careful that they have knowledge and erudition to profit and comfort that which ought to be most dear to us, to wit, the Kirk and Spouse of

our Lord Jesus Christ." "Of necessitie it is," if this end is to be attained, "that every several Kirk have one Schoolmaster appointed, such a one at least as is able to teach Grammar and the Latine tongue if the town be of any reputation : if it be upland where the people convene to the doctrine but once in the week, then must either the reader or minister then appointed take care of the children and youth of the parish to instruct them in the first rudiments, especially in the Catechism.¹ Further, we think it expedient that in every notable town, and especially in the town of the Superintendent, there be erected a Colledge in which the arts, at least logick and rhetorick, together with the tongues, be read² by sufficient masters, for whom honest stipends must be appointed. Also that provision be made for those that be poore, and not able by themselves nor by their friends to be sustained at letters, and in special *these that come from landward.*" In this way the Reformers believed that the youth, being under the supervision of their own friends, would be preserved from many evils, and the "great schools or universities" be "replenished with those that be apt for learning." No father of "whatsoever estate or condition" is to be allowed to bring up his children "according to his own fantasie"; but all "must be *compelled* to bring up their children in

¹ Calvin's Catechiam, translated in the Book of the Common Order.

² The word *legere* was used in mediæval times as meaning "to teach," masters in the universities having before the invention of printing to read or dictate, their scholars writing down what was dictated, and then getting it up.