

side to that. He takes the first 11 constituencies—

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Seven.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I will take 11 because that figure is according to my statement.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I am merely referring to what I said.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Exactly. In so far as the comparison goes he compared 7 with 7, but I will compare 11 with 11. The first 11 constituencies south of Red Deer recorded a vote in the last election, according to my figures which have not been controverted, of 10,566. I think the figures quoted by my hon. friend from Argenteuil (Mr. Perley) are a little different, but the difference is so minute as not to count. On the other hand, the 11 constituencies north of Red Deer only cast 9,555 votes. That is one source of information, and if we were to be guided alone by that the argument of my hon. friend would be unanswerable, he would have the best of it, and we would have to bow. But, as another source of information we take the census. The 11 constituencies to the south which recorded a larger vote than the north in the last election have a population of 31,000, whereas the 11 constituencies in the north have a population of 36,000. Therefore, if there is on one side a preponderance in favour of the south in the vote recorded, there is a preponderance in favour of the north in the number of the population in 1901.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Yesterday I asked the right hon. gentleman if he knew the number of Indians north and south.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I answered that yesterday. I take the census population. I cannot say if it includes Indians or not. Suppose it does include Indians there will be Indians north and south. Suppose it does not include Indians then my hon. friend is answered.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. There are a great many more north than south.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Are there 5,000 more?

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I would not care to say because I am not sure.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No. These figures show that after all the difference is not very great, and as far as that goes I do not think there is much of an argument to be based upon it. Let me say to my hon. friend again that in my estimation it is absolutely impossible to do anything with these constituencies in regard to proportion of numbers. I do not think it is possible to apply the principle which it is sought to apply in the Transvaal of having the same number in every constituency, allowing a margin of only ten per cent. In order to bring about that result you will have to

cut up the territory like a checker board, irrespective of villages, population, groups and all those things which we have to respect. One of the instructions, if I remember aright, which I quoted to the committee this afternoon, was that the commissioners were to group the population in reference to its character if possible. Let me call the attention of my hon. friends opposite to conditions which have existed at all times in this country. I have here the Parliamentary Companion for 1874 containing a record of the first parliament elected after British Columbia came into the confederation. There were five or six members representing four or five constituencies. The record shows a great variety of conditions prevailing in British Columbia at that time. For instance, the city of Victoria, with a population of 4,540 and 2,925 voters, was given two members. There was the constituency of Yale with a population of 1,316 and 148 votes. That is all it had. The constituency of Cariboo had a population of 1,955 and 359 voters. New Westminster had a population of 1,356 and it had 460 voters. Well, some one may tell me that Yale which had only 148 voters should have been united with some other constituency, just as it is suggested that Athabaska and Peace River should have been united with some other constituencies. But, it would not have been fair to have united it to another constituency and we say that you must give representation to these constituencies in the north and that the only way you can do it is in the way we have suggested.

Mr. PERLEY. I would like to call the right hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that in discussing the 11 constituencies above Red Deer, I do not think he is taking a fair view of the case. There are 13 constituencies above Red Deer and the 13 constituencies ought to be taken and not the 11 which are above Red Deer. To my mind the whole crux of this matter is these two constituencies of Peace River and Athabaska. The right hon. gentleman compares the north 11 with the south 11 and absolutely ignores these two sections which have so few voters. He has left out Nos. 24 and 25 which really make 13 constituencies above Red Deer with practically no more voters, or only 300 more, than there are, from his statement, in the 11 constituencies.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes, but the two constituencies of Athabaska and Peace River have never been organized and they have to be left out of the comparison because there never has been an election there. We have been anxious to take everything we could get in order to come to a conclusion. For these 11 constituencies north and south of Red Deer we had recourse to the recorded votes, the registered votes and the population. In Athabaska and Peace River we could not have the recorded votes or the registered votes because there were none. It is impossible to treat Athabaska and