

at the conclusion to which we arrived, was the number of post offices and the number of school-houses. The reliability of such information was questioned; it was claimed that it did not give a fair, accurate statement of the population, and as another source of information the member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) quoted figures of the trade of the north and south and also the number of chartered banks which had offices in the north and south. From such sources of information he was led to his own conclusion, but I repeat again that so far as the information we have given to the House is concerned, it has not been disputed.

Mr. INGRAM. The right hon. gentleman draws his conclusions from the number of votes polled. The Minister of the Interior claimed that that is a proper source from which to make the delimitation. Evidently that view is supported by the First Minister. The statement made by the member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) is that owing to certain difficulties amongst the ranchers in the southern part of Alberta at the time of the general election of November 3, 1904, many men engaged in ranching were obliged by reason of an order issued by the government to absent themselves from the polling divisions at which they would have a right to vote and by reason of this thus absenting themselves the number of votes polled in the south was less than it ought to have been or otherwise would have been, had it not been for the order issued by the government. But, on the other hand, in the north we have the statement made that more votes were polled than were on the voters' lists. Therefore the northern part of Alberta derives a greater benefit from calculating from the number of votes polled, by reason of the fact that more ballots found their way into the boxes than there were names on the voters' lists in the north while the percentage of votes cast in relation to the number on the list in the south was less than it should be, as I have said by reason of the men having to be absent to obey the order of the government or lose their cattle. Is that a correct statement of fact? If it is then if you take the number of votes polled you are not doing a proper thing for the south as against the north. That is unfair if that statement is true and I have not heard it contradicted.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not dispute the statements which the hon. member has made; I know nothing about it. There would be something in the argument if the source of information and the only basis which we had before us in coming to the conclusion had been the recorded vote. When my hon. friend says there have been more votes cast than were on the lists that may be but there is nothing illegal in that.

Mr. INGRAM. It is true all the same.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. These men were entitled to vote all the same; it is perfectly lawful, and we therefore took the number of votes recorded. It may be that in the south as alleged some ranchers did not record their votes. That could not be a large number, I do not know the reason but I am prepared to look into the question from a broader point of view than that. It seems to me that is a small way of looking at it. I am willing to give to the hon. gentleman the benefit of everything there is in those figures which I have quoted. I have taken these figures and they tell against us in some instances and against the hon. gentleman in some instances; we have to take them as they are and to come to the best conclusion with such information as we have. I stated yesterday at the opening of the discussion that we took as the basis of the distribution which we made, the condition of things existing at the present time, the number of seats assigned to the province of Alberta in the present legislature of the Territory which amounts to 16. First of all we had to increase that by 10, we had to give to Alberta 10 more seats than there are to-day in the legislature of the Northwest Territories within the limits of Alberta. How are we to come to that conclusion? We come to that conclusion upon information derived from three sources which we submit to the House to be challenged. We take first the number of votes recorded. We do not say to the House that this is the only thing we should take into consideration; we say that is one thing which ought to be taken into consideration but not alone. We take next the number of votes registered; we do not say that is the only thing to be taken, that is only one of many things on which we should form our judgment. Then we take the census of 1901. That is the best thing of all. If we had a census for 1905 we would not have to consider the number of recorded votes nor the number of registered votes, nor the number of post offices, school districts or improvement districts; we would take only the census for 1905. But we have no census of 1905 and therefore we have to make up our minds as to what is the actual population at the present time. We know that the population at the present time is double what it was in 1901, and we have to make our calculation accordingly. But though the population has doubled, I think it is only a fair suggestion that we must find a wealth of information in the census of 1901. We say moreover that we think this is something to go on, not the number of post offices, school districts and improvement districts. I will try to deal with the question as fairly as I can and give to the hon. gentlemen the benefit of these figures wherever they tell in their favour, and I shall ask them to give us the benefit whenever they tell on our side. I followed the speech of my hon. friend from