

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The Prime Minister said yesterday that he would be able to give us to-day the number of pupils attending the schools in this district.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. On inquiry in the Department of the Interior, I am informed that the returns made to the Lieutenant Governor in regard to the schools of Athabaska are not sent to Ottawa, but a telegram has been sent to the Lieutenant Governor at Regina asking him to have an abstract of the returns sent here.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. If it includes Indian schools, we would like to have a distinction made between the whites, the half-breeds and the Indians.

Mr. LALOR. According to the census of 1901 Athabaska has a population of 3,096 Roman Catholics, 264 Anglicans, 23 Presbyterians and 2 Methodists.

Mr. OLIVER. In regard to this question of Indians, it might be well to point out that the Indian population is included in the census in all parts of the country, and it may be of interest to our friends of the opposition to be informed that the Indian population of Alberta is not confined to either the district of Athabaska or the district of Edmonton. I asked from the Census Department a statement of the number of Indians in each of the electoral divisions of the country, and the figures are as follows: Medicine Hat, 107; Cardston, 1; Lethbridge, 7; Macleod, 1,738; Pincher, 2; Gleichen, 974; Calgary City, 4; Banff, 861; Innisfail, 6; Red Deer, 2; Vermilion, 57; Ponoka, 369; Wetaskiwin, 222; Leduc, 2; Strathcona, 2; Stony Plain, 520; Edmonton City, 28; Saskatchewan, 275; Sturgeon, 379; St. Albert, 201; Peace River, 955; and Athabaska, 735; a total of 7,447, of which 3,702 are south of that mysterious dividing line, township 38, and 3,745 north of it. There are just as many Indians in the southern country as there are in the north, including the district of Athabaska; so that perhaps we may get over our difficulties without discussing the Indian question any more. I want to draw attention to the rather peculiar position taken by the hon. leader of the opposition in his presentation of his case. He made the plea that because there was uncertainty in regard to the population of the district of Athabaska, therefore the delimitation of the constituencies should be left to a commission of judges; but he does not propose to leave the representation of Athabaska to any commission of judges. He proposes that this House shall define the representation of Athabaska. He only calls in his commission of judges later on and for other purposes. Now, it seems to me that if he is not going to refer to this commission of judges the representation of the district of Athabaska, about which we will admit that neither he nor I know very much—

Mr. OLIVER.

Mr. FOSTER. Is the hon. minister serious in what he is stating now?

Mr. OLIVER. Yes, quite serious.

Mr. FOSTER. If I am not interrupting too much, I might point out that yesterday and the day before we were discussing the appointment of a commission. The ground we took was that it would be fair to appoint a commission of judges and have them delimit the whole province. The House discussed that proposal and last night the government voted it down. A proposition was made to-day by the hon. gentleman from St. Antoine division, Montreal. You voted down the commission, you refused to grant it, you are stiff necked and obstinate, and will not do the thing that is right. If you will not do the thing that is right and refer the question to a commission of judges, perhaps you would take our proposition as to a delimitation and see if you cannot get somewhere near what is a fair, reasonable and just distribution. That is the way we argue, and I do not see any inconsistency in that. I am thoroughly consistent. If I want a commission of judges and try to get you to accept it, and you will not, then I say: If you won't do the whole thing that is right, will you do anything that is right? Here is a plan which I think would be more fair and just than yours; will you adopt that instead of yours? There is no inconsistency in that, I think. What does my hon. friend think about it?

Mr. OLIVER. I do not quite follow the hon. gentleman's argument. As I read the amendment of the leader of the opposition, he asks that this House declare that the district of Athabaska shall have one member in the provincial house, and he goes on in his amendment to say that certain delimitations in other parts of the province shall be made by a commission of judges. I say that if he is prepared to take the verdict of this House in regard to the district of Athabaska of which neither he nor I are very well informed, he will surely take the judgment of this House in regard to the delimitation of the rest of the province in regard to which he and we are very well informed. At any rate, his first contention that we should have a commission of judges because we do not know what the population of Athabaska is, and afterwards that we should not submit to the commission of judges the question of the representation of Athabaska, seem to me illogical and lacking consecutiveness.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It is obvious that the two amendments were not the same, if they were, I could not move them. I moved the second, as the member for North Toronto said, because the first was voted down.

Mr. OLIVER. I am not making a comparison between the two amendments, I am discussing the position taken by the