

forgotten that the usefulness, and even the very *raison d'être*, of his office depend upon the successful supplying from time to time of the deficiencies which necessarily must be in every education Act, no matter how complete. That is, upon wisely attending to those details which no Legislature can provide for. If then he cannot, in the nature of things, successfully supply these deficiencies, and competently attend to these details, the very existence of his office is unnecessary and even deluding, for the people naturally repose confidence in him wisely to supply those regulations which the Legislature leaves unacted.

It is my matured opinion that he cannot in the nature of things supply these deficiencies of the education Acts; for in the nature of things he will be incompetent to do so. He ought from his position to be an educational expert, and thoroughly familiar, not only with the theories of education, but with their practical application in other countries, and more especially in our own Province. No man who has given the necessary study to educational matters to be thus familiar with them, will be of sufficient political eminence to be made a Cabinet Minister. Neither will a party-leader consent to take an untrained and non-partisan politician into his Cabinet, although an eminent educationist. Neither will an educationist of merit enter a party Cabinet, bound, as he would be, to consider party triumph and majority greater ends than educational progress. Nor, even were the consummation reached of having the most capable educationist in the country the Minister of Education, would any real solution have been made of the educational problem. The day for autocracy has passed. Authority which is unregulated by discussion and the representation of every interest concerned, no

matter how wise in itself, never can satisfy an intelligent constituency. And our educational system concerns so many interests, that no one man, however wise or experienced in those matters which the Legislature leaves indefinite, can absolutely exercise authority acceptably to trustees, teachers, inspectors, and all who are deeply concerned in educational matters, or even to the great body of the people generally.

It will perhaps be argued that there is no greater reason for separating the educational administration from the regular government, than for removing any other department—that of Crown Lands, or of Public Works, from ministerial control. At first sight this seems true, but the resemblance of the Education Department to these others is very slight. In the first place, legislation in regard to Crown Lands or Public Works can be made much more definite, and so as to leave very much less to ministerial absolutism than educational legislation can possibly be made. Then again, what is left to be done by the Ministers in these Departments is of an every day commercial and legal character, requiring just that experience and ability to effect which, we are happy to say, are the ordinary endowment of those men whom the people delight to honour with places of power. And again, their acts, concerning as they do the great material interests of the Province, can be and are intelligently and ably criticised by the members of the Legislature, who for the most part, are practical business men. But educational matters, when once systematized by an Act of the Legislature, are still left very largely under the control of the Minister of Education—much more largely than people are aware of. As I have said before, his acts are absolute, directly to half a million of our people, and indirectly to the balance.