

as that which I pointed out to the First Minister the other day where a flourishing town in the northern part of that country was placed on the dividing line of two constituencies. But we did not suggest that this should be done by a commission with any idea of getting any unfair advantage, because, of the three justices of the Supreme Court in the province of Alberta who were suggested, two were appointed by the present administration and one by a Conservative administration. But this subdivision can be made by a committee of the House just as well, if the government consider that they would be shirking their responsibility by handing that work over to a commission of judges. If you fix the number of seats that each section of the country is entitled to, it does not matter to us whether the division is made by a committee of the House or by a commission of judges; but we say, let there be no difference between the different sections of the country in regard to the quota of representation.

Now, let us follow up the argument of the hon. Minister of the Interior as to the pioneers who should be entitled to representation. I have tried to get from him, for the purpose of making a comparison, the number of half-breeds in the Peace River and Athabaska local constituencies; because in the whole district of Athabaska, only half of which is being taken into the province of Alberta, there was, according to the census of 1901, a total population of 6,615 of whom 3,716 were Indians. The figures given us to-day of the number of Indians in Athabaska and Peace River show: In Athabaska 735, and in Peace River 955, a total of 1,690. If we take 1,690 from the total Indian population, it will be found that there are 2,026 Indians in the eastern section of Athabaska, which is getting no separate representation at all. The object of my question was to find out the number of half-breeds in the proposed two new constituencies, to enable me to show that there were still a number left in the eastern section, which is in the province of Saskatchewan and is not getting any separate representation. I think that disposes of the hon. gentleman's pioneer argument; because if the section of Athabaska which is in the province of Alberta is entitled to special representation by reason of there being some pioneers in it, then the section which is in the province of Saskatchewan would be entitled to special representation upon the same ground. With regard to the suggestion that Athabaska is contributing largely to the increase of wealth and development in the southern parts of Alberta, it has been pointed out twice from the hon. gentleman's own figures, that the receipts for passengers and tonnage on the Canadian Pacific Railway show a greater increase in the neighbourhood of Macleod for the years 1902-3 than

they do in the northern part of the province. We claim that there should not be two representatives given to Athabaska because the present conditions do not demand it. I have endeavoured to show that if we take the white population of Athabaska of 241 white people and assume that seventy per cent of that is in the portion included in the province of Alberta, it would amount to a total of 160. The population of the whole province is said to have increased two and one-third times, so that if we multiply 160 by $2\frac{1}{3}$, we get a total white population at present of 400 in that portion of Athabaska. I had further pointed out, as an indication of the population there, that up to two or three months ago there was only one post office in the whole district, and that the revenue from that office in the year 1904 was only \$60. That, I think, is a fair indication that the districts is not entitled to two representatives.

Mr. W. J. ROCHE. I have followed with some interest the discussion that has taken place in the House on this question, and I must admit that the more I hear the so-called explanations of the Minister of the Interior and some of his colleagues in the government the more mystified I become. At one time the hon. gentlemen are taking as a foundation for their distribution of seats the population as shown by the census of 1901; at another time it is the estimated population; at another time it is the post offices, the homestead entries, and so on; and when driven from one point, they take up another. I must say that the accusation made by the hon. Minister of the Interior against members on this side of the House of wishing to apply the census of 1901 in one part of the province and not in another, is entirely without foundation. I have yet to hear an hon. member on this side of the House base an argument on that ground. The Prime Minister, in introducing this question, stated that he had taken into consideration existing conditions, population and geographical conditions. In regard to existing conditions, he applies the principle only in part. Where it can be applied without detriment to the object the Minister of the Interior has in view, he applies it, and where it can be applied detrimentally to that object he fails to apply it. It has not been shown up to the present time that north of township 38 there is any constituency in which the existing conditions remain undisturbed. It is only in the southern constituencies that they have been left intact. There cannot be produced a single instance north of township 38 in which existing conditions have been adhered to in this redistribution. That would lend colour to the argument that it has been the effort of the government, and especially of the Minister of the Interior who has looked after that part of the country, to give a preponderating influence to the country north of township 38.