

—W. Mackintosh, Esq., Inspector, North Hastings requests us to correct an error which appeared in our report of the proceedings of the Ontario Teachers' Association. In the September No. on page 281, first column, our report says: "Mr. W. Mackintosh moved in amendment, 'That in the opinion of this Association the Council of Public Instruction should issue a regulation definitely giving Local Boards of Examiners the power of exacting a minimum of not less than 50 per cent. of the aggregate number of marks in the subjects of arithmetic and grammar.'" The motion should read as follows: "That in the opinion of this Association the Council of Public Instruction should issue a regulation definitely giving Local Boards of Examiners the power of exacting a minimum which shall in no case be higher than 50 per cent. of the aggregate number of marks in each of the subjects of arithmetic and grammar." What Mr. Mackintosh objected to was binding all Boards to exact a certain percentage in arithmetic and grammar. In some counties teachers are scarce enough as it is. Raise the standard and we will have fewer. In other counties Third Class Teachers are getting to be a nuisance. Give Boards the power to act as their circumstances demand. Raise the standard where needed. Keep it as it is where teachers are scarce.

—At the opening of the Ottawa Normal School, the important announcement was made to the public by the Hon. Attorney-General, that it was decided to supercede the Rev. Dr. Ryerson as Chief Superintendent of Education, by the Hon. Adam Crooks, as Minister of Education. We are aware that this course was frequently urged upon the Government by the present Chief—that as far back as 1868, Dr. Ryerson offered to resign in favor of any Minister the Government might appoint to take charge of the Education Department, but we were glad to observe that such offers were persistently refused; not that we were unwilling that Dr. Ryerson should resign, but we were decidedly opposed to the idea of entrusting our educational interests to the control of any man who was dependent for his position upon the political humours of the day. We believe the success of our Public School System, has been largely owing to the independent position which the Chief Superintendent was always able to take in educational matters.

Although the legislation which he proposed from time to time always *appeared* to emanate from the Government, yet, as it rested upon the recommendation of the Chief, and was of necessity merely *introduced* by the Government, that political acrimony which so frequently mixes itself up with legislation was avoided, both parties being prepared to discuss the matter as one entirely separate from party politics. In this way the defects in our School Laws, and all the improvements which experience suggested, were pointed out, without either political party being blamed for the one, or credited for the other.

The only argument in favor of a Minister of Education is, that it is necessary in order fully to carry out the idea of Responsible Government. It is held that a Department with so much power, patronage and business, should be *directly* responsible to the country. This is true in theory, but it is quite possible that the evils growing out of *direct* responsibility will be much greater, than any that have yet arisen from the want of direct responsibility. Should it follow, and we cannot see it as possible to be otherwise, that educational matters will come within the political arena, each Minister that takes up the Educational portfolio will be likely to propose a number of amendments to the School Law, simply to show the country that he is a working Minister, and the Government of which he is a member will be expected to see that his suggestions are carried into effect. Local grievances about Teachers' salaries and the removal of school sites, and a thousand trifling matters, will be made the occasion of a political contest, and men with narrow ideas on educational subjects will bring the pressure of political support to bear upon candidates whose convictions on such matters might not always be of the most lucid character. It was no fault of the former system that Dr. Ryerson was a political gladiator; naturally of a combative disposition, he must fight. It was a relief to him to break a lance with somebody. But his successor might not be similarly disposed. The occasions for political pamphleteering might not present themselves, and there could be no reason on that score for refusing to appoint a successor to the present incumbent. Let it not be supposed that we object to Mr. Crooks personally. What we do object to is the appointment of a Minister of Education, instead of a Chief Superintendent, and for reasons already assigned.