

fairly and with the best knowledge of the facts apply this principle? Who could do it better than these six men who to-day are your Supreme Court judges in the Northwest? What possible argument can be used against their delimiting these constituencies? Leave the matter to them and you will immediately do away with opposition so far as this clause is concerned. Is that a thing which it is worth while to consider? High precedents can be quoted for such a course. My right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has vaunted himself a Liberal of the English school. If he were a member in authority in the British parliament, would he dare to propose a scheme for the redistribution of seats in any of the divisions of Great Britain according to a scheme framed by two partisans of his own from the extreme corner of that division? Would he venture to force that plan, without reasonable argument, upon parliament? No English statesman has ever tried to do such a thing; no British government has ever been guilty of doing it. Whenever there was redistribution of seats there, the first point was agreement. We do not want Liberal or Tory, we do not want Whig or Radical, in the redistributions of seats—we want a fair redistribution.

We do not want a Whig or Radical distribution. What we want is a fair distribution; and a proper government and a proper House of parliament has always acted upon that rule, and avoided the rock of trouble which my right hon. friend is steering against. May I recall to my right hon. friend his own favourite utterances of years ago, how he stood on this side and pleaded for an equal division of the constituencies. He will answer me that he did not get his request, so far as he himself viewed it, but that does not matter here nor there against the rightness of the argument. It does matter, however, to my right hon. friend. It shows whether he was in earnest then or not. If he was in earnest, he wished that to be carried out, not for party advantage, but in justice to the electors themselves. If he was in earnest then, these great principles have not changed since, and we must presume him to be equally in earnest now. There he stands at the helm of legislation. Will he do to-day, as Prime Minister, what he held for and argued for years and years when on this side? Why not? I am not going any further in the argument than this, but this one thing I will say. My hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) and my hon. friend from St. Antoine (Mr. Ames)—the latter of whom I did not hear, but whose speech I have read—bestowed more blood and brain and muscle expenditure on the information that they have procured, and procured at immense toil to themselves, than has been shown by the whole of the government on the other side, and they have put information before this House which is reliable, I believe; which must be held to be reliable until it is con-

troverted; and the whole trend of that information goes to show that an injustice is being perpetrated. They might very well say: Your distribution is wrong; here is curs, put that on. But they did not go that far. They sense this idea that there is partisanship on both sides, and that there might be partiality even in their own proposal. They do not ask that theirs be adopted, but they present their side of the case and say: For reasonable fair-play and justice, for the stilling of bad passions, and for the setting out on a smooth sea the new sail which is to break from harbour on the 1st July, let your only impartial board in the Northwest, whom you yourselves have appointed in part, who are looked up to and trusted, against whose honour, justice and fair-play no man will breathe a single word—let them be trusted with the duty of giving to the new electors of that new province their new scheme of distribution. Why cannot that be acceded to? What interest would suffer if it were, and what good would not be brought about if it were acceded to by my right hon. friend?

Mr. OLIVER. The hon. gentleman saw fit to draw attention to an alleged discrepancy between the position taken by the First Minister and myself as to the basis of calculation upon which the distribution was made. I think he rather missed the point in what I said, as I think the House will bear me out, having heard him read it. The basis of the division of the constituencies was necessarily, I said, the vote cast. That was not the question that he was arguing about at all. That question has not yet arisen. I said that we took the actual vote cast, because it was the latest and most accurate information we could get for the purpose of drawing a dividing line between the constituencies. But that was not, if he followed my remarks of yesterday, the sole basis, from my point of view, of the general arrangement that was made. He speaks of my having introduced the question of the dividing line at township 38. I do not know whether it is to the purpose in this argument to shut our eyes and ears to what we have seen and heard ever since these Autonomy Bills came up for consideration; but I instanced the increase of population, the number of post offices, the number of statute labour districts, the number of school districts and other matters connected with the northern country, as evidence that there has been a large increase of population in that country such as would justify the large increase of representation that is being given to it. I gather from the remarks of the hon. gentleman that, having availed himself of all the information which was collected at so much labour and pains, most commendable, by the hon. members for Calgary and St. Antoine, and having applied his own intellect to the matter, he came to the conclusion that, so far as the