

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friend is drawing a distinction between separate schools and national schools which I did not draw, and which does not necessarily exist at all. A separate school may be a national school. The distinction which I attempted to draw, so far as I approached the question at all, because I was not dealing with it from the constitutional aspect—but the distinction I attempted to draw was between an ecclesiastical school and a national school; and I stated that the system provided in the Northwest Territories, the system which we were going to continue, was a system which contained in it every element of national schools that is of any importance, that they were not ecclesiastical schools, and that the idea of separate schools is not necessarily inconsistent with the idea of national schools.

Mr. SPROULE. May I remark to the Minister of Finance that the argument proceeded stage by stage upon this ground: What was our public school? It was a national school. What was the provision for teaching in that public school, national in every sense of the word? Then the distinction was drawn as between a public school and a church school, or separate school.

Mr. FIELDING. A church school and a separate school are not necessarily the same.

Mr. SPROULE. The Minister of Finance declared that there was practically no difference between a separate school as established to-day under these ordinances and a national school or a public school, practically no difference whatever, except the half hour's religious instruction, that it was in every sense a public school or a national school; and he explained that whatever was intended by the Act of 1875 in the way of a confessional school or a church school, that had all been done away with by the ordinances, and we have no such thing as an ecclesiastical or separate school, it was practically a public school, and that public school we regard as a national school. That was, as I understand it, the argument which he presented to this House. And yet we are told by the Minister of Justice that the ordinances do not take away any rights contained in that clause 11 of the Act of 1875.

Mr. FIELDING. My argument was that a church school and a separate school are not necessarily the same. A separate school and a national school may be essentially the same; and I say that these separate schools which exist to-day in the Northwest contain every element of a national school; they are not church schools, they are public schools under the control of the authorities of the separate schools still. They are public territorial government, but they will be schools under the authority of the Northwest Territories as administered to-day, and as we understand they are to be continued, and

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they contain every element of a national school system though they are separate schools all the same.

Mr. SPROULE. We dispute that.

Mr. HAGGART. I have heard the hon. gentleman make that statement before in the House, that a national school may be a separate school. Let us call a spade a spade. A separate school defeats the very object of a national school. The moment you segregate a particular creed and educate them apart from the others in the community, that moment you defeat the object of a national school. Is it not well known? All the writers upon the subject of education call a national school a school where all classes in the community mingle together and receive their education together. The moment you segregate one class or one creed in the community from the rest, you defeat the very object of a national school. What is the use of blinking the fact? Roman Catholic writers upon the subject admit the principle that you defeat the object of a national system of education when you have a separate school in the community. But they argue on a different ground altogether, on the ground of morals, a higher conception of the Deity; but they never argue on the ground of the Minister of Finance, that it is possible in a community to have a national system of education and at the same time have separate schools.

Mr. FIELDING. I cannot discuss with my hon. friend what Roman Catholic writers say about separate schools. We are dealing with so-called separate schools in the Northwest Territories of Canada. Let us consider what those schools are, not what they may be elsewhere, not what Roman Catholic writers elsewhere may say, but what these schools actually are in the Northwest.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. What they may be under the law.

Mr. FIELDING. They may be under the law just what they are now. I have said, and I repeat, that the separate schools in the Northwest Territories, though they are called separate schools, contain every essential element of a national school system. If I may define what I regard as the essential elements of a national school system, I understand that if a system is created under a statute of the legislature, if it is administered by the public authorities, if it is brought under the same system of inspection as the other public schools, if the course of study is the same, if the teachers have to submit to the same examination, if the whole machinery is conducted in the same way as in the other schools, even though they may be separate schools to the point of having half an hour's religious instruction, they are in all respects the same, and are essentially national schools.

Mr. FOSTER. The inevitable difficulties have arisen. When there was general speak-