

required than that which he has given? If there are any reasons on account of natural boundaries, on account of local conditions, or on account of anything else which have led the government to make up this extraordinary schedule, let us hear what they are, but surely the hon. gentleman is not going to content himself with simply placing Stony Plain on one side and Calgary on the other and omitting the other 23 constituencies designated by the schedule. I venture to think the right hon. gentleman is altogether departing from the principle he laid down in 1899 and doing so without any good reason.

My right hon. friend must have well known that I never had the slightest knowledge or intimation of any intention on the part of the government that there should be any such conference between the two sides as that which he has referred to to-day. He has admitted frankly that it was not the intention of the government, in the first instance, to proceed along the present lines; he has admitted that it was the intention of the government to proceed along the lines of a conference between the two sides of the House, adopting the British principle, and if he had followed out that principle to its legitimate conclusion he would have left its application to some independent tribunal. The right hon. gentleman has abandoned both; he has abandoned, in the first place, the suggestion of a conference, which was his own idea, as he admits. For what reason has that been abandoned? My hon. friend has given no explanation of that. For what reason was the intention of a conference, admitted by the right hon. gentleman, abandoned? Whose fault is it? It is certainly not the fault of any one on this side of the House, because we never heard anything of it before. It was a very fair intention, it was one in which we acquiesced in 1903; although we at that time thought it should go further, and that there should be a commission of independent men to delimit the constituencies. But there was a conference of the two sides of the House by means of a committee, and our deliberations, the right hon. gentleman well remembers, were carried on informally in order that we might ascertain whether we could not, in that informal and private way, come to a conclusion as to some matters respecting which we were likely to differ in opinion. We were not altogether satisfied with the conclusion or the conference on that occasion; some alterations were made by the right hon. gentleman after the committee had reported. But still that was an infinitely fairer method than the one which is presented to the House by the right hon. gentleman on this occasion; and I trust he will see his way clear to revert to his first good intention and to deal with this matter somewhat differently from the method which he now seeks to

impose upon this side of the House. He spoke of this question the other day as one of higher politics. A principle of higher politics should not be varied as this is being varied, simply because the right hon. gentleman concludes that there has been some misunderstanding between members on both sides of the House from the west. I was entitled, I think, if the right hon. gentleman had any intention of that kind, to know something about it. If he had brought it to my attention, probably he would have saved a good deal of debate, a good deal of delay and discussion with regard to this matter. But inasmuch as he is quite clear now that his intention has not been brought to the minds of those on this side of the House who have dealt with the matter, I ask him whether he does not think it would be fair to deal with it in that way at the present time, and to see whether we cannot come to some conclusion as to the schedules which will be a little more in consonance with what we on this side of the House believe to be justice and fair-play to all concerned?

Mr. OLIVER. The leader of the opposition is certainly doing his humble best to create dissatisfaction in the minds of the people of Alberta. I do not know that he will be successful, because, after two or three days engaged in threshing this case out in parliament, he and his friends have certainly failed to establish a case.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What part of my remarks were intended to excite dissatisfaction?

Mr. OLIVER. The whole of them, as I understood them, by trying to create a grievance where no grievance exists, and where none has yet been shown. My hon. friend has laid some stress on the assertion he makes that there was no attempt at a conference with regard to this question. Had he been here last night, or had he read the proceedings of last night in the 'Hansard,' he would have seen that there was a direct statement made by three members on this side of the House that there was a conference held in which the question of the division between the two districts was discussed, and during which, according to the statement of the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Herron), other questions in that connection were discussed; and that the conference was not continued because it was evident from the results of the meeting that there was no use in continuing it. There was no refusal on the part of members of this side to go on, but there was an absence of willingness on the part of members on the other side of the House when it was desired to go on.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. What is the hon. gentleman referring to?

Mr. OLIVER. I say there was a meeting held at which the hon. member for Alberta