

vote recorded, the vote polled, the post offices, the school districts and so on; and the population on each division must vary between 1,000 and 1,400, so far as I can see. My hon. friend must remember what took place in 1903 regarding the delimitation of Ontario, 25,000 was the unit we adopted, but in some instances the population went beyond 25,000 and in others under that figure.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. But my right hon. friend is putting it as if in that case we said our unit of population shall be from 25,000 to 40,000. We had a unit of 25,000 and came as near to it as possible.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. But you cannot say there is equality of population in one section and another. Here is one section which is less than 1,000 and another which is more than 1,500. When we come to discuss each case separately, we can see whether or not it is possible to make changes. Take the case of Stony Plain as an example. It is at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. The division extends to the west from the summit of the Rockies, the height of land, up to the Saskatchewan river, and it follows the Saskatchewan river. Does my hon. friend say that in order to have a larger body of population in Stony Plain, it would be advisable to cross the Saskatchewan river? Is it not preferable this river should be made the boundary? It forms a natural boundary, and my hon. friend will agree that it is better, in a large constituency of that kind, to follow the river. We must take every case by itself. Suppose this were referred to a commission of judges, could they have proceeded any differently? They would have to observe the conditions and ascertain the best way to accommodate the population to the natural divisions. Sometimes that is easy because there are no rivers or mountains; but when we come to section by section and division by division, we can take each by itself and see if it is possible to improve one or the other.

Mr. AMES. I understood the right hon. gentleman to say some time ago that there were no rivers in the province of Alberta sufficiently important to be considered as natural boundaries, and that it was a very simple proposition to take the map and arrange the various constituencies. For the local legislature we find four constituencies: Lacombe, Ponoka, Wetaskiwin and Leduc—which extend completely across from east to west and which take up the territory now occupied by Stony Plain. And if we look at the number of votes cast, we find that all these four constituencies are considerably below the mean average. But if we should add Stony Plain to these four and allow their boundaries to go entirely across, thus absorbing Stony Plain into these four constituencies, we should then have about the average. How is it that al-

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though these four constituencies are now perfectly satisfactory it is found necessary to create five and give Stony Plain less than its quota and also reduce the other four below the necessary number?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I think they are still above the necessary number. If my hon. friend will look at the map of the province of Quebec, he will find that there are counties in that province to-day—for instance, the counties of Ottawa, Montcalm, Joliette and Berthier—which extend almost to the North Pole. At one time the county of Ottawa was only one, but we divided it into two. Why? Because the population extended northward, and at a certain time the county of Ottawa, which extends to-day almost to the limits, the population was sufficient for the purposes, but in 1882 it was divided into two counties—the counties of Wright and Labelle. The time will come when the county of Montcalm will have to be divided and also the county of Berthier, and we shall have another division made north of these counties. You will have the same experience here. There were no people in Stony Plain some years ago but there are now, and they have to be represented and that is the reason why we give them representation.

Mr. AMES. The Prime Minister misunderstands; we have no intention of depriving any portion of the new province of representation. But we do not wish to see parts over-represented. We do not understand why a man in one section of the country should be considered worth double the voting power of a man in another section, that is all. We have no objection to having every man in the country represented if it is possible to bring him to the poll. As far as the county of Wright is concerned, this county was divided north and south so the distance between the extremities is the same to-day as it formerly was. If the minister will look at the map he will see that it has been found necessary for some reason to have Red Deer extend from the Rocky Mountains in the west to Medicine Hat on the east, and yet it is a constituency of proper size so far as population is concerned, and the next four districts in order to make room for Stony Plain, have to be bounded by the river so that five constituencies may be formed where there is only population for four.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Take again the county of Ottawa. It matters not whether it was divided north and south or east and west; it was divided because population had flowed into that county which was not there when the county was organized. That is why in a new country like ours you have to vary the constituencies from time to time, because population comes in and representation must be adjusted accordingly. In the case of Stony Plain if my hon. friend