

province. I want to place myself on record as not being influenced a particle by that consideration. If I had my way I would not make either of them the capital, but I think I would pick out Red Deer which seems to be half way between the two and put a dozen constituencies north and a dozen south. I think we have a precedent in the past history of this country when the capital of the Dominion was established in the little place called By-town and that is the reason we find ourselves here in Ottawa on the present occasion. I think that would settle the controversy. But, to my mind there are some other considerations. I think the political aspect of the question has had some little influence on hon. gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has stated that the only matter in controversy is the political capital. Well I would not like to dispute the statement of the right hon. gentleman because he probably knows more about what led up to the present arrangement than we members on this side of the House. If that was the main consideration in drawing up this schedule of the constituencies I think it would be in order for the right hon. gentleman to justify it. There are one or two anomalies which I would like to point out before this question is finally settled. It is stated by the hon. Minister of the Interior that they have given more representation to these large places in the north than to the constituencies in the south. I would point out that the constituency of Medicine Hat is much larger than the constituencies in the middle of the province. Take for instance such constituencies as Lacombe, Ponoka, Wetaskiwin and Leduc; probably the whole four of them do not cover a greater area than the constituency of Medicine Hat. I presume that when the hon. gentleman went over these constituencies and found out that the very large ones required more representation, Medicine Hat was not overlooked. It is a very large constituency and requires more representation on that account. How was it adjusted? They divided Peace River and Athabaska into two constituencies and got over the difficulty in that way. They got over the difficulty in regard to Medicine Hat by adding forty townships and giving it a population of nearly double that of other constituencies and three or four times the area. How can that be justified? The question of Stony Plain has been referred to. There is a fringe of population down the side of this constituency and the adjoining constituencies could very easily have been extended a little westward so as to take in all the votes that there are in Stony Plain. To my mind there are three or four reasons why this Bill should not go through in its present shape. It is well known and I think it will be admitted by hon. gentlemen opposite that whatever the reason may be there is a good deal of feeling all over the Dominion of Canada, especially in the Protestant portions of this

Mr. WILLIAM WRIGHT.

Dominion, over the distribution of this province as well as over the school clause which we have been discussing in this House for some months. I want to point out that it would have been wise, in my judgment, if the government, knowing the strained feeling there is in this country, to have left the delimitation of the boundaries of these constituencies to an impartial and independent tribunal, because the fact cannot be hidden that in making the adjustment we are making here we are giving to the people in the northern part of that country, including these half-breeds, a voting strength out of all proportion to what is given to the people elsewhere in the province. Figures were given to-day as to the census returns of that northern population taking in the whole of Athabaska which has now two members and they showed that in that country there were Roman Catholics 3,090, Anglicans 264, Presbyterians 23, and Methodists 2. There are people who will believe and who undoubtedly do believe that in that circumstance will be found one of the reasons for giving that additional voting strength to the northern district.

In order that there should be no excuse for any ill feeling over this matter, it would have been wise for this government to have done something to allay that feeling by leaving it to the judges to settle the boundaries. It has been said that there is no objection to the internal boundaries of these constituencies, but personally I may say that I have a decided objection. The question of the north or the south has no interest for me, but I find that some of these constituencies resemble the definition of a line, which is that it is length without breadth, and looking at these constituencies on the map it can be said that they are fearfully and wonderfully made. An impartial tribunal could have divided the constituencies in a manner fair to all concerned and allowed the new provinces to start out with that harmony and good feeling which should prevail. It is too bad that we should start them out with a red hot dispute over the question of the location of the capital. They have many other important matters to give their attention to, and this government could have easily prevented this controversy had they seen fit. Perhaps the selection of Red Deer would have settled the question as between Edmonton and Calgary, and removed the feeling of jealousy between the two. The government have had their way with regard to the school question, the number of provinces that ought to be created, and the disposition of the lands, and now they might accede to our contention and allow the judges to divide the constituencies.

Mr. HERRON. I draw attention once more to the fact that the districts of Lethbridge and Cardston are not properly represented in this proposed schedule. Cardston is one of the very thickly settled por-