

work out mathematically either in this or in any other distribution. You will always have to depend upon that substratum of justice and fair-play, which, after all, is the best guide in matters of this kind. If you attempt to carry out your purpose by any precise mathematical rule, you must fail; you have to trust to good sense and fair-play in the end.

I wish to refer to two matters to which my hon. friend has called my attention, namely, the population of Stony Plain and the population of Calgary. The hon. gentleman asks: Why do you give a member to Stony Plain when you give only one member to Calgary? Well, Calgary is a city, while Stony Plain is a rural district. I appeal to hon. gentlemen on the other side, I appeal to my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster), who has sat on the treasury benches when the redistribution was undertaken, that you cannot have the same unit of population for the representation of a city as for the representation of a rural community. Two years ago, when we last had a redistribution measure before this House, a strong appeal was made to us by representatives of urban populations, that they were not treated fairly because the unit of population was not the same for the city as for the rural places. Our unit of population for counties was 25,000, but for Toronto and Montreal we had a very much larger unit. If this principle were not adopted some portions of the rural populations would be left unrepresented. Calgary, for instance, had a population, according to the last census of 4,865. This is a compact population included within, perhaps, two square miles. Stony Plain had a population of 2,938; here is a population of about 3,000 scattered over a territory hundreds of miles in extent. On what principle are you to deal with these two populations if not on the principle we have adopted of considering geographical conditions as well as population?

Mr. AMES. Will the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) allow me to ask him why he argues that Stony Plain with 589 votes cast in the last election should have one member to itself, while Saskatchewan, with about equal area and with 1,168 votes cast in the last election, should have only one member? Or will he tell us why Stony Plain, with 768 votes on the list should have one member, when High River, with 1,786 votes on the list, both rural sections, has only one member?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Because of geographical considerations as shown in the map I have before me. It is impossible to make division so as to establish mathematical equality among the voters. No matter what arrangement you make you must do apparent injustice to somebody. How, then, would my hon. friend (Mr. Ames) do it?

Mr. AMES. I would follow the principle adopted in the Transvaal, in New Zealand

and in New South Wales—establish a certain quota of representation by voting population, and then leave it to the judges to define the boundaries.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. But how could the judges proceed in any other way than that in which we have proceeded? I have looked at the laws of the Transvaal on this subject. They provide that every electoral district must have the same population within 10 per cent. I do not know the population of the Transvaal or the conditions of that country, but I feel sure it would not be possible to work out any such system in this country.

Mr. AMES. Does not the Prime Minister think that the conditions of the Transvaal and of New South Wales are very much the same as our own—population very much scattered in some places, and, in others, concentrated?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. In this country, from the time of confederation, no such rule has been followed; and I do not think it is possible to follow out this fanciful new theory, but we must, to some extent, stick to the old idea, so far as it can be applied with justice. My hon. friend (Mr. Ames) contrasts the registered vote of Stony Plain 766 with the registered vote of Saskatchewan, 1,382.

Mr. AMES. Stony Plain and High River.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I understand that High River is a rather thickly peopled portion of the country. But Stony Plain is a remote section, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and I understand, very sparsely settled. If representation is to be given with even a semblance of justice, these people must be considered in the light of their geographical position.

Mr. AMES. Practically all the population of Stony Plain, I understand, lies in the northeastern portion of it. So far as High River is concerned, why cannot that territory be given two representatives, inasmuch as it has more than double the population and more than double the number of voters that Stony Plain has?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Well, would the hon. gentleman (Mr. Ames) suggest why High River should have two representatives and none should be given to Stony Plain? Would that be justice?

Mr. AMES. That is not necessary.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Then, what will take place if that is not necessary?

Mr. FOSTER. What will take place is that the right hon. gentleman will not have the balance in the north, as he has taken care to have it now.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. What will take place is that Stony Plain will have to be added to some other large territory, whose representative already would have