

speaking about the basis of this division and he made the remark that the voters' list was not so sure an index in the west as the voters' list in the east would be. There are certain reasons which make it not so good a guide. My right hon. friend said:

I think the basis is as fair as it can be.

Here is the proof of it. This is what I cannot understand and I would like my right hon. friend to explain it. He says:

The population by the census of 1901 was 69,441, or let us say in round numbers 70,000.

I agree to that.

That would give, if you divide the population by twenty-three constituencies, a unit of a little over 3,000.

I agree to that. That is the first fact stated, that 70,000, divided by 23, gives 3,000.

The number of registered votes 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.

I agree to both of those statements. Thirty thousand divided by 23 gives you 1,300 in round numbers. Then:

The number of votes polled was in round numbers 21,000. Dividing that by 23, you get a little over 900.

I agree to that. The three statements made are these: 70,000 of a population divided by 23, the number of constituencies gives you 3,000; 30,000, the number of votes registered, divided by 23, gives you 1,300; and 21,000, the number of votes polled, divided by 23, gives you 900. I grant all that, but when the right hon. gentleman draws this conclusion from it, that is what I do not understand, and I would like an explanation. The conclusion which he draws is that:

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.

I cannot follow the deduction from the premises laid down. It may be there, but I cannot see it.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The deduction is simply this: We have proceeded upon the figures and divided them by 23 without any ultimate thought as to what would be the conclusion. We say: There are the figures, the total population, the total recorded vote, the total number of votes cast; divide them by 23 and the result is as I have stated. But now, we go further and we have gone further. If these figures were taken by themselves and if there was nothing else than these figures the adjustment between the north and south

Mr. FOSTER.

would not be challenged by anybody. They show that we have this population, and if we give so many seats they produce such a result, but since I spoke yesterday and since my hon. friend spoke yesterday we have had the speech of my hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) who says this division is absolutely unfair, because it gives more to the north than to the south. My hon. friend (Mr. Foster) who, I think, was not in the House last evening, although in the afternoon he heard part of the speech of my hon. friend from Calgary, heard him say that according to the figures which I gave to the House of the registered votes, the votes polled and the population, 10 members ought to be given to the south and 5 to the north. That is the point which we have to elucidate. I say that the figures which I gave yesterday and the figures which I gave to-day do not warrant that conclusion. In so far as I can make anything out of these figures there is absolute justice done to everybody. How do I make that out? I do not know whether my hon. friend followed my argument to-day, but I make that out by showing that if you have 11 constituencies north of Red Deer and 11 south of Red Deer there are more registered votes in the southern constituency than in the northern constituency. The difference is not great, but I grant that. If you take the population you find that there are 5,200 souls more in the north than in the south giving there the advantage to the north. Under such circumstances, can my hon. friend come to the conclusion that any injustice has been done to the south to benefit the north? I am sure that the figures which I have given do not show that conclusion.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. The statement I made yesterday was that the local distribution of 1902 was 9 in the south and 6 in the north. I said that on that basis there should be 15 in the south and 10 in the north. I did not make the statement, or if I did I did not intend to make the statement, that the division should be as 15 to 10 according to the census of 1901. But the figures show that since the distribution of the local house in May, 1902 the influx of population had been south. That was my intention? Then, as to the census the population has more than doubled since 1901 and as I understand the right hon. leader of the government admits that there are considerably more voters—I did not catch the exact figures—and a considerably greater number of names on the list south than there are north. The census being practically five years old it would be a manifestly unfair guide to take.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. If we had a census in 1905, we would rely on it and there would be no necessity to look at these other facts. But we know there is an increased population since the census, and how are we to proceed. The hon. gentleman says that upon the basis of the