

a few words, that the separate schools in the Northwest to-day are not denominational schools as we Roman Catholics understand that term.

Mr. BARKER. I rise only to correct an expression used by the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt) with regard to the meaning of the expression 'separate schools.' I understood the hon. gentleman to say that throughout Canada that expression had a recognized meaning, that it meant a religious school of the Roman Catholics or the Protestants. Now, there are only two provinces, Ontario and Quebec, that have separate schools. And, certainly, in one of these two provinces the province of Ontario, the expression 'separate school' has not the meaning the hon. gentleman stated. I have here the school law of Ontario, and I find that separate schools may mean Protestant schools, or Roman Catholic schools, or coloured schools.

Mr. BELCOURT. For Catholic or Protestant.

Mr. BARKER. No. The coloured children do not go to a Protestant separate school, or the Protestants to a coloured separate school.

Mr. BELCOURT. If my hon. friend (Mr. Barker) will permit me—I was addressing myself simply to the religious distinction and not to points of race or colour. My argument was that whenever parliament or the legislatures had attempted to deal with schools in the light of religion, they made a distinction only as between the Catholic and the Protestant.

Mr. BARKER. But the hon. gentleman (Mr. Belcourt) was speaking of separate schools. Now, after dealing with Protestant schools the statute of Ontario says:

And, upon the application in writing of five or more heads of families resident in any township, city, town or incorporated village, being coloured people the council of such township or the board of school trustees of any such city, town or incorporated village, shall authorize the establishment therein of one or more separate schools for coloured people.

After that I think the hon. gentleman (Mr. Belcourt) will desire to withdraw his expression with regard to separate schools of Catholics or Protestants. The expression means precisely what it means in English words—a school separate from the schools of other people. And when the hon. gentleman said that separate schools had a recognized meaning throughout Canada, he made a mistake in saying that it meant only Catholic or Protestant separate schools.

Mr. BELCOURT. What I said was that whenever parliament has legislated with reference to separate schools, it had recognized only Catholic and Protestants. I was

not dealing with racial distinctions. Evidently there are none so blind as those who will not see. I have made the statement half a dozen times, and have made it as plainly as my command of English will allow. I say I was dealing with denominational schools and that I spoke of those alone.

Mr. BARKER. But the hon. gentleman (Mr. Belcourt) was defining the expression 'separate schools,' and I hold him to that, if he will allow me. He asserted that that expression had a recognized particular meaning, which meaning he gave. I quote this statute to show that it has no such meaning. And I would ask him where he finds the legislation, when he speaks of school legislation by this parliament. School law is provincial law, and he has to go to the provinces to find that law, except for the provision of the British North America Act. And so I bring to his attention the separate school law of Ontario showing that the words have no such recognized meaning as he says they have, and this is one of the only two provinces in which they have separate schools by law.

Mr. BELCOURT. Well, if my hon. friend (Mr. Barker) is satisfied, I am.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I certainly thought the hon. gentleman (Mr. Belcourt) was defining separate schools as denominational schools—I thought that was part of his argument. If I understood him wrongly, I am sorry. But I followed him carefully and understood him to say—and he was supported by the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. A. Lavergne)—that separate schools meant necessarily denominational schools, and therefore, as he said, the word 'separate' in section 11 of the Act of 1875 meant not merely a school separated, but meant a denominational school. If I did not hear the hon. gentleman make that argument my ears deceived me. As to the misunderstanding which occurred between the hon. gentleman and my hon. friend from St. John (Mr. Stockton), I certainly did understand the member for Ottawa to say this, in answer to a question of mine: I asked him whether the majority mentioned in the first part of section 11 of the Act of 1875, was a religious majority, and the hon. gentleman said, yes. Then I asked him whether, in a community where there were 1,000 Roman Catholics, and 500 Protestants and 2,000 Mormons, the 1,000 Catholics would be the majority within the meaning of the statute, and he said, yes. I do not think my hon. friend will deny having given that answer. It seems to me a very extraordinary result. For example, in a community of 1,000 Mormons, not having a school established, if one Roman Catholic or one Protestant should enter, then the one Roman Catholic or the one Protestant would be the major-