

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—In my opinion, Sir, we are better off than if we were included. The only thing we have to do is to fix a date. If we put the date back to a remote period, we might be doing ourselves an injustice; for we might be entitled to more. I would put it off for 20 years, filling up the date by inserting 1891.

Hon. Mr. HOLBROOK—I think ten years quite enough, we shall have more than 120,000 in that time, and be entitled to increased representation.

Hon. Mr. DECOSMOS—Mr. Chairman, during the previous debate an Hon. Member referred to 120,000 as the basis of representation, as well as the basis of population. We find this echoed by others, last, but not least, by the Hon. Attorney-General himself. I am surprised to find the Hon. and learned gentleman setting this up as a basis. For the basis of representation under the Organic Act was the basis of representation allowed to Quebec, that is, one member for every 20,000. It is proposed that we shall have eight members; then the population ought to be 160,000; but it is only set up as 120,000, which number would only entitle us to six members. Now, Sir, I have no objection to getting eight members for the House of Commons, and four for the Senate; but I do object to Hon. Members and newspapers spreading abroad statements which have no foundation in fact. I think our population has been over estimated. It is going abroad that 120,000 is the proper foundation for representation; I say it is not so. The honest straightforward and manly course is for our Government to say to the Dominion Government, that it is necessary for us to have a larger representation on territorial grounds. The whole thing resolves itself into expediency; beyond expediency I say that no one can find a fulcrum for the assertion. I would cheerfully support twelve and six so far as it goes. But I do denounce that want of principle and want of truth that surrounds this basis. There is another question about the representation to which due attention does not seem to have been given; it is this: the electoral qualification in Canada is too high, and it will be most objectionable to have the same qualification thrust upon us. The qualification of members may safely be left to the Dominion Government. But that of electors is too high, and will be a source of irritation, which the Government should endeavour to remove now. I should have moved a recommendation as to this, but from the treatment which my amendments have received in this House, I am inclined to let it pass, and I shall move my amendments before my constituents.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Dewdney, the Committee rose, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

Several Members having left the House, on motion of the Hon. Mr. Robson the Committee sat again.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—Mr. Chairman, I find the average of representation in the Dominion Parliament is one member to 15,000. That, on the basis of 120,000, gives eight members. Nova Scotia has 19 members for 39,000, New Brunswick has 12, Newfoundland has 8 members. All we have to do is to take care that we are not included in the census of 1871. Our number cannot be diminished, so we may put it at 1881 safely. As for fictitious numbers, it is useless to talk about it.

Hon. Mr. CARRALL—I move that the date "1881" be inserted.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I do not see that of necessity the number cannot be decreased. I would name a more distant date.

Hon. Mr. ROBSON—I would not take a more distant date, because I think we shall have a larger population in 1881.

Hon. Mr. DRAKE—From Section 61 of the Organic Act, I think our number might be reduced. I think it improbable we shall have a population of 120,000 in 1881. And if we have not that number then, I think it possible that we may be reduced. I shall therefore vote for 1891.

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I shall support the date 1891.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—I move a recommendation to insert the words "not less than," before "4 and 8," and after the word "eighteen" to insert "91."

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I cannot see the use or necessity for the words "no less."

Hon. Mr. ROBSON—I think the words are important. We might in 1881 be entitled to more or less.

Hon. Mr. DRAKE—I hold to 91, because I think it likely we might be reduced if we fix the date at 81.