

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. As to the choice of the 38th line of townships, I may say that I am willing to take any line the hon. gentleman (Mr. Scott) suggests. Whatever line he takes the calculation will be the same. My reason for taking the 38th line was because it left eleven constituencies north and eleven south of the line, exclusive of the Athabasca constituencies.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. This is a matter which will have to be settled eventually by the province, just as will the question of redistribution, of which we have heard so much. It is practically left to the province to settle. For the time, we take Edmonton, but the new province can choose any place it pleases. That is the intention, and I think it is the better plan.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Yes, but if the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fitzpatrick) will do me the honour to look at the map, he will observe that Edmonton is practically made the hub of a wheel through this distribution of seats. He will see that a condition of affairs is being established here which cannot be found to exist in any other province of the Dominion. Edmonton is one constituency—the hub. Stony Plain comes into it like the spoke of a wheel; as does Strathcona; and Sturgeon is another; and Saskatchewan is practically another and St. Albert also. Already three candidates have been nominated for these constituencies who reside in Edmonton. So when the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fitzpatrick) says that this is a matter for the local legislature to decide, I may tell him that the people in the south are perfectly willing to leave the capital to be fixed according to the will of the people. But under this measure the hands of the legislature are tied—for there are six constituencies out of twenty-four bordering on Edmonton.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Of course, I know very little of the conditions existing in that part of the country—but of one thing I am sure that if anything nearly so iniquitous has been perpetrated as my hon. friend (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) tells us, that wrong must necessarily be righted by the people. They will find out that wrong, and they will also find means to remedy it.

Mr. FOWLER. But the difficulty is that the first legislature must be elected from the constituencies as they are here, and that legislature fixes the capital. And the scheme that has been made by some person—I do not know by whom, but I very strongly suspect that it is by the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) himself—will result in the permanent capital being fixed at Edmonton. It is like playing with loaded dice. The majority of the people of Alberta will have no fair chance to say which of these towns shall be their capital, for this iniquitous distribution will have its effect, and no doubt, Edmonton will be se-

lected as the permanent capital, whereas, if the voice of the majority of the people could be heard, that selection would not be made.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. May I ask the Minister of the Interior to point out one single reason why the seat of government should be placed, even provisionally at the end of railway construction?

Mr. OLIVER. I am very sorry to delay the proceedings of parliament at this stage of the session for the purpose of stating what has already been stated, and re-stated, and re-stated again, until the House must be tired of it and the country most unwilling to hear it again. The suggestion of my hon. friend (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) that the capital is placed at Edmonton, because Edmonton is at the terminus of the railway is quite in line with the argument generally put forward in support of the contentions of hon. gentlemen opposite in this matter. They have been determined to find cause of offence where no cause of offence existed, to find a crime where there was no crime, a gerrymander where there was no gerrymander.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. OLIVER. They have assumed that something has been done wrong because it has been done by this side of the House. There is no ground for such an assumption. The placing of the capital is not in the same position as the distribution of the seats. The latter is, in the nature of things, only temporary. The placing of the capital is supposed to be permanent. This government, in locating the capital must, for its own justification place it where it will, in all probability be most suitable for the province, not only as it is, but as it will be. It would be a very short-sighted government and one that would take very little care of the interests committed to its charge if, having the responsibility of locating the capital of the new province, it should locate it elsewhere than at a point where it is likely to be, in future, if not at the present time, the centre of population and of traffic facilities.

Now it is the policy of this government to construct a transcontinental railway. That railway will pass through the city of Edmonton. At the present time the Canadian Northern Railway is under construction to that point. The Canadian Pacific Railway already has connection with that point. The city of Edmonton is the one point west of Winnipeg which has already any reasonable probability of having the three great railway systems of the west. As a railway centre there is no other point equal to it, prospectively, west of Winnipeg between Red River and the Rocky Mountains. If we seek for the geographical centre of the new province, Calgary is not near the centre. Calgary is within