

GOVERNMENT UNFAIR TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS,

N. Hastings Member, in Vigorous Speech, Contends Hon. R. H. Grant's Own Figures Show Actual Discrimination in Favor of Separate Schools in Making Grants

Characterizing the statement of Hon. H. R. Grant, Minister of Education, on public and separate school grants as unfair and misleading, J. R. Cooke, Conservative member for North Hastings, in the Legislature yesterday, contended that the figures given disclosed considerable discrepancies in favor of the separate schools.

Concluding an extended analysis of the statistics presented by the Minister, he declared: "The total amount of salaries paid in separate schools is \$278,950, or 4.9 per cent. of the total salaries paid in both systems, and if the Government were dealing fairly with the public school system, then the separate schools as a unit would be entitled to only 4.9 per cent. of the total legislative grant upon salaries, or \$70,272.

"Deadly, Vicious System."

"The figures that the Minister has submitted show that the Government paid to the separate schools \$114,077 on salaries, or an increase to the whole separate school system as a unit on salaries of over 6 per cent. more than they have paid upon salaries in the public schools. I do not see how the minds of men can conceive a more deadly, viciously unfair system than this Government has used in dealing with the public school system of this Province."

Mr. Cooke, who was given an exceptionally attentive hearing, held forth at great length upon the "wanton extravagance" of the Drury Government, which he accused of getting into power with the assistance of the voting strength of enraged anti-prohibitionists. Not even the farmers of Ontario, he said, were satisfied with the performance of the present Administration, which, after perusal of the Federal election returns, he judged had lost the confidence of the people.

The member for North Hastings reiterated his desire for a widening

of the unit of taxation in connection with Provincial education, proposing to dispense with local boards and administer the whole system Provincially. His estimate was that a Provincial tax of five mills would cover administration costs, both rural and urban.

In vigorous terms he upheld the needs of the rural schools of the Province, declaring that, while higher education might be construed to be beneficial to the few, primary education was the vital necessity of the many. Efficient primary educational facilities, he said, was one of the greatest assets of the Province or a nation could