

number of polled votes 20,962, and the total population 69,441.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. And you estimate the population now at a quarter of a million?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The probable population on the 1st of July is estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 250,000.

Mr. FOSTER. Who estimates that?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The Interior Department.

Mr. FOSTER. How did the Interior Department get at that?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am sure I do not know, except from the records of the population and the immigration.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. By a divining rod.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I think it will not be disputed by hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House coming from the Northwest Territories, that the estimate made by the Interior Department of the population on the 1st of July in the two provinces to be in the neighbourhood of 500,000, is fairly correct. When we introduced the Bill we mentioned this estimate, and I do not know that it has been challenged.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. That would be about 10,000 to each constituency.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Might I ask the Minister of the Interior if I understood him to make the statement that the constituencies were based on the number of the votes polled last November, not on the number of votes on the list? I would certainly consider that rather an unfair way to divide up that country.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Why?

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Take, for instance, the number of votes polled in North Oxford the other day. There were in the neighbourhood of 1,200 more polled on June 13 than in November last. If the constituencies in the Northwest are based on any such vote as that, I do not think it is reasonable.

Mr. OLIVER. If the hon. member will look over the list, he will find that the difference will not be material in the result. A proportionate number of votes were not polled in each constituency. Perhaps the hon. member is not aware that the voters' list in the Territories is not made up as it is here. It is made up by enumeration immediately before the election; and, as it is manhood suffrage, there is a good deal of latitude in the making up of the list, and it seems to us that if we want to give an unquestionable basis, the actual votes polled was the proper basis; because it

might be said that one enumerator was a better figurer than another, and the fact that certain names were on the voters' list would be no evidence that the people were there, as it would be in the province of Ontario.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Why were the names placed on the list by the enumerator?

Mr. OLIVER. Different enumerators in different parts of the country would take a different view as to whether a man's name should be on the list or not. One man might be more strict in his interpretation of the law than another. It is a matter that is left entirely to the enumerator, and in the end enumeration makes no difference, because a voter may have his name put on the list at the last moment, and vote. So that the voters' list is not at all the same sure guide to actual population in the west that it is here in the east.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I think the basis is as fair as it can be. Let me call the attention of my hon. friend from North Toronto to these facts. The population by the census of 1901 was 69,441, or let us say in round numbers 70,000. That would give, if you divide the population by 23 constituencies, a unit of a little over 3,000. The number of votes registered was 29,950, or let us say in round numbers 30,000. By dividing that number by 23, you would get a unit of about 1,300. The number of votes polled was 20,961, or say in round numbers 21,000. Dividing that by 23, you get a little over 900. So that on the whole I think that there is a fair correspondence between these figures, that no injustice has been done to anybody, and that the endeavour has been made to have as fair a division as was possible, especially if you consider the character of the population, which is sometimes in compact groups and sometimes very sparse.

Mr. FOSTER. I would like to ask the Minister of the Interior a little more closely how they came to make the estimate of 250,000 population for each of these provinces. If it was a guess of course it would be no good at all; and if it was worth trying to find out, there must have been some methods adopted. What methods were adopted, and what did they show? On the face of it, it would seem as if they were optimistic as to their estimate of the population. November, 1904, was not long ago, and you took as a basis of the population the registered vote. That gives you, say, 30,000. That would make about eight to a family in order to bring up the population to 250,000. I doubt very much if that would be the average in the Northwest. There may be some large families there, but there are a great many bachelor establishments. It seems to me that that would tend to bring down the average rather than to raise it. I would not think that more