

but nevertheless very important. The office of Chief Superintendent of Education is virtually abolished; the Council of Public Instruction is defunct, and all the powers enjoyed, and duties devolving on the Chief and Council will henceforth be transferred to a responsible Minister of the Crown. We have already expressed our opinion as adverse to the change now accomplished, and we see no reason to make any retraction. Briefly we may say that our own objection to the new departure is that a Cabinet Minister will find it exceedingly difficult to give his attention to the numerous matters hitherto managed by the Chief and the Council. So many are the details requiring mature judgment, experience, and sagacity for their administration, that no one man, still less the political head of a Department, can successfully grapple with them. It may be urged that the late Council have already done so much that very little remains to be done. When it is remembered that the same Council have from year to year been kept busy, their labors, indeed, increasing, instead of diminishing, and that the demand for changes and improvements and the numerous matters connected with the efficient working of our school system, will still continue to demand attention, the argument loses all its force. It has been proposed to transfer to an Advisory Council, consisting of the Central Committee of Examiners, with the addition of two or three other members, a portion of the labors devolving on the late Council. Whether such a step is now in contemplation we cannot say; we only

know that the Act is entirely silent in regard to it. Such a division of duty and responsibility would be, to say the least, exceedingly awkward. Such a Council would have only *advisory*, but not *executive* power, and the Government having all the responsibility might feel compelled by the exigencies of any particular case, or conscientious conviction, to differ from its advice. Under such circumstances — circumstances, indeed, not unlikely to arise — the Council would be practically a non-entity, and would occupy a position neither pleasant to its members, nor useful to the country.

Another strong objection to the change is that it deprives the Teachers and Inspectors of the Province of the privilege of exercising their franchise to select representatives in the Council of Public Instruction — a privilege which was obtained only after a hard struggle, and which they prized very highly. We have also expressed our fears that the change would lead to the introduction of politics into our educational system. But it is useless now to enlarge. The change has been accomplished, and whether we like it or not, it is the duty of all interested in the educational progress of the country, to aid in making it a success. We regard it as a doubtful experiment — one which has been already tried with the result of failure in the Province of Quebec, but nevertheless we shall rejoice if our fears should prove to be groundless, and the anticipations of its advocates be more than realized.

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