

meeting, to discuss certain things one of which it is well known because it is agreed to by all, was the boundary line between the two provinces. The rest of it is in an interminable and unfathomable haze, denied by hon. gentlemen on this side of the House and haltingly affirmed by hon. gentlemen opposite. But the hon. gentleman has not cleared up the question as a minister and member of the government until he shows that something was done in the only way in which it could be done to bring together representatives of the government and the opposition in a conference in reference to this delimitation of the boundaries. There is no other way. If members from one section of the country meet with members from another section of the country, even though they are of different politics and belong to both sides of the House, that does not make it such a conference as the right hon. Prime Minister had in view. His idea was that the two sides of the House should confer together and that they should agree together as to what should be the basis of delimitation.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No, what I said was that the idea in my mind was that this question and other questions of a similar character should be settled by the gentlemen who represent the Northwest Territories in this House on both sides of the House. Unfortunately this idea did not prevail.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. That is not what the right hon. gentleman said a little while ago. The right hon. gentleman pointed to what had been done in Great Britain. There was a deadlock, representatives from each side of the House had a conference, and defined the principles, and I certainly gathered most distinctly from the words of my right hon. friend that it was his intention, as far as this Bill was concerned, that the same procedure should be followed.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. That was not it.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Well, my ears have played me false if that is not what the right hon. gentleman said in the earlier part of his remarks this afternoon. His reference to what took place in Great Britain was entirely irrelevant if he did not mean that, because what has been stated just now has not any relevancy at all to what took place in Great Britain. My right hon. friend, if his statement represents what was in his mind, should certainly have conferred with me or some other member on this side of the House privately and arranged for this interview. We know that no such interview took place, but he excuses himself now by saying that is not what he intended at all. The illustration he drew from British practice was in that case so absolutely irrelevant that I cannot imagine why the right hon. gentleman referred to it.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I never conferred with my hon. friend in regard to hav-

Mr. FOSTER.

ing a conference on this question, but I stated that my view was that the division of boundaries might well be settled by members on both sides of politics, and that did not carry.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Would not that involve a communication from the right hon. gentleman to myself?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No; because when it was not adopted I did not go any further.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What was not adopted?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. My suggestion.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. How can I be accused of not adopting something which I never heard.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not accuse my hon. friend.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Then, there was no intention of a conference.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I did not consult my hon. friend with regard to the boundaries; I consulted the members from the Northwest Territories. I asked them to give advice, and I wanted to have their advice as to the number of constituencies and as to the capital and other things which were purely local. My argument in regard to the precedent in England was in answer to the statement of my hon. friend that these matters were always referred to judges in England, whereas in the case mentioned they were referred to special commissioners.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I do not care whether they were referred to judges or not; that is not the point we are dealing with. The right hon. gentleman in answer to me certainly did say that he regretted that this had not been dealt with by a conference between the two sides of the House.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I have explained over and over again that I regretted, and I regret now, that this matter was not settled by the members from the Northwest Territories who are directly concerned in the matter.

Mr. FOSTER. Did the right hon. gentleman as leader of the government, or did the Minister of the Interior as representing that district, call that conference? Was it the right hon. gentleman or was it the Minister of the Interior who called this conference and authorized it?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It was not I who called it. I simply understood that it had been done and that nothing effectual could result from it.

Mr. SCOTT. It may not be out of place for me to repeat exactly what I said last evening upon this question. I stated: