

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THE Toronto *Mail* takes us severely to task for advocating an Elective Council of Public Instruction, and broadly hints that in advocating such a measure we have presumed to speak for the Teachers and Inspectors of the Province. Now while we have no hesitation to speak out on behalf of such a very respectable body of men as the *Mail* refers to, when they enunciate principles we hold in common, we would just simply request the *Mail* to turn over its file of August last, and it will find there recorded in its own report of the proceedings of the Ontario Teachers' Association, resolutions, unanimously adopted, embodying the principle of an Elective Council of Public Instruction. A reference to the proceedings of the Convention of Inspectors, held in Toronto in January last, would also inform the *Mail*, that when a resolution to the same effect was proposed, not a single objection was raised, though several Inspectors addressed the Convention. It is therefore quite clear, that while not pretending to speak for either Teachers or Inspectors, both of whom are quite able to speak for themselves, we do represent such views as they have already declared at their respective Conventions.

In opposing the elective principle on the basis which we drafted in the first number of the TEACHER, the *Mail* impugns the honor and moral rectitude of the whole teaching profession, by insinuating that a Council composed of two-thirds Teachers would be prompted by "professional sympathy to make everything as easy and independent for themselves as possible." Does the *Mail* mean to say that the Teachers of Ontario are not fit to be entrusted with a seat at the Council of Public Instruction? Does it mean that they are so selfish and so unprincipled, that in order to prevent their *legislating away* the people's rights, and the blessings of a free education, they must be shut out from any position that would give them a voice practically in school legislation? Or are the teachers of Ontario of such inferior attainments that they possess neither the ability nor the judgment to legislate? By the *Mail's* own logic, however, it would appear that practical experience as a teacher was considered a qualification in the first Council of Public Instruction.

If a Council then, with four practical teachers was such a boon, and has legislated so wisely, and shewn such "sympathy" with the teacher, and evaded the "hostile" criticism of its determined enemies, how much more serviceable would a Council of six be: It is assumed by the *Mail* that the *practical* element

is that which is really the most useful. Then the *more* practical the *more* useful.

The *Mail* again asks whether "Boards of Trustees or Municipal Councils would be likely to respect and submit to school regulations made by a body composed of two-thirds teachers." How cynical and supercilious! The *Mail*, in its lofty ideas of what society demands, could not for a moment entertain the deliberations of such despised, obscure, and good-for-nothing men as the teachers of Ontario.—What do they know? this inflated cynic asks. "Who cares for their decisions? Who would submit to them? And thus wrapping itself up in a panoply of arrogance, it looks down with scorn on men, who we venture to say can make themselves felt, whether the *Mail* will hear or forbear.

The *Mail* endeavors to meet our argument in favor of the practical element on the Board of Public Instruction by pointing out that four out of nine of its members were practical teachers. It admits, however, that only five attended the meetings of the Board during the past year. Does not that fact itself furnish an argument for a change? A Board of nine and only five, a bare quorum, taking interest enough in the education of the people to attend its meetings! Were they elected would such be the case? Do representative bodies ever act in this manner?

"But then," says the *Mail*, "look at their regulations!" "Neither Mr. Ross, nor any other impugner of the Council has been able to shew any defect." We reply Mr. Ross has not, either by innuendo, or in any other way, impugned the Council or its venerable head, Dr. Ryerson. We challenge the *Mail* to point it out. Mr. Ross, however, does not fear to assert *principles* of legislation, no matter who may *feel* themselves impugned. His opinions of the usefulness of the Council of Public Instruction, even as now constituted, will not prevent his advocating a change, which, in his opinion, is calculated to make it more useful. No man has spoken or written in higher terms of the ability of our Chief Superintendent, and no one holds him in greater esteem than Mr. Ross does, but that which the Teachers and Inspectors of this country demand, that which conforms to the genius of our institutions, that which is based on the sound legislative principle, "that the party governed should have a voice in appointing the governors," Mr. Ross has no fear of advocating, and no doubt as regards the result.

The *Mail*, in its concluding remarks, endeavors to