

And they relate to such intricate, technical, and professional matters that they cannot wisely be revised, or prudently be amended, except by a body where every educational interest is represented.

It has been objected somewhat ostentatiously, and as if the objection were completely destructive of any criticism of the present system, that since the people pay the cost of education, they should therefore control its management. I need scarcely say that there is no desire, as far as I am aware, on the part of those who propose to separate educational control from the ordinary province of Government, to take away from the people one particle of power which they at present possess. Even now the money voted by Parliament for the support of education is expended as the law directs. Ministerial authority in no way controls its distribution, except in the matter of the High School Fund, and of the salaries to Departmental officers and Normal School teachers, which is wisely left to ministerial discretion, although subject to legislative criticism in the passing of the Estimates. And not only in any new scheme of administration should the distribution be continued in accordance with the specific provisions of the Legislature, but in every other way in which the public purse is concerned, the School Act should be made as definite as possible. What is desired is simply a scheme by which two things shall be secured: first the entire freedom of educational administration and patronage from the maintenance of party and from party opposition; and, second, the representation of every interest concerned in the discussion, framing and authorization of all those ordinances and regulations which are necessary to supplement any Act of the Legislature, no matter how carefully considered before passing.

I have been told, by both prominent educationists and politicians, that a remedy for the present educational distress can be found in the appointment of a Deputy Minister of Education of experience and ability, whose advice his Chief should take on all professional and technical matters. This proceeds on the assumption that the present Deputy is inefficient, which to my mind has never been established, if regard is had to the real qualifications of a Deputy head. But assuming it to be true, and supposing the most eminent educationist available were made Deputy Minister in his stead, what reason have we for believing that the Minister would always accept his advice, or for believing that Party would not have the same baneful influence upon educational interests which it is now said to have? And, too, how can it be supposed that a man, shut up in an official bureau, can maintain for years that living knowledge of the educational wants of the people, and of the progress which education is making, which the director of a Provincial educational system should have? This was the very ground of much of the opposition that was given to Dr. Ryerson in his late years—that he did not really understand the educational status of the country, although he had been the principal factor in developing it. And, too, all the objections which I have urged above against surrendering to any one man a power virtually absolute over educational matters, are as weighty in the case of the Deputy-Minister, no matter how capable, as they are in the case of a Minister-in-Chief.

As to the scheme which I propose, I repeat, lest there be misunderstanding, that I do not intend a return to the Ryersonian system. Neither do I desire, as has been stated, to see the powers of the people taken away and given to a body of professional