

which we have adopted is one that has been working very satisfactorily in New Zealand for some time. That is this: three commissioners are appointed who are members of the civil service. They are in no way under political control. They make the subdivision of the electorates. . . . These commissioners have the power of fixing the electorates in that way, and they divide the country into 125 electorates returning 125 members.

In consequence of the success of New Zealand, the government of New South Wales presented a Bill in 1892, which was duly passed, and that is the method now in operation in New South Wales. It may be worth while to indicate some of the main lines on which the distribution of New South Wales is carried out. I will make a few citations from the Act 56 Vic, 1892-3, No. 38, of the statutes of New South Wales.

Within thirty days from the passing of this Act, and thereafter when any distribution of electoral districts shall become necessary under the provisions of this Act, the government shall, by commission under the great seal, appoint three persons, each of whom shall be qualified as an elector in and for some electoral district of New South Wales, according to the law in force at the time of the appointment, to be commissioners for the purposes of this parliament and to be called 'the electoral district commissioners.' The persons so to be appointed shall be chosen by the government from persons then holding some office in the public service of New South Wales. And the names of the persons so appointed, and of all persons hereafter appointed as such commissioners, shall be published in the 'Gazette.'

It shall be the duty of the commissioners, and they are hereby directed, to distribute New South Wales into electoral districts for the purposes of this Act, within three months after the passing of this Act, and thereafter, within three months after the results of every census of the population of New South Wales shall have been ascertained and reported to the Colonial Secretary, which the government statistician is hereby required to do as early as possible after such census shall have been taken, and such distribution shall take effect when approved by resolution of the legislative assembly.

Now that is the way in which the distribution was made, and you will see upon what they base it.

The total number of members to be elected to serve in the assembly shall be 125. The quota of electors for the purposes of this Act shall be ascertained in the following manner—for the purposes of the first distribution, the quota shall be ascertained by dividing by 125 the total number of persons enrolled on the electoral rolls. . . . And the quota for every subsequent distribution shall be ascertained by dividing by 125 the total number of electors on the rolls in force for the time being.

Two very important principles therefore are carried out in this Bill. After they have found the total number of persons enrolled on the list and divided it by the total number of constituencies, and having established the quota, then they make their boundaries.

Mr. AMES.

Every such district shall have such an area that, at the time of making such distribution, the number of persons enrolled therein shall, subject to the margin of allowance hereinafter contained, reach the prescribed quota.

That certainly seems to be as fair a proposition as can possibly be offered. Now supposing that method were applied to Alberta. We have there 25 seats, the quota of electors will be ascertained by dividing the total number by 25. Assuming that Peace River and Athabaska would contain 300 qualified electors each, which we believe to be beyond the mark, there would be 30,550 electors on the list which was used on the 3rd of November, 1904, affording a quota of 1,222. If we were adopting the method prevailing in New South Wales, we would then divide our constituencies so that each one would contain as nearly as possible 1,222 of the names on the electoral lists. If, however, we take the twelve southern constituencies according to the schedule which is laid on the table, we find they have 16,662 qualified electors, they would therefore be entitled to 14 members instead of 12. On the other hand, we find the 13 northern constituencies containing 13,945 electors, and they are to receive 13 representatives, whereas they should receive but 11 representatives. If this eminently fair Australian method were adopted we would have no objection to make. If the total number of names upon the Alberta list were divided by the total number of constituencies, and the boundaries were made so as to include in each one of these constituencies the quota of electors, nothing fairer could be asked for. But unfortunately that is not done.

Now the latest constitution that has been given to any of the self-governing British colonies is that which was a few days ago granted to the Transvaal. I read from the 'Spectator' of April 29, 1905:

The electoral districts will be framed upon the basis of the number of voters, and a commission will be appointed to draw their boundaries. Finally the constituencies will be redistributed every four years in accordance with the fluctuations in the number of voters as established by the biennial registration lists.

Mr. Lyttleton, the colonial secretary, in his communication which appears in the London 'Times' of the 26th April, 1905, further describes the method as follows:

A commission will be appointed to create from thirty to thirty-five electoral districts upon the principle of an equal number of voters, and for the purpose of enabling voters' lists to be compiled in advance. An Order in Council has been passed, making the necessary provision for registration of voters. This commission will give due consideration to boundaries of existing administrative divisions, and will have power to adopt, in settling the boundaries of electoral districts, a margin of ten per cent of the quota of voters.

This new Transvaal constitution is considered to be the product of all the experi-