

S P E E C H
OF THE
HON. GEO. W. ROSS,
MINISTER OF EDUCATION,

At his Nomination, October 11th, 1886,

ON

The Progress of Our Schools, Text Books,
and Religious Instruction.

In opening, Mr. Ross referred to the policy of the Mowat Government in regard to Provincial rights, municipal legislation, enforcement of the Temperance Act, and the administration of justice. He then proceeded to discuss more fully legislation affecting the Education Department. He said: We have placed the Education Department directly under the control of the people. Although there is no doubt as to the ability of the late Dr. Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Education, still it must not be forgotten that under him our school system was essentially bureaucratic. The members of the late Council of Public Instruction, except during the last year of its existence, were the nominees of the Crown, and no more responsible to the people of Ontario than the Senate of Canada or the House of Lords in England. By the legislation of 1876, the members of the Executive, or a committee thereof, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, were constituted the Education Department, thus preserving in its fullest integrity the direct responsibility of the Department to the people. That this course was meditated by the Administration of Mr. Sandfield Macdonald is quite clear. In 1869, Dr. Ryerson, in sending in for the first time his resignation as Chief Superintendent, recommended the appointment of a member of the Executive to take his place, with the title of Minister of Public Instruction. The Hon. M. C. Cameron declined to accept it "until His Excellency's advisers shall have more fully considered your suggestion and matured a measure for placing your Department under the direct control of a member of the Executive." For the first time in the history of Ontario the head of the Education Department is made directly responsible to the people, through the Parliament

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