

9

Whitney Government's Educational Policy

VALENTIN STOCK, M. P. P.

General Reform Association

36 Toronto Street, Toronto

T

for

Mr
bers
man
posit
with
tenti
men
said
W
amo
spen
are
their
all i
ture.
Gov
not
with
Libe
celle
fect,
perf
onw
idea
ackr
worl
Wor
ed c
of t
It w
in v
the
lege
vinc

A REVIEW OF THE WHITNEY GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATIONAL POLICY

SPEECH

OF

VALENTIN STOCK, M. P. P.

for South Perth, delivered March 10th, 1909, in the Ontario Legislature.

Mr. Stock after scoring the members of the Cabinet for breaking their many promises made while in opposition, to deal more economically with the public money, turned his attention especially to the Government's expenditure on Education and said verbatim as follows:

We Liberals do not complain of the amount of money this Government spends on Education, but we do ask, are the people getting full value for their money. That seems to me the all important question in all expenditure. Examination will show that the Government's educational policy is not yielding returns commensurate with the amount spent. Under the Liberal Government we had an excellent Educational System, not perfect, perhaps, for no system can be perfect as long as the people strive onward and upward, and aim at new ideals. That system was, however, acknowledged one of the best in the world. It was so declared at the World's Fair by three judges considered competent to decide on the merit of the various systems of the world. It was also so proven by the manner in which the product of that system, the graduates of our schools and colleges, were sought by the sister provinces, by the United States and oth-

er lands, even so far away as the island continent in the Pacific Ocean. It would hardly be fair to that system to speak of it as though it would be the same system today, after the lapse of years since it was in force. If the former administration had remained in power advances would have been made in the direction of new ideals. The growing nation was striving for changes. I, myself, in my maiden speech in these halls advocated certain advances. I have noticed since that the late Minister of Education pleaded for advancement along the lines of technical education, and it is not saying too much that if he had remained in his position considerable changes along advancing lines would be noticeable to-day. It is not unfair to examine closely the new system introduced by this government to see whether it is really an improvement and an advance. If it is not, then harm has been done. The honorable members of the Government should welcome such examination, for no doubt, they are desirous of giving the Province the best system possible.

I appreciate their efforts at improving the teacher and the teacher's conditions in this age when so many parents neglect, and by their neglect unwittingly delegate their most

solemn duty to the Public school, which in reality means the teachers. It is of the greatest importance that we have the very best teachers that can be secured. I feel, Sir, that the future welfare of our nation is largely poised on the shoulders of our teachers. The aim is commendable, but will the manner of the government's procedure accomplish that aim. It was that aim, no doubt, that led the government to make changes in the system of preparing teachers. If the press reports can be credited they are taking great credit for, and pride in, having totally "upset" the system in existence at their accession to power.

The Dual System of Training Abolished.

Under the former government a Dual System of training for teachers had developed—a combined system of Model and Normal school training, with an interval of several years' practice in teaching under the supervision and guidance of an inspector, generally a man of wide experience in Public school work. The Model school part of the system has been abolished by the present government on account of the so-called "inefficiency" of that part of the system. It was urged:

(1) That the term was too short to give the students sufficient practical training to enable them to cope successfully with the difficulties of the school room.

(2) That the local examining boards were too lenient, it having become customary with many to allow every student to pass.

Now, let us examine the remedy the government has applied to overcome these supposed difficulties of the combined Model and Normal school system of the late government. The Model schools have been abolished and a straight Normal school system has been instituted. Three new Normal schools have been added to the three which already existed and a fourth is in course of preparation at North Bay. At these Normal schools students are to receive one year's training to take the place of

the training of one year and a half under the combined Model and Normal school system, which really shows a balance of one-half year's training in favor of the late system. But this is not all. Under the old regime the training was entirely along professional lines, whilst the Normal schools under the present administration are devoting a good share (it is said fully half) of their one year term to the academic training which was formerly the work of the High schools and Collegiate Institutes. Thus it appears the so-called Second class teacher under the new system receives really no more professional training than a Third class teacher did under the former system. Moreover, the academic training is more expensive in the present Normal schools than it was in our High schools and Collegiate Institutes, which have been especially equipped to do this work and have done it most efficiently. The efficiency of our High schools has never been questioned. In fact, it has been the boast of the Education Department and I believe justly so. Here then the question arises, why should this additional expense be incurred to give an academic training in Normal schools, which experience has proven can be given just as efficiently in our High schools and Collegiate Institutes?

I maintain, Sir, that the late system did and could supply our province with better trained teachers than will the present one. Under the combined Model and Normal school system of the late government the young teacher received his first half year's practical training under a Model school master, who generally was a man trained thoroughly in Public school work, in close contact with it, and usually of considerable experience, who, because of the limited number of students in his class, could exercise a personal supervision which is utterly impossible in the present Normal schools with their 200 pupils and over. In a short term the Model school master was able to instil into a small class as much of the principles of teaching as the members were capable of assimilating at that

stag
muc
er te
ed No
traini
term
charg
himse
super
tor v
ings
With
a sec
Norm
to be
grade
Un
the y
Norm
he n
divid
time
profé
end
Norm
teach
grad
not r
train
ence
trair
An
your
man
spea
their
scho
hom
visic
unti
in s
pres
the
Bes
touc
and
telle
ality
Nor
not
Unc
are
scat
larg
ervi
grea
con
dar

stage, and in any case certainly as much as they will absorb in the longer term of one of the present crowded Normal schools with their two-fold training. Then at the close of the term the Model school graduate took charge of a school, where he tested himself, and was tested under the supervision of an experienced inspector who pointed out his shortcomings and counselled improvements. With this experience he went back for a second professional training to the Normal school, much better prepared to be benefited by the more advanced grade of professional training.

Under the present system by which the young teacher at once attends the Normal school with its 200 students, he necessarily receives very little individual attention, and devoting his time as he does to both academic and professional work, he emerges at the end of a year spent at a Provincial Normal school no better prepared to teach than a former Model school graduate. And what is more, he does not return for any further professional training after he has had the experience which really makes professional training effective.

And under the former system the young students just emerging into manhood, or womanhood, morally speaking the most critical period of their lives, while attending the Model school generally boarded at, or near home, and remained under the supervision and influence of their parents until they had received special lessons in self control and had become impressed with the responsibility of the position they were about to assume. Besides, they came into close personal touch with the Model school master and received the moral and intellectual inspiration of his personality. This is not possible in the large Normal school where the master cannot know his students individually. Under the new system the students are forced to leave home, and are scattered in boarding houses over a large city, without any parental supervision or control, and therefore in greater danger morally. This is a condition of affairs fraught with great danger for the teaching profession.

Has the Government taken any steps to meet it by establishing government residences, where students will in some measure receive an equivalent for the parental supervision of which they are deprived by being obliged to attend a distant Normal school?

Also, these Model schools, dotted all over the province, were so many educational centres in which the surrounding population had a special interest, because of the sons and daughters attending there. They tended to keep alive an interest in education, and were like so many outlying stations through which the Education Department could readily spread among the masses of the people the latest and most advanced ideals.

I think, Sir, it is quite clear that the objection raised against the Model school system is not at all well taken. And as for the objection, that the examinations were not rigid enough and that every student was allowed to pass, this is really a charge against the local Examining Boards, rather than against the Model school system, and cannot be an argument in favor of abolishing the system. If it is true that the local examining boards were inefficient, why not, by appointing district boards, or a central board of examiners, abolish the local examining board rather than the system itself.

Another objection which has been raised against the Model school system is, that the short Model school term encouraged many to enter the profession, who had no intention of remaining in it, and merely wished to make teaching a stepping stone to some more lucrative profession. In support of this theory figures are quoted to show the large percentage of teachers that drop out after from three to five years' teaching; the assumption being that they all entered from the motive just mentioned. Now what is the Government's remedy for this state of affairs? Honorable gentlemen of the Government will say that they have made it more difficult to enter the teaching profession by lengthening the term for professional training. But I have already shown

that what really has been done is doing away altogether with the preliminary professional training, and making it practically possible to obtain a permanent teacher's certificate at the end of one year's training, instead of one and one-half year's professional training as under the Dual system.

Let us analyze this situation carefully. Is it true that teaching is being made a stepping stone to other professions? It was true thirty years ago when teachers' salaries, especially in rural schools, were higher and the cost of living lower. It was possible then for a young teacher to save enough money in a few years to almost carry him through his college course. The country was then new and there were few openings in the business world which yielded such good returns. But conditions are very different to-day. The cost of living is higher and teachers' salaries are lower. What is there then in the teaching profession which the ambitious young man can use as a stepping stone? Certainly no financial return. There are however scores of other positions, much more lucrative than Public school teaching, open to the young man with matriculation standing, or with junior or senior teacher's certificate. The development of North Ontario and of our great North-West make it possible for a young man to obtain employment in some sort of constructive work in which he can earn more in the few summer months than he can save in as many years of teaching.

Mr. Speaker, the cry that the teaching profession is being made a stepping stone to the other professions is a myth; for every one knows that the low salaries paid our Public school teachers can be no inducement to the young man wishing to get a financial start.

But, if it be true that a large percentage of our teachers leave the profession after from three to five years' experience, how is it to be accounted for? Some, no doubt, drop out because they discover that teaching is not the sinecure they expected it to be, and that they are not fitted for

the profession. They are not successful, and not being permanently certificated teachers they decide to try some other vocation. Now, this is rather to be desired. I claim that it is a strong argument in favor of the Model school system, that the weak teachers were more likely to drop out of their own accord than they would once having been made permanent. Once having become permanent they would likely become dead weights in it. But those who leave the profession from this cause are no doubt in the minority. Why do the rest of this large percentage leave it? To answer this question we must bear in mind that the majority of our Public school teachers are women. And why do they leave the profession? We all know that one great objection raised to so many women in the teaching profession has been that they teach but a few years and then leave to get married. Now, I really wonder if honorable gentlemen are in earnest when they endeavor to make the public believe that any changes they have made in the system, or can, or will make, will prevent the lady teachers from doing what they are charged with doing under the former system?

And to my mind it is a question whether the Education Department in its endeavor to keep the young women generally out of the profession, and those that enter it, in, is not doing the nation more harm than good. The young woman who studies and attains a junior or senior teacher's academic standing, who spends a half year at a professional training school, and gains several years practical experience in teaching and governing children, will make a greatly superior mother to the one who has not received such culture, training and experience.

She will better understand and train her own and be of invaluable help to them and to their teacher at school. She will, by her example, kind advice and help in the community awaken an interest in education in many a home. She will thus

beco
to
Sir,
vice
ing
teach
and
be
disgr
It
our
fessi
more
of th
the
leav
mun
shal
ters
that
Whe
anci
teac
will
clai
pref
the
of t
the
cont
very
shov
teac
prof
thir
earl
visk
less
the
prin
At
atte
cou
year
the
spec
teac
sup
it n
tion
the
leav
wha
ing
teac
fical
teac
form

become a leaven in, and a blessing to the community and the nation. Sir, in my humble opinion, the services of the young lady teachers leaving the profession are not lost to the teaching profession nor to the nation, and their leaving it is not at all to be regretted. It is a blessing in disguise.

It is eminently desirable to keep our best teachers in the teaching profession. No one, I am sure, deploras more than I do, the fact that many of those who have been "weighed in the balance and not found wanting" leave the ranks for the more remunerative pursuits. However, we shall never be able to improve matters by any such superficial means as that adopted by the Government. What is necessary is the proper financial and social recognition of the teacher; then the other conditions will follow. But the Government claim that by their new system of preparing teachers they are giving the Province a better, a higher grade of teacher; second class teachers for the old third class teachers. This contention is, to express it mildly, very misleading. I have already shown that the new second class teacher actually receives no more professional training than the former third class teacher. He is removed earlier in life from parental supervision and influence. He receives less inspiration from the principal of the large Normal class, than from the principal of the smaller Model class. At the Normal training school his attention is divided between two courses of study, and he gets no three years' experience in teaching under the guidance of the Public school inspector as the former second class teacher did. In what then does his superiority consist? If in anything, it must be in his academic qualifications. Inquiry proves, however, that the academic standing for a junior leaving certificate is now precisely what it formerly was and that standing was also required for a third class teacher. Then in the academic qualifications also, the new second class teachers stand no higher than the former third class teachers. The pro-

capabilities are that they will not even stand as high; for they (at least those coming from approved schools) have not to pass the full examination which the former third class teachers had to pass, and may slip through on recommendation of a kindhearted friend of the family. This phase of the situation looks even worse when it is remembered that a considerable number of the third class teachers under the old system had senior leaving, i. e. first class academic standing. The fact, in plain English, is: The Education Department is at present branding qualifications as second class, which are really inferior to the old third class qualification; and in view of this fact and in consideration of the greater expense to the public, is the public not justified in asking, why are we thus misled? Is our money spent thus for a name merely? The quality we do not get?

Briefly stated: The combined Model and Normal school system had the following great advantages, of which the present system has deprived us without yielding any adequate compensation:

- (1) It supplied a longer professional training which was made more effective through its division into two parts by a term of actual teaching.
- (2) The teachers in training at the local Model schools on account of the smaller number in attendance could receive more individual attention in the primary stage when they most needed personal supervision.
- (3) They were trained by men who were in close touch with actual Public school teaching. The majority of them were principals of the schools in their local centre and actively engaged in teaching during the first half of the year; whereas the present Normal school staff are composed largely of men who have had little Public school experience, and who have been appointed because of their academic qualifications, or some other reasons best known to the Government.
- (4) Model schools forming numerous local centres of education tended to diffuse education amongst the peo-

ple, whereas the present Normal school system, centralizing education, as it does, in a few of the larger cities has the opposite effect. It practically leaves the farm and the country villages and towns untouched by educational movements.

(5) The Model school gave the students of rural districts, villages and towns, as well as those from the cities, an opportunity to become teachers; whereas the Normal schools will draw their students more from the cities in which they are located.

(6) Students coming from rural districts make the best teachers for rural schools, being more in sympathy with local aims and conditions.

(7) In the Model schools, students received more practise in actual teaching (30 to 40 lessons), whereas in the Normal schools only about twenty.

(8) The Model schools (about 50 in number) cost the Government \$7,500, and the counties an equal sum; a total of \$15,000, whereas the new Normal schools cost about \$300,000, besides a heavy cost for annual maintenance.

Education Made Less Accessible to the Masses.

And this, Sir, brings me to a more general criticism of the Government's Educational Policy, namely that it tends towards making education less easy of access for the great mass of the people. We are a democratic people. Our system of education, as founded by Dr. Ryerson, and carried out by all succeeding Governments up to the present, has been democratic; but under the present administration, I maintain, it is fast losing this characteristic and we have now the spectacle of a democratic government with an autocratic system of education. As an instance of this let me refer to the differentiation of the Public school teachers' academic course of study from the university matriculation, pass and honor course, whereby a gap has been created between the university and the Public school, and a university education practically removed from the reach of the Public

school teacher. Under the Ross Government the subjects prescribed for teachers' certificates corresponded with those prescribed for entrance to the university. As a result the young teacher had his attention directed towards the institution which affords the highest possible culture for his profession. In fact, he had already taken the first step towards it by securing his matriculation standing while obtaining his teachers' certificate.

The present Government has made the course leading to a junior leaving certificate so different from that leading to matriculation that a gulf has been created between the Public school teacher and the university. Instead of the road to the university being smoothed for the struggling teacher, unnecessary obstacles have been put in his way. If the late policy had been pursued many of our public school teachers would be graduates and undergraduates of our universities, as is the case in Scotland. It is well known that the high standard of education among the common people of Scotland is due to the fact that the village schoolmaster or dominie, of whom we read in the tales of Ian MacLaren and other Scottish authors, was a university graduate who had been brought into contact with the highest culture that Scotland affords. The example set by Scotland is in harmony with the spirit of democracy, while the present educational policy of Ontario practically closes the door of the higher education to the common people. If Canada wishes to take her place among the nations she must make the very highest education easy of access to the humblest of her citizens, because the permanent welfare of a nation depends upon the high average intelligence of her masses, not upon the highly specialized intelligence of a few. And since the scholarship of the Public school teacher, more than that of the university professor, or even of the High school teacher, moulds the educational ideals of the great mass of the people, it is eminently desirable that the Public school teacher should at-

tain
our
read
nized
If th
tions
whol
tion
by a
cour
high
of th
Ag
that
fessi
cogn
they
of a
the l
publ
prog
coul
dres
lead
cate
enliq
wou
the
to e
port
com
ern
of
amo
der
have
the
and
ern
erin
as t
tion
tor
ins
sch
sch
ins
cise
fice
gres
gen
use
wha
arm
ern
tion
mes
the

tain to the highest education which our country affords, and this, as already indicated, is generally recognized to be a university education. If the Public school teachers' educational outlook be narrowed then the whole educational standard of our nation is bound to be lowered. Let us by all means then have a teacher's course of study which will place the highest scholarship within easy reach of the majority rather than a few.

Again, we hear the cry on all sides that education and the teaching profession do not receive the public recognition and financial support which they merit. If this is the true state of affairs, and I do not gainsay it, the best remedy is to keep the general public well informed as to the most progressive views on education. This could be done through public addresses delivered by the educational leaders of the country, thus an educated democracy would be created so enlightened and enthusiastic that it would co-operate spontaneously with the educational authorities, according to education a hearty financial support and its rightful place in the community. What steps has the Government taken to diffuse a knowledge of educational aims and ideals amongst the mass of the people? Under the present Government positions have been multiplied. In addition to the Honorable Minister of Education and a Deputy, as under former Governments, we now have a Superintendent of Education, as well as that all powerful body, the Educational Council. We have an inspector of Continuation schools, a chief inspector of Public and Separate schools, and an inspector of Normal schools, as also a third High school inspector. I do not at present criticise the creation of some of these offices, although I feel tempted to digress a little and remind honorable gentlemen of the fury with which they used to attack the maintenance of what they were pleased to call "the army of officials," by the late Government. But I ask, does dissemination of educational principles by means of public addresses lie within the duties of any of these officials,

or are their duties confined to sending in reports to the Education Department, and to meeting within the four walls of the edifice down here on St. James' Square, for the purpose of issuing regulations—regulations indeed which it is necessary from time to time to have rescinded? I claim, Sir, that it is the duty of the Education Department to see to it that the best ideas on education find their way to the mass of people through public addresses. And I do not mean mere academic addresses delivered in the larger cities, but addresses delivered in the towns, villages and country sections, informing the people generally what the aims are, what difficulties are to be overcome, how they can be overcome, and the people's share in overcoming them. Who should deliver these addresses if not the officials of the Education Department? Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask how many such addresses have been delivered through the past year, and what provision has been made for the future to supply the educational gatherings of our province, such as the local Teachers' Institutes, with addresses from educational experts, instead of being forced to seek for such across the border? It is well known that the executive committees of our Teachers' Associations find it difficult to get men (both qualified and able) to speak publicly on educational topics. I ask again, what has the Government done in this matter and what guarantee do their appointments afford that they are in a position to do something in the near future? If no satisfactory answer is given to this question I feel justified in asserting, that, not only has the Government failed to advance the ideal of an educated democracy, but has actually retarded it.

The late Dr. Ryerson placed great importance on acquainting the people with his ideals and aims, and he endeavored to enthuse them for his ideals by public addresses, in which work he himself led, and had others supporting him. He also made it part of the inspector's duties to deliver an address on some educational topic once a year in every school sec-

tion. The present Minister apparently thinks it of greater importance to have the inspector spend his time inspecting tin measures and other media of instruction, and gathering information for Departmental reports. He has divided all the school work for teachers, trustees and inspectors to report on, and to base grants on, into different years, the calendar year and the academic year—the latter from July 1st in one year to July 1st in the following year, thereby necessitating double reporting, especially by the inspector. This means loss of valuable time and an unnecessary increase of the work of red tape, and therefore necessarily diverts the Inspector's attention and energies from his true work (which I consider to be thorough examination of schools, and assisting of teachers by means of his own extensive experience and skill in teaching). Thus the inspector may become an inspiration to the most of his teachers, instead of a mere recorder of unimportant details for official reports. The government has spent increased sums on education, has multiplied positions and machinery, changed the laws and complicated the regulations, but they have not by their spiritless enforcement of laws and regulations enthused the people nor won their active support, and they never will by continuing this course. In this respect again, the policy of the Education Department does not only not meet the spirit of democracy but is actually antagonistic to it.

Autocracy in Education.

I shall now endeavor to show that its very machinery has under the present Government assumed the form of autocracy. In this connection I shall refer first to the Educational Council, and secondly, to the system of inspection and of "approved" schools. When the Right Honorable Leader of the Government was in opposition, we heard a great deal about a body representative of the educators of the Province, which he would create if in power; a body to be known as the Educational Council in which great power was to be vested.

The idea suggested a democratic rule and naturally was a popular one to the people of a self-governing country under the British flag. Now, what has been done to fulfil this promise? It is true that a body of prominent educationists, some of whom are elected by the teachers and inspectors of the province, now constitute part of the machinery of the Education Department. But what about the power this body was to exert? The facts are, as far as can be learned (for the meetings are held privately) that it is a consultative body and nothing more. Its members meet from time to time to discuss such questions as the Education Department deems important. Their power is limited to advising on such questions merely as the department sees fit to place before them through the chairman. They have not the power to introduce new matter which they, in active service in the cause of education, are so eminently fitted for. In short they are denied all right of initiative. The right of initiative denied to the Educational Council, the representatives of the real servants of the people! Is this British freedom? Mr. Speaker, if the existence of this body ever had any other object than to serve as a blind for the people I would like to know it? The work which this body is allowed to perform, appears to coincide with that of the Board of Examiners of the late Government. Yes, is it not even less? Has the Honorable Minister of Education not already taken away the power of this council to appoint the examiners for the teachers' certificates, and is he not now endeavoring to induce the university authorities to assume the appointment of the examiners for matriculation and university examinations, as a cover for his other act? Is it not also being planned to deprive the county councils altogether from any say in the appointment of Public school inspectors? Sir, I regret to have to say, that the policy which the Right Honorable Leader of the government dangled before the eyes of the public as a great educational reform is really not one step in

adv
gove
voic
educ
emp
In
of in
we
dem
drop
"the
form
educ
one,
no
und
guar
well
wha
beer
of M
that
of l
the
insp
dire
in t
But
ed
Doe
gest
part
insp
This
ture
the
sche
vide
sche
miss
Nor
of t
or t
mea
ber
sche
of t
he i
Edu
we
Edu
cons
ing
to a
(we
awa
wha
sim]

advance of the policy of the late government. The promise that the voice of the many would prevail in educational councils has become an empty form.

Indeed, when we turn to the system of inspection, and of approved schools, we find that here, even the pretence democratic government has been dropped, and we are confronted with "the one man rule" in its baldest form. The principle of inspection of educational institutions is a sound one, and one with which I have no quarrel when it means as it did under the late Government, a safeguard, that these institutions were well manned and well equipped. But what do we find? A new office has been created, viz., that of inspector of Normal Schools, the appointee to that office being also chief inspector of Public and Separate schools. If the title means anything it means inspection of the work performed, and direction of the work to be performed in those schools by this new official. But these schools are already inspected by the local school inspectors. Does this new appointment not suggest the idea of the Education Department policing the public school inspectors through this new official? This view is strengthened by the nature of the written contract made with the Boards of Education of Normal school centres. This contract provides that the principal of the Normal school shall have the power to dismiss any teacher on the staff of the Normal Practice Schools, irrespective of the opinions of the local inspector or the Board of Education. What this means is apparent when we remember that the principal of the Normal school stands under the supervision of the Normal school inspector, and he in turn under the authority of the Education Department. And when we add to this the fact, that the Education Department has already considered the advisability of depriving the County Council of the right to appoint the Public school inspector (we know they have already taken away their power to dismiss them) what have we but autoocracy pure and simple. Over-inspection and over-di-

rection in the teaching profession as in all other vocations of life tends to stifle originality and personal initiative. I claim, Sir, that such autoocratic machinery does not foster real education, but depresses and stifles it; and, moreover, it is not in harmony with the principles of our democratic government. In the same way the laudable principle of High school inspection has been stultified and made abortive by the introduction of the "approved" school system. I have earnestly endeavored to learn from the departmental regulations what that system is, but I must say that I find it difficult to understand all its details. I have heard an able friend of the government confess that he could not divine what it meant. He thought it would take two Philadelphia lawyers to unravel its meaning. However, I will give the honorable Minister of Education my view, and my opinion of it, and if I am wrong I am willing to hear his correction. To understand this wonderful system of "approved" schools we must go back to the last year or two of the late Government when, as honorable gentlemen will remember, there was raised a great outcry against examinations. That cry was started in one of the large cities of the province, where several times in succession the percentage of pupils that succeeded in passing the Departmental Examinations fell far below the average percentage of that of the province, and of course when pupils fail, the examinations are to blame, and thus started the outcry. Honorable gentlemen then in opposition sympathized with the failing pupils, for they themselves, during a course of thirty years, had failed many times in their public examinations, and being fathers they knew by sympathizing with the child one gains the good will of the mother, and through her the good will of the father, and the father had a vote. They took up the cry on the public platform and the friendly press took it up, and thus a storm was raised over the whole province which contributed not a little to their success in gaining power in January, 1905. In 1908, facing another election

the new Government concluded that what had helped them once might help them again, and they passed a regulation dropping from the examination list (in addition to the few less important subjects dropped by the former Government in October, 1904), the all important subjects of writing, spelling, arithmetic and mensuration, English grammar and geography. Conscious that these subjects would not now receive the same attention formerly accorded them, and which their importance demanded, the Government thought something had to be done to insure that the subjects not submitted to examination would not be too much neglected, and the Department of Education devised, or rather, adopted a United States scheme of supervision which classifies all Collegiate Institutes, High schools and Continuation schools of the province into "approved" and "non-approved" schools. This supervision is exercised by the Departmental Inspector, assisted by the Principals of the Normal schools and the Deans of the faculty of education. The details of this scheme are extensive and may be seen from pages three to four of the regulations. The substance of it is, that if the departmental inspector on his annual visit does find "the school equipment adequate, the staff competent, the organization acceptable, the time-table suitable, the pupils' work satisfactory, and the teachers' honesty and zeal unquestionable," he will grade the school "approved," and in such event the pupils will not have to take the examination in the subjects dropped off the examination list; in September for the Normal school, and in October for the Faculty of Education.

In my opinion this scheme has fatal defects, one of which is, that the inspector is not required to present a certificate of omniscience. He certainly will require to be all-wise and infallible in order to apply successfully such a test as that mentioned in a visit of two days yearly.

Criticism.

(1) Two Departmental Inspectors or even three, the Department has, I

believe now appointed a third, cannot examine thoroughly all the subjects not submitted to examination in a yearly visit of two or three days. It will be impossible for him to examine personally all the book-keeping sets, science books, art work, and writing preserved by the pupils for examination; not to mention the oral examining which will have to be done in such subjects as reading, grammar, geography, and arithmetic.

(2) The average Collegiate Institute or High school inspector cannot devote more than thirty minutes to the inspection of the actual work done by each teacher in each of his classes. Teachers should not be subjected to the injustice of being branded "approved" or standing "not-approved" by means of so insufficient a test. Teachers and classes might happen to be at their highest level during the inspector's visit and the lesson be a brilliant success; or the opposite might be the case, and the result a dismal failure. You cannot depend upon human material to act in as uniform and accurate a way as you can on the inanimate material with which you feed a machine.

(3) We all know that there is a tendency to bias in human judgments, and a still greater tendency to attribute bias if the judgment is unfavorable to ourselves. Pupils are prone to imagine their teachers are biased by every little difference that may arise in the school room. If pupils are promoted on the judgment of their teacher alone, the teacher will often find himself in a difficult position, either of doing violence to his conviction or of resting under a cloud of disapproval in the school room, and even in the community. To safeguard both teacher and pupil there should be an outside test which would preclude the possibility of bias. Written examinations alone can supply that test, and these in conjunction with the teacher's judgment are the best basis for promotion.

(4) The school might not be marked "approved" because of a deficiency in the lower school in some one or more subjects not on the examination list. Because of this deficiency

in th
the
the
leavi
to w
for
scho
year
Case
me
was
this
ed l
that
scier
recei
sult
that
cate
tion
phy,
thou
were
nor
tary
tory
canc
So
were
scho
scho
gran
mati
phy,
is ne
elen
(5)
out
ful
stitu
clasi
unsa
its
in th
indi
gene
fers.
does
leav
scho
Cont
will
tor
sed
does
the
tute
(6)

in the lower school, the candidates of the middle school who are presenting themselves for examination for junior leaving certificates, would be obliged to write on the subjects dropped off for approved schools, although the school may have been approved the year they were in the lower school. Cases of this kind have occurred. Let me cite an example: A school that was classed "approved" last year has this year been dropped off the approved list because the inspector thought that the bookkeeping and elementary science of the lower school had not received sufficient attention. As a result of this grading the candidates of that school for junior leaving certificates will, according to the regulations, be obliged to write on geography, grammar, arithmetic, etc., although it was not these subjects that were not approved in the lower school, nor was the book-keeping and elementary science graded unsatisfactory the previous year when these candidates were in the lower school. So because book-keeping and science were unsatisfactory in the lower school, candidates in the middle school must write on geography, grammar, arithmetic, etc. To make matters worse the teacher of geography, grammar and arithmetic, etc., is not the teacher of book-keeping and elementary science.

(5) Another peculiarity that works out in the application of this wonderful system is this: A Collegiate Institute or a High school may not be classed "approved" because of the unsatisfactory work done by one of its teachers, and thus all the teachers in that school will be penalized, their individual reputation suffering as the general reputation of the school suffers. Then again, the teacher that does the unsatisfactory work may leave the Collegiate Institute or High school and become principal of a Continuation school, where his work will be marked by a different inspector and here his work may be classed "approved," although he there does no better work than he did in the High school or Collegiate Institute.

(6) A school might also fail to be

marked "approved" because the trustees failed to supply the prescribed equipment, etc., and thus teachers and pupils both would be penalized for the shortcomings of the trustees.

(7) This system of supervision is too much a "one-man rule." Human nature is so constituted that it becomes arbitrary and unreasonable unless it is kept in check by the judgment of the many. It is true that the Departmental Inspector is to be assisted by the judgment of the Normal school Principals and the Deans of the Faculty of Education, but even then only a very small body of the teaching profession is represented. Moreover, these men are not likely to be totally unbiased in the judgment of pupils who come to them merely recommended. Will they not be inclined to attribute deficiencies in their own results to the deficiencies of the pupils on entering? Sir, I shall not follow the intricate details of this system and its results any further, but confine myself to the statement that the inspectors would have to be endowed with omniscience as well as invested with the omnipotent power conferred upon them by the Education Department, to be able to make a just classification from their brief yearly inspectoral visit. Taking the most charitable view of it possible the system is unjust to the teachers, the pupils and the schools. As yet, it is only in process of being tested, but I am confident that its working out will prove its own condemnation. My present criticism, however, is chiefly directed against the principle of making the will of one man supreme and thereby stifling original work and initiative in the principals and staffs of our High schools. This furnishes one more proof of the educational autocracy established by the present government. But I mistake very much the spirit and temper of the teachers of this province if they humbly submit to such injustice, not to say tyranny. I understand the Honorable Minister of Education contemplates codifying the school laws during this session, but I do not believe that the teachers of the province will allow such a

centralized system of school government, which permits him and his generals to give orders from Toronto to their subordinates in places hundreds of miles away relating to the minutest details of their schools to be riveted upon them by his proposed new code. Like the trustees whom the Government sought to dragoon they will resent such dictatorial treatment. If the Honorable Minister of Education listened he must already have heard some rumblings. If not, he might learn some signs of the times by reading the "Proceedings of the 47th Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association."

In concluding I would briefly point out one more unfortunate occurrence in the administration of our educational affairs by the present Government. In this province we have a large body of first class Public school teachers with many years of experience; also a large body of Public school inspectors who have travelled twice per year to each school in their respective counties and observed and critically studied the work of the teachers for half a generation, and who therefore, above all others, are qualified to instruct intending young teachers. These men have practically been ignored in the appointment to the positions of instructors at the new Normal schools. Men with very little experience in the Public school room have been appointed because of their academic standing, or some other reason best known to the government; men whose experience consisted mostly in High school teaching, and I am not saying one word of disparagement against these men. They may have been excellent men in their positions in the High schools and other higher institutions of learning, but did they in those higher institutions of learning not employ and become accustomed to entirely different modes of instruction and management from those required and practised in the Public school room, and will not now the result be that they are unfamiliar with Public school work and Public school methods? Is there not as much difference between High school methods of

teaching and management and Public school methods of teaching and management, as there is between university methods and High school methods? And is there not now the danger that these men will, unintentionally perhaps, yet by force of habit instil into the intending Public school teacher much of the methods of teaching and management practised by them in the higher schools, and thus ingraft High school methods into the Public schools to the great detriment of the latter? And I do not believe that one of these men is misguided enough to think that, because he was an excellent High school teacher, therefore he would also be an excellent Public school teacher. There are plenty of Public school men eminently fitted. Why did the Government not find them?

In summing up the Educational situation in Ontario to-day, I contend, Sir, that the present Government, far from having instituted the educational reforms promised when in opposition, has not taken one step in advance, and more than this, by the abolition of the combined Model and Normal school system; by the centralization of power in the hands of a few individual men; and by handing over the training of our Public school teachers to men unfamiliar with Public school work, it is supplying our Public schools with a less efficient class of teachers. It is making education less easy of access to the great mass of people, and is changing the democratic system of the late government into an autocratic one. These acts, which, to my mind, are offences against a democratic people under democratic Government call for vindication or prompt redress. In view of this state of affairs I contend that the people of this province are not getting value for their money. We do not ask the Government to spend less on Education, but we ask value.

Mr. Speaker, I would not like to close my remarks without offering a word of encouragement to the Government. I am ready to acknowledge the good they have done as well as to point out wherein they have failed.

I have
of fault
of public
ism of
Dept.
and t
fere
tional
I refer
have
school
until
do for
school
done
they
best
and
High

I have not criticised with the spirit of fault-finding, nor with the thought of party gain, but because my patriotism outweighs both. The Educational Dept. as done well in one direction and that is where they did not interfere with, but developed the educational policy of the late Government. I refer to the manner in which they have dealt with the Continuation schools. These they have fostered, until now they are in a fair way to do for the rural districts what the High schools and Collegiate Institutes have done for the towns and cities. I hope they will continue to give them their best consideration, multiply them, and make them free schools; the High schools also.

The Honorable Finance Minister in delivering his budget speech led us to believe that he possessed a sort of magic wand, which he only needs to wave and say: Revenues come! and they come. Now I would suggest, wave your wand a little more and hand over the additional revenue to the Honorable Minister of Education that he may therewith establish free Continuation schools in every township, and by so doing you and he will erect to yourselves monuments which the rising generation not only, but many generations yet to come will deck with laurel wreaths.