

the hands of one man, and that man a party-chief, the present incumbent of the education bureau is as well qualified for the position as any other that could be had, the present murmurings I fear would increase to more loud and general complaint.

Apologists of the present system are continually pointing to the manifest improvement in educational affairs which has been made during the past seven years, as evidences of the superiority of the present educational *régime* to that which preceded it; to the establishment of Model Schools; to the increased efficiency and usefulness of High Schools; to the greater thoroughness of examination of teachers; to the more general adoption of intellectual methods of instruction; to the better character of text-books, and so on. I should be the last to deny this improvement, and also the Minister's share in effecting it. But that it is in any way due to him alone, or that it might not have been accomplished with more steady progression and with less friction under the representative administrative system which, in my opinion, should take the place of the present absolute system, I should be equally the last to admit. The Minister had the good fortune to enter upon his office just when were beginning to be felt the excellent effects of the Acts of 1870 and 1872; the one providing for the better inspection of schools and a higher qualification of teachers, and the other establishing a uniform and sufficiently high standard of admission to High Schools. It cannot be doubted but that to these causes, and to the increased efficiency and frequency of inspection of High Schools, which followed the enlargement in 1873 of the High School inspecting staff, very much of the educational improvement of the past seven years must be ascribed. A share of this improvement, too, must

be ascribed to the advisers of the Minister. The committee of examiners to whom during much of this period the Minister has referred many matters which came before him, thus constituting them a *quasi* advisory committee, have been men of ability and educational experience. Had the Minister bound himself to take the advice of this committee in his educational policy and administration, and made the committee by their appointment or election, the representatives of every educational interest, and answerable to the people instead of to himself, his administration would have been marked by fewer mistakes, and the educational advancement of the past seven years would have been greater than that actually achieved.

I think I am excusable if I say again, as I said in my previous address, that the regulations of the Minister, which indeed of his official performances are what principally concern public interests, can never be made the subject of revision and amendment in the Legislature as long as the Legislature continues what it is, a little antitype of the British Parliament. Not until an act of his is so much opposed to public opinion as to endanger the Government to which he belongs will one of his numberless regulations and ordinances secure any sort of correction, by the fact that he is responsible to the Legislature for what he does. So long as his party remains in the majority, so long will his acts be endorsed by the one side, and by the other fruitlessly opposed.

For it must be remembered that where he is likely to go wrong is not in a great principle, about which public opinion is fully formed, or even the opinion of a mere majority of people, but in those details of the educational system where the education Acts necessarily allow him large latitude of action. Nor must it be