

ence of the British Crown in many centuries in dealing with unorganized or sparsely populated sections, and it has been decided that the fairest possible way of making the division is to base it on the number of names on the electoral list, find the quota and afterwards make the boundaries.

I wish, in further support of this argument—that a reference to a commission is the best way in which to perform this task—to quote from American experience. A great many of those who are at the present time coming over the boundary into Alberta are accustomed to the institutions that prevail to the south of us. We do not always imitate our cousins to the south of us but in some cases possibly they might well be imitated, and I think that many Americans coming into Alberta, who have lived in north and south Dakota, on becoming acquainted with this schedule as the method under which they are to cast their first votes, will decide that the method which prevailed at home was the better one.

Whenever it is decided that a territory shall be admitted as a state it is necessary that the sanction of the two parties shall be given, the people of the state and the people of the union. The people of the state are usually already registered on the electoral list for the territory, and it becomes necessary to choose delegates to represent them at a convention. The following extract from the United States statutes at large, volume XXV., chapter 180, shows the manner of choosing these delegates:

And the aforesaid delegates to form said conventions shall be apportioned within the limits of the proposed states in such districts as may be established as hereinafter provided in proportion to the population in each of said counties and districts, as near as may be, at the time of making said apportionment by the persons hereinafter authorized to make the same, from the best information obtainable, in each of which districts three delegates shall be elected, and so forth. . . . Said apportionment shall be made by the governor, the chief justice and the secretary of the said territories.

The Governor, representing the United States; the Secretary of the Territories, representing the best informed local authority, and the chief justice, who will add to this commission the judicial element. That is the way in which constituencies in the Dakotas were divided, and nothing could be fairer, inasmuch as it is done by a commission which was entirely removed from any political bias.

Now, the idea of a commission is not altogether a foreign proposition even to the present government. I am sorry to say that the government have reverted from a principle which they at one time advocated. When they had come freshly into power they had many new ideas of reform which were shortly to be put into effect. Some were attempted, but were later abandoned. This is one of these. In 1899 the liberal administration, which we have now, believed

it advisable that there should be a redistribution in view of the coming elections of 1900. This was to affect particularly the province of Ontario, and this is the way they proposed that it should be done. Bill 126 was presented in the House of Commons. This measure was to give the city of Hamilton two members, it was to give the city of Toronto five members, it was to give to eight of the counties of Ontario—Brant, Elgin and others—two members each, and it was to give to seven other counties of Ontario—Huron, Bruce and others—three members each. How did the government propose that the five constituencies of Toronto should be divided? This is what they suggested:

Where, under the foregoing provisions, any county or city is to be divided into more than one electoral district, such divisions shall be made by a board of commissioners, consisting of at least three persons, being judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature for Ontario, who, for that purpose, shall be appointed by letters patent under the great seal.

What was the government's proposition? They said we will decide that the city of Toronto shall have five members, that the city of Hamilton shall have two members; we will not undertake to divide these cities up into constituencies, but we will leave that to a commission of judges, in whom we have every confidence. At that time the right hon. First Minister himself and the hon. Postmaster General defended this proposition. Said the right hon. Prime Minister, on the 19th May, 1899:

The judges, so far as the city of Toronto is concerned, as well as other constituencies, which have to be divided, will divide the municipal city of Toronto into four ridings, taking into consideration the census of 1891, and the convenience of the population, so as to do substantial justice, so far as it is possible to do it.

Again he says:

The instructions given to the judges, as my hon. friend no doubt knows by this time, are general. It is impossible to divide counties into ridings which will have exactly the same population, but I assume, and I hope also, that it will be the duty of the judges to make the ridings as equal as possible in population.

This Bill was presented to the House by the hon. Postmaster General and supported in a speech by the right hon. First Minister. Why should not the government apply the principles then enunciated on this occasion? We would not object if the government at this time would put in practice their own doctrine, which they supported in 1899. Let the government give the southern half of Alberta twelve members, let them give the northern half twelve members, let them give to that part of Assiniboia, which is to be taken in, one member, and then let them leave it to a commission of judges to divide these twelve constituencies in the north and these twelve constituencies in the south, and I will guarantee that there will be no trouble.