

new province, but that it is not even worth representation in a local legislature when such is formed. He has read a statement taken from the census—

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Does the hon. gentleman pretend to say that I stated that it was not fit for representation in the new provincial legislature?

Mr. OLIVER. That is what I gathered from the reason the hon. gentleman gave.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I may say that is about as fair as most of what the hon. gentleman says. I advocated waiting for its growth by gradual process, just as the First Minister suggested when discussing Manitoba. That country, so far as I know personally, may be the finest in the land. I know nothing about it of my own knowledge, but have heard certain reports. I simply take the population and the post office guide, and ask whether or not it is at present ripe for provincial representation.

Mr. OLIVER. I hope I have not misrepresented the hon. member. If he did not say before that he did not consider the district of Athabaska fit for representation, he certainly has said so now.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I hope the minister will be absolutely fair. My hon. friend did not say that it is not fit for representation, but that it is not entitled at present to representation.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Not ready for it.

Mr. OLIVER. As I understand the position taken by the hon. member for Calgary, it is that the district of Athabaska should not be represented in the new local House. If that is what he said, it does not matter whether he said it should not be represented because it was unfit for representation or for any other reason. I leave the hon. gentleman and the hon. member for South York to settle the matter between them. My knowledge of that country is perhaps greater than that of some other members, and I would certainly say that the trade done there, whatever its population may be, entitles it to representation. I would add that the census of 1900 is not a fair or reasonable guide to the population at present.

Mr. MONK. What is the population.

Mr. OLIVER. I have not taken a census of that country nor has any body else, but I know it has a very large area. It had a population, as my hon. friend said, of 6,000 at the time of the census. It has had five years to increase, and we have reason to believe that its population has since increased in some proportion to the increase in other parts of the territory. We know that its trade has very largely increased in that time, and on behalf of that district and its people—whether white men or half-breeds—

Mr. OLIVER.

I submit that they are entitled, by reason of their contributions to the treasury of this country, to representation in its legislative councils and to the expenditure of public money towards its development. If the people of this Athabaska district, in which the manufacturers and merchants of eastern Canada do a very large and profitable trade, are to be debarred from representation and consideration in the councils of the provinces to be created, as they are debarred from consideration in the councils of this Dominion parliament, then I think we are dealing with them very unfairly and improperly, and I am prepared to take issue with any hon. member on that question. I hope the members of the opposition do not share the views of the hon. member for Calgary on that point.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Have all parts of the province of Ontario and Manitoba and Quebec got representation in their respective parliaments?

Mr. OLIVER. I am given to understand that they have. Looking at the map, I should say that the whole of Ontario is divided up into electoral districts and so is the whole of Manitoba. I am not quite sure about Quebec. I am satisfied that the province of Ontario is and certainly the province of Manitoba and British Columbia, and I can see no reason why these 6,000 people, whether half-breeds or Indians, should not receive fair and reasonable consideration in the matter of local representation.

Mr. BARKER. Who represents James' bay in this House?

Mr. OLIVER. I think the hon. member for Nipissing does.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. The member for Lake St. John does in the local House.

Mr. OLIVER. The hon. member can satisfy himself on that point at any moment.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Lake St. John is in the province of Quebec.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. So is James' bay.

Mr. SAM HUGHES. James' bay is in Ontario.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Partly.

Mr. OLIVER. The hon. member for Nipissing represents a part of the shores of James bay.

Mr. BARKER. They are 200 miles from it.

Mr. OLIVER. It is included in his district.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I think the hon. minister misunderstood my hon. friend from Calgary. My hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) does not want to disfranchise the riding, but he does not want to enfranchise it too much.