—he was a British Columbian. (Hear, hear.) He advocated the giving of one member each to Vancouver city, New Westminster city and Yale.

Mr. Anderson complimented the Government on the way in which they had drawn up this measure and distributed the representation. He thought they had come to a happy conclusion; and he would not ask for any change in a measure so beneficial.

Hon. Mr. Davie asked Mr. Grant if he fav red increased representation of the mainland over the Island, and, if not, in what way could the additional members he advocated be given up n the mainland.

Mr. Grant said that he was not there to advise the government.

Hon. Mr. Beaven had been in hopes that the discussion would have been postponed until next week, but the government with its usual force had decided that the measure was to be discussed to-night. He thought as a matter of policy it was one of the worst acts that could have been attempted to force this measure on the country. Out of the six members who had addressed the House on this question, only one characterized it as fair, and that was the hon. member for Victoria district. But the Premier had not said the same of it; he said it was a compromise. Mr. Beaven exp ected to hear something from some of the members on the other side on this measure, which the country had been led to look forward to as a redistribution bill—this was not a redistribution bill; it was a haphazard act. The basis of the first constitutional bill was framed on the various interests here at that time. It could not be claimed that this bill was so based. It was framed in a happy-go-lucky method just to get it through the House. There was no policy—no principle about it, and so he would certainly cast his vote against the second reading of the bill. He quoted from Todd's parliamentary practice to show that a premier must either govern his colleagues in the cabinet or compel them to resign, and this is what the premier should have done in this instance, with those members of the cabinet who had insisted on this measure, instead of accepting a compromise. He considered that the member for Cassiar had shown great tact in refusing to give any satisfaction to the attorney-general, who had asked the question—how he (the member for Cassiar) would propose to counter-balance matters if Vancouver and New Westminster cities, and the district, were given four more members between them? He (the member for Cassiar) might have answered the attorney-general in the way Sir Robert Peel once answered a member of the government: "I will prescribe when I am called in, and not before."

Hon. Mr. Davie—It will be a long time, then, before you prescribe. (Laughter.)

Hon. Mr. Davie, continuing, contrasted the broad statesmanship of the premier with the carping, faultfinding policy of the leader of the opposition. This gentleman had dodged the main question at issue, which was whether for the present at all events, the existing balance as between the Mainland and Island should not be maintained, and when both he and the member for Cassiar had been asked the pointed question whether they favored a preponderance of representation for the Mainland over the Island, and how they could bring about the increase, proposed in the cases of Vancouver, Westminster and Westminster district, without giving that preponderance, they both refused to answer, which showed that they were a pair of trimmers and nothing better. Although there were other important considerations to be taken into account in fixing representation as between the two sections, h (Mr. Davie) thought the chief one was population, and until after the census had been taken there was no reliable data upon which to proceed. What was now before the House in the shape of voters' lists showed the two sections pretty evenly divided—within a few hundreds—and such being the case, there was nothing to justify a departure from the existing basis. The members for Westminster and Yale (Cunningham and Semlin) had done themselves infinite discredit by their intensely sectional addresses, and how the leader of the opposition would justify himself to his constituents of the city of Victoria in allying himself with those grossly sectional gentlemen who advocated the increase of Mainland over the Island, in opposing the measure now before the House he (Mr. Davie) was at a loss to conceive. The member for Nanaimo, Mr. Haslam, with his accustomed practical sense, had suggested to him (Mr. Davie) that possibly the best plan would be to concede an increased representation to the Mainland of a member, upon the condition that in 48 hours they agreed where to put him. They never could agree, and in the meantime, until proper statistical information could be had showing not only what the population was, but particulars of the wealth, commercial, agricultural and other interests of each section, the government could only do justice by preserving matters as they are. He would now ask the hon. the leader of the opposition the same question he had asked the member for Cassiar: "Does he favor increased representation of the Mainland over the Island, and if not, how could he give the additional members upon the Mainland which he advocated?"

Mr. Davie waited for a few moments, and continued; No reply—perfectly dumb, and in default of an expression of opinion upon what would be considered by every voter, and what was, the vital point at issue, what else were the professions of the leader of the opposition but clap-trap? The hon. gentleman cannot deceive the electors in that way. They know what the point is, and want him to address himself to it. The hon. Premier had met the point with honesty, and had discussed it with ability, in marked contrast to the evasive, wishy washy utterances of the leader of the opposition. Hence it was that the Premier won for himself the admiration of every man whose good opinion was worth having, but the shuffling of the leader of the opposition brought him into contempt. (Cheers).

Mr. Ladner thought that the balance of power was going against the mainland worse each time. He would suggest that Vancouver city be given three members, give Port Moody one, Yale one more, one to Nanaimo city and one to New Westminster city. He thought the bill was gotten up on the wrong basis; he must say that he could not but vote against it in its present shape. He hoped the government would take the matter into consideration and give them a fair equitable measure. If this bill is forced through the House in its present state he would not be surprised but what there will be an application to Ottawa, or some other place, to have this thing arranged on a proper basis.

After a recess of fifteen minutes, Mr. Smith took the floor. He compared the present measure with the principle of confederation. That was a compromise, and so is the present measure. It was difficult to see how it could be otherwise. He considered it as unwise to reduce the number of representatives in any place. He illustrated the case of Kootenay as an instance. He favored the present bill, and would favor the increase of members throughout the province where necessary. As to the idea of separation he thought it foolish on all occasions to broach such a subject. He did not think the opposers of this bill had brought forward a single instance why representation should be based on population. Representation in the United States is not based on population. If population were considered in all cases the city of New York would be entitled to send about 150 members in Congress. He had not the least fault to find with the government for their action.

Mr. Mason said that the highest compliment he could pay the hon. premier was that his speech in moving for the second reading of this bill was a most honest one. He intended to support this bill, for he thought it was a good and wise one for the present. But in the course of four or five years the Mainland would outstrip the Island in population and development, and at the expiration of that time a redistribution would again take place, when he did not doubt that a wise measure would be brought down that would give satisfaction to both the Mainland and Island when the proper time arrived. As he had stated he was in accord with this bill, so he did not intend asking for an additional member for Cariboo, but if Cariboo got the railroad which had been promised and its people were placed in touch with the outer world it would make such rapid progress that the government would feel it incumbent upon them at the next redistribution to give it one or two more members. The member for New Westminster city in drawing comparisons had refused justice to Cariboo in a very pointed manner in connection with the Voters' List. He considered that the advocacy of redistribution on the basis of population alone was a mistake. Area, resources and probabilities formed a part, and an important one, and those who advocated it would think differently after they became better acquainted with our vast outlying districts. He did not think the New Mainland would suffer by this bill; for it must be admitted that Westminster District had been well looked after by its representatives and by this government, for if any one would take the trouble to go over the estimates they would find that no less a sum than two hundred and sixty thousand dollars was to be spent this year. Neither did he think the Island would suffer by according to the Mainland a preponderance of representation. There appeared to him to be an idea on the part of the Island that if the Mainland had the balance of power they would endeavor to move the capital to the Mainland. He did not think that would ever be; Victoria was the best place for it. It had advantages the Mainland did not possess, nor ever would possess. And what could be gained by its removal? It would only entail a needless expenditure of money, which the country would not sanction. If the question came up to-morrow for its removal he would vote against it. And he claimed to be as true a mainland man as any hon. gentleman in this House; and he believed that many of the mainland members would vote the same way.

Mr. Haslam intended to vote for the second reading on the ground that, owing to the entire absence of information, it was unjust to change the basis of representation. During this debate an unfair contrast had been made between Nanaimo and New Westminster. There were more single men at New Westminster than at Nanaimo, which swelled the voters' list. He did not think the families themselves were larger at the latter place, but there was a large school population, which proved conclusively that there were more inhabitants in Nanaimo than in New Westminster. In his opinion if New Westminster had a population of 8,000, Nanaimo had one of 10,000. Comparing New Westminster with Cariboo, each voter in the former averaged a payment to the provincial revenue of $56.56, while in Westminster it was only $19.50. No one, he thought, would pretend that it took three men from Westminster to make one from Cariboo. But to approach anything like equality on the basis of revenue and representation it would seem that two out of every three of the voters were off the list at Cariboo, and if put on would raise the voters' list to 1,100. He contended that it was improper to change the ratio of representation without further information as to population. It was conceded that there must be an increased number of members, and he could in the meantime see no other way than the present measure of meeting the case. It had been stated that the members of the House on his side had no intellect. It was not going to dispute that, but such being the case the remarks of the opposition could hardly be a reflection on the members, but fell upon the majority of the electors of British Columbia who had sent them to parliament and were responsible for them. It might be that all the intellect had been gathered in the opposition, but it was hardly reasonable to come to this conclusion. Another thing, when it was found that a political party was growing smaller and smaller every year, it showed that the opposition had to look to themselves. He didn't like to be personal, but he had to state facts as they were.

Mr. Martin first thought, when he saw this bill laid on the desks, that it was rather hard on the Mainland, but having heard the able speeches of the hon. leader of the government, attorney general, and other hon. members, he had come to the conclusion that he could give it his support. The hon. member for Nanaimo, who had just sat down, alluded to the population of Nanaimo and compared it with Cariboo. He (Mr. Martin) wished to take a broader view of the matter. As for Cariboo, if it had not been for Cariboo, where would the Island and the whole province be to-day? The whole province owes a debt of gratitude to Cariboo, and although the placer diggings in that locality are worked out, yet Cariboo is now on the eve of great developments. The hon. member for New Westminster city now had joined the opposition. He (Mr. Martin) wished to congratulate the hon. leader of the opposition on the support he has acquired. The member for New Westminster remarked about the amount spent by the residents of his district for agricultural advancement. Why, if he wished to be sectional, he could show how much Yale had spent in the same direction. But he wished to take the broader view of the matter under discussion, and did not wank it to be thought that he looked at it in the narrow-minded way his hon. colleague (Mr. Semlin) did. He should much like to see the district of Yale with another member, but seeing that the same proportion as to representation was maintained, he could not complain. The hon. leader of the opposition had only to look behind him and on each side, and he would see, although he represented an Island constituency, yet his whole support was mainland. Why should that hon. gentleman complain? In what position would he be without the mainland? Merely a solitary individual representing an unpopular opposition. It had been suggested that hon. members would have to meet their constituents at the coming general elections. He did not dread the meeting, knowing as he did that his constituents were too intelligent and too enlightened to be led astray by the false arguments brought forward by the opposition and the treatment they had received years ago from the government of which the leader of the opposition was a member is still fresh in their memories. If not again returned to represent Yale district, he would still have the satisfaction of knowing that he had conscientiously done his duty to his district and the country.

Hon. Mr. Pooley remarked that the measure was, in his opinion, one of the best that could be brought forward. It was not produced in haste; it was well-considered and the leader of the government deserved credit at the hands of the House and the country for considering the interest of everyone. The only views brought forward against the measure were sectional views, particularly by the member for New Westminster city, whose sole aim and study appears to be criminating against New Westminster! His views were so narrow, that he could not get beyond the district which he represented. The speaker was sorry to see his hon. friend the member for New Westminster district also display the same sectional feeling. Some people will rush in where angels fear to tread. The leader of the opposition wisely declined to make any statement as to what he would have done under the circumstances, or what he could do to improve on the case now. It was really extraordinary that these gentlemen could not rise above the district they represen. Why could they not look at it as a constitutional question. For his own part, he arrangement when they found that they could not satisfaction of the whole country. The leader of the opposition had stated that the electors would be blockheads if they kept the present government in power. When that hon. gentleman comes back to the House next year and finds the government still in power, he will have to admit that there are a great many blockheads in the country. And when he (the speaker) went down to his constituents at Esquimalt (and they are by no means blockheads) he could explain to them the position that he had taken with the government on this question, and Esquimalt would support the government and return the members to support the government. (Hear, hear.) His hon. friend had referred to the representation at confederation, but members were placed then, not according to population, but according to the then requirements of the district and its possibilities at a not distant date. The object of the present representation was to give all the districts an opportunity of representing their views on the floor of that House, and the speaker quoted statistics to show this. In a short time there will be a census taken, and then the government will have tolerably good data on which to work in fixing the representation of this province. He could not understand why the Mainland (he meant New Westminster) should be jealous of Yale. Did they think that because they had a few more population now that they were going to get control of the legislation of this country? Mr. Pooley quoted an incident of this feeling showing what the Mainland would do if they had the power over them. It was a case where last fall a Provincial Agricultural society held its annual meeting at New Westminster. It had been decided by the government that the society should meet alternately in Victoria and New Westminster, but a resolution was passed that the meeting should be held at New Westminster continuously. It only shows that immediately they get the power in their hands they don't know how to control it. They had heard in the House that they were going to be mobbed by the Mainland. All the speaker could say in reply to such a statement was that if any man thought he was going to threaten him (Mr. Pooley) into doing anything which he did not think was right and just, it would be found that he had struck the wrong man. (Hear, hear.) No threat from any person or deputation that might come down here will induce the government to depart from what they believe to be their duty. (Hear, hear.) The government had brought down a good measure and the government would be thankful for what they had done; and they could go without fear to their constituencies and explain to them their conduct in this matter. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Pooley concluded by stating that he would vote for the second reading of the bill before the House.

Mr. Ladner rose to explain that as president of the Provincial Agricultural society he had had, directly or indirectly, nothing to do with the resolution referred to by the Hon. Mr. Pooley.

Mr. Pooley replied that he had merely referred to the society and not to any one individually.

Mr. Orr stated that the reason the exhibition was again voted to be held at Westminster was because that city had gone to an extra large expenditure, and a second year would enable them to overcome the financial strait in which they found themselves. It was he (Mr. Orr) who had moved the resolution that the exhibition be held in 1890 at Westminster, and it carried.

Hon. Mr. Pooley—I have no doubt that it was you who moved in the matter.

Hon. Mr. Turner said the leader of the opposition had asserted that Hon. Mr. Robson should control the other members of the government, and if he could not get them to agree with him, he should resign or form a new government. The hon. gentleman quoted from Todd to prove his position, but he was sorry to say that in his usual manner he had only quoted as few as suited himself, the same way as he had done with respect to the Public Accounts. He gave only part of the truth. He (Mr. Turner) would also quote from Todd's Parliamentary government—something that was exactly suited to the present position. Todd said:—

"It is not usual for the Prime Minister to proceed to extremity with the Cabinet until he is convinced that there is no alternative but well-meaning adoption of his his views and his retirement from office. Form compromise is the natural result of all differences between men in official stations under constitutional government; it is so even where they are not co-equal in authority.

"At the failure of the Irish potato crop in 1845 Sir Robert Peel then Prime Minister advocated in Cabinet the opening of the ports for the admission of foreign corn, but having the support of only three of his colleagues he was overruled, and did not persist in it."

It was evident that the Hon. Mr. Robson had under this authority done the same thing. The leader of the opposition remarked that this bill was called a redistribution measure, but did not redistribute. He (Mr. Turner) had looked at it and saw that it gave six new members, placing them in different districts, and in some cases changed the boundaries of districts. He considered this was distribution, and it was carefully done. The hon. leader of the opposition had said that originally the representation of the province was fairly divided between the different interests. He (Mr. Turner) found that roughly speaking there were ten members for ten mining districts, ten for agricultural and seven for cities. This bill gave three additional to agriculture, one to mining and two to the cities. This certainly, taking into consideration the changed circumstances, was a fair distribution. One hon. member had complained of the Islands being represented by a member, and compared the Islands to the rocky ones at the entrance of the harbor. That hon. gentleman did this from ignorance of what the size and resources of the Islands were. They were valuable districts having, many of them, good land and valuable timber. Others were rich in minerals, and all were adapted for the fishing industry. There were about 27 of them, with a population probably of 1,000 to 1,500 in all, and from their situation they could not be fairly represented by a member from the mainland or from Vancouver Island.

Mr. Croft agreed with the bill introduced by the government, and pointed out several fallacies in the arguments of the member for Westminster city, and especially in his statistical comparisons.

Hon. Mr. Vernon said that the hon. the leader of the government had expressed most clearly his views in the matter of the present bill. Various members, however, had quoted statistics in support of their claims for further representation, simply for gaining sympathy in their local surroundings instead of considering the general interests of the province. In their small minds they thought that they would gain a few votes. The hon. senior member for Yale had said, the other day, that while he would support the principle of the Railway Aid bill for the Ashcroft-Cariboo road, yet he could not favor it for the other railways. This was a most selfish spirit to evince. He surely did not believe the good sense of his constituents could not see the smallness of his motives. Mr. Vernon urged the members of the House to put all sectional ideas aside and act, not as if they represented some particular portion of the province, but the whole province. It was not a question of whether one district had more or less voters than another. The future prospects of the districts in the way of development and consequent population should be considered. The prosperity of one section should only be regarded as a source of common thanksgiving. Thorough representation of interests was what was desirable, the point of the whole question was not that one district should have so many representatives because that number was given to some other district. Sectional feeling was ever to be deprecated. It was a very mistaken idea that because one city on account of a sudden inflation of values, received an increased number of voters, that they should receive at once an increased representation. All British Columbia was truly interested in the prosperity of the several cities, but the prosperity of any particular section should not induce sectional legislation. This was the best and most economical measure that could be brought forward, and when the country was more developed, it might be possible to bring forward a measure that would be even more fair. He therefore had pleasure in supporting this bill.

The question was then put and carried on a division of 15 to 5, and the House adjourned until Monday.

FIFTHIETH DAY.

Monday, 21st.

The Speaker took the chair at 2 o'clock, p.m.

Hon. Mr. Robson said that he observed on the order of the day a notice of motion by the member for Cassiar that "this House has not confidence in the present government." That hon. member, however, was not here, which was rather awkward. Had he been here he intended to have said that in face of that proposal the business of the House could not go on. This notice was on the orders of the day, and it was highly proper that it should be made before anything else was proceeded with. It was important in the district for Cassiar was not here to do his duty. Were he here he should insist that the motion of want of confidence be disposed of. He would like to know what was the position of the leader of the opposition with respect to the subject. He took the position that the Redistribution bill could not go on on Friday night on account of this notice being on the paper. Where was the member for Cassiar?

Hon. Mr. Beaven intimated that he did not know.

Hon. Mr. Robson said he wondered whether the leader of the opposition would deem it to be his duty to send for the member. As the leader of his party it occurred to him (Mr. Robson) that it was his (Mr. Beaven's) duty to see that he was in his place.

Hon. Mr. Beaven—I am not the keeper of the member for Cassiar.

Hon. Mr. Robson—Yes, you are, as the responsible leader of that party.

Hon. Mr. Beaven had not seen him since Friday. That resolution should be disposed of before public business was taken up.

Mr. Ladner explained his remarks on Friday night to mean that New Westminster was entitled to an additional member.

ELECTIONS REGULATION.

Hon. Mr. Davie moved the second reading of the Elections Regulation Bill. He proposed to amend section 41 by providing that it should be incumbent on every candidate for an electoral district to deposit with his nomination paper a sum of $200, which shall be returned to him on his receiving a vote equal to half the number polled by the party elected. This was already the law which regulated the Dominion elections, and it was only reasonable to apply the principle as a local act. Were the bill allowed to go into committee he should propose to directly apply the principle to districts where there were more than one member. There was nothing unjust in this measure, but its provisions were eminently required, as the running of a number of candidates increases the expenses. When a gentleman received less than half the votes which the lowest elected candidate has received he puts the country to an expense which he might be made to bear. The object was to prevent persons running who had no chance of election. He had known cases in which candidates in the city of Victoria had received not more than 50 or 60 votes. This was an abuse, and when such was the case such candidates should bear the expenses themselves. The other amendments to the law were merely in keeping with the above explained provisions of the act.

Mr. Semlin was amazed and sorry to see such an amendment made to the law. It was not a fact that any additional expense would be caused by an increased number of candidates other than by the printing of seven or eight names on the ballot paper. The proposed bill seemed to him to hamper the electors, and he, for one, would not endorse it, even though it were a Dominion regulation. The electors themselves ought to have every chance of selecting candidates, the difficulty at present being to get candidates. He considered the provisions of the bill an undue interference with the electors.

Hon. Mr. Robson—The hon. gentleman presents a very comical argument when he stated that the effect of this bill will be to prevent candidates whom the electors desire to have. That would be the very opposite of this bill. The idea was to discourage candidates whom the electors did not want, and in the case of candidates whom the electors desired to have he would what certainly get his money back. He thought, however, it would be better to substitute $100 for the $200, but he regarded the principle of the bill as just and good. The tendency of the act would be to do a great kindness to parties who were apt to rush in and run without any reasonable ground of success. It would save them expense and the sleepless nights they were accustomed to spend in running about a constituency where there was no reasonable ground for expecting their election. He recollected once in a constituency where there were about 1,000 voters that there were eleven candidates, the lowest of whom polled fifteen votes after canvassing all the constituency. Another candidate only polled thirty votes. Besides it was a severe strain upon the electors when there were eleven candidates to address the meetings. This took all the evening and the best part of the night. The present bill would, he thought, have a good and salutary effect on both candidates and electors. If a man wished to indulge his pride by running as a parliamentary candidate there was no harm in making him pay $100 for the hallucination that he was a popular man in the district. It would have a wholesome effect. He should be disposed to move in committee that the amount of deposit be reduced to $100.

Mr. Ladner thought the present bill was a step backward, but at present we were living in a progressive age. He remembered that in the days he referred to the provincial secretary saw no difficulty in the length of the meetings, inasmuch as he used to arrange to stand as the bottom of the list of speakers.

Hon. Mr. Robson said that of all the sublime pieces of cheek he never heard or saw such an instance of it as this. When eleven candidates were traveling together, after the first or second of the meetings, the majority of them had put their heads together and come to the conclusion that if he (Mr. Robson) had the first part of the meetings he would occupy all the time and get off with the meetings. He was astounded that the member should have dared to express himself as he had done, when he knew that the facts were that the other candidates had come to him and declared that if not fair to let him speak first. They had proposed to let the speaking be done in alphabetical order. He had informed them that this would put him at the bottom of the list, nevertheless he consented to the arrangement when they found that they had actually played into his hands. It showed the audacity of Mr. Ladner to say that the arrangement was at his suggestion.

Col. Baker referred to cases which had occurred of contests being provoked for the fun of the thing.

Hon. Mr. Robson—And in order to get money spent.

Col. Baker thought the adoption of the bill would prevent the expense of election when the electors did not want one.

Mr. Orr said that the premier had accused Mr. Ladner with having a great deal of cheek. He distinctly recollected that the proposition came from the hon. premier to speak last, and he took every advantage of all that the other speakers had uttered, partially on account of which he was elected. He looked upon the present proposal as a sort of Louisiana lottery, which was intended to get money out of men who could not get elected. He looked upon the provisions of the bill as most unjust in a young country like this where political lines were not distinctly drawn. He should therefore move that it be read this day six months.

Hon. Mr. Beaven contended that legislation of this kind in this province was retrograde, as it practically established property qualification. If the principle were applied in Canada that did not imply that it was applicable here.

Mr. Cunningham pointed out that it was not always convenient for men who would make good representatives and do honor to themselves to put up $200 in cash. He believed in doing things justly and for the best interests of the largest number. If this province must advance it must have in the House representatives of the agricultural industry, and they had not always the money to put up.

Mr. Orr's motion was put and lost on a division of 15 against, 5 for.

The bill then had its reading and passed committee, Mr. Tolmie in the chair.

THE VOTERS' BILL.

Hon. Mr. Davie moved the second reading of the Voters' bill. This measure, he said, was second only in importance to the Constitution Act which had altered the boundaries of some of the districts. That being the case, it became necessary to make provisions as to who should vote in the districts as divided. Up to the present the city of Vancouver had formed a part of the New Westminster district. Vancouver now had a separate electoral district, whose boundaries were those of the city, but the act did not, so far, state who were competent to vote in that district. It was now provided that those who were shown to be registered in the new district should vote in it, and those outside of it should vote in the district for Westminster. Then East and West Kootenay had been formed into districts; Nanaimo had also a city and district, and who should vote in these divisions respectively had to be specified. The same principle had to be offered to a limited extent with respect to Equimalt. One of the provisions of the Constitution Act gave representation to every place in the province. It took in the whole north of Vancouver Island and Queen Charlotte Island, and so with the Albernl district. The people of Cowichan Lake, who had not previously had the right to vote, were placed on the list. To apportioning the votes no pains had been spared by himself and the deputy attorney-general to secure a correct and perfect measure. He must confess that he felt nervous, as it was very easy in the most perfectly drawn statute to make its provisions nugatory. There might be mistakes, and therefore section 17 of this bill was as follows:

"17. It being the intent and object of this Act to make provision for the proper representation of the several electoral districts, in accordance with the boundaries and provisions of the "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," and inasmuch as errors and omissions are liable to creep into the most perfectly drawn statutes—

"It is therefore enacted that if, in the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, any defect, error, mistake, or ambiguity shall arise in the construction of this Act, as applying the same to the "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," or if any provision shall be omitted, either herein or in the "Provincial Voters' Act," whereby or by reason of any such defect, error, mistake, ambiguity, or omission the election of any member to represent any of the various electoral districts may be hindered, avoided, or imperilled, it shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, from time to time, by one or more rules and regulations, either applicable to the whole province or to any one or more districts, to correct and remove any such defect, error, mistake, or ambiguity by such further or other provision or provisions as he may think proper, or to supply any such omission or defect in such manner as he may deem best calculated to carry out the true intent and meaning of the said "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," and so on, from time to time, to the end and intent that the province, at each and every election to be hereinafter held, shall be well and validly represented in the Legislative Assembly by representatives from the various divisions and divisions thereof in manner prescribed by the said "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," and any such rule or regulation so to be made by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall be published in at least one issue of the Gazette, and shall have the same force and effect as if passed in this act, or as if this act had been passed as modified or corrected by the provisions of any such rule or regulation; and the provisions of this section shall apply equally both before, during, and subsequent to elections, and although the error, omission, or defect may be the subject of a pending election petition."

Mr. Orr asked that the bill be not further proceeded with, as it would be unjust to pass it without comparing it with the Consolidated Act.

Mr. Ladner spoke to the same effect.

Hon. Mr. Davie explained that persons who are entitled to vote should have the right to change the polling division on which they had been placed on proving application. He (Mr. Davie) proceed with the second reading, provided that when the government wished to proceed with it they should be allowed to do so.

On motion of Mr. Orr the debate was adjourned.

THE GRAVING DOCK CLAIMS.

Hon. Mr. Robson moved the House into committee on the message of his Honor with respect to the graving dock claims.

Hon. Mr. Beaven observed that this measure authorized the payment of $30,000 to McNamee & Co. The House had at that stage to reduce the amount to be paid, but could not make payments to parties to others than those recommended. The premier had explained that he desired to have a settlement arranged with John Nicholson and Co., and other British Columbia creditors. If the government got the consent of McNamee and Co. to the settlement of their claims, it was very well, but in the absence of that they would be in the same position as the previous government was in in the case of Reid and Co., when the bill being drafted in their name they got the money, and left the local creditors unpaid. He could assure them that they would defeat the objects of the legislation, and the wish of the House. If the names of McNamee and Co. were inserted in the bill it should not be paid. The money was to be paid to John Nicholson & Co. and other creditors of McNamee & Co. in British Columbia. In the case of Reid Bros., as soon as the government decided to carry out the settlement it had a legal sentimental side and act, not as if they represented some particular portion of the province, but the whole province. It was not a question of whether one district had more or less voters than another. The future prospects of the districts in the way of development and consequent population should be considered. The prosperity of one section should only be regarded as a source of common thanksgiving. Thorough representation of interests was what was desirable, the point of the whole question was not that one district should have so many representatives because that number was given to some other district. Sectional feeling was ever to be deprecated. It was a very mistaken idea that because one city on account of a sudden inflation of values, received an increased number of voters, that they should receive at once an increased representation. All British Columbia was truly interested in the prosperity of the several cities, but the prosperity of any particular section should not induce sectional legislation. This was the best and most economical measure that could be brought forward, and when the country was more developed, it might be possible to bring forward a measure that would be even more fair. He therefore had pleasure in supporting this bill.

The question was then put and carried on a division of 15 to 5, and the House adjourned until Monday.

FIFTHIETH DAY.

Monday, 21st.

The Speaker took the chair at 2 o'clock, p.m.

Hon. Mr. Robson said that he observed on the order of the day a notice of motion by the member for Cassiar that "this House has not confidence in the present government." That hon. member, however, was not here, which was rather awkward. Had he been here he intended to have said that in face of that proposal the business of the House could not go on. This notice was on the orders of the day, and it was highly proper that it should be made before anything else was proceeded with. It was important in the district for Cassiar was not here to do his duty. Were he here he should insist that the motion of want of confidence be disposed of. He would like to know what was the position of the leader of the opposition with respect to the subject. He took the position that the Redistribution bill could not go on on Friday night on account of this notice being on the paper. Where was the member for Cassiar?

Hon. Mr. Beaven intimated that he did not know.

Hon. Mr. Robson said he wondered whether the leader of the opposition would deem it to be his duty to send for the member. As the leader of his party it occurred to him (Mr. Robson) that it was his (Mr. Beaven's) duty to see that he was in his place.

Hon. Mr. Beaven—I am not the keeper of the member for Cassiar.

Hon. Mr. Robson—Yes, you are, as the responsible leader of that party.

Hon. Mr. Beaven had not seen him since Friday. That resolution should be disposed of before public business was taken up.

Mr. Ladner explained his remarks on Friday night to mean that New Westminster was entitled to an additional member.

ELECTIONS REGULATION.

Hon. Mr. Davie moved the second reading of the Elections Regulation Bill. He proposed to amend section 41 by providing that it should be incumbent on every candidate for an electoral district to deposit with his nomination paper a sum of $200, which shall be returned to him on his receiving a vote equal to half the number polled by the party elected. This was already the law which regulated the Dominion elections, and it was only reasonable to apply the principle as a local act. Were the bill allowed to go into committee he should propose to directly apply the principle to districts where there were more than one member. There was nothing unjust in this measure, but its provisions were eminently required, as the running of a number of candidates increases the expenses. When a gentleman received less than half the votes which the lowest elected candidate has received he puts the country to an expense which he might be made to bear. The object was to prevent persons running who had no chance of election. He had known cases in which candidates in the city of Victoria had received not more than 50 or 60 votes. This was an abuse, and when such was the case such candidates should bear the expenses themselves. The other amendments to the law were merely in keeping with the above explained provisions of the act.

Mr. Semlin was amazed and sorry to see such an amendment made to the law. It was not a fact that any additional expense would be caused by an increased number of candidates other than by the printing of seven or eight names on the ballot paper. The proposed bill seemed to him to hamper the electors, and he, for one, would not endorse it, even though it were a Dominion regulation. The electors themselves ought to have every chance of selecting candidates, the difficulty at present being to get candidates. He considered the provisions of the bill an undue interference with the electors.

Hon. Mr. Robson—The hon. gentleman presents a very comical argument when he stated that the effect of this bill will be to prevent candidates whom the electors desire to have. That would be the very opposite of this bill. The idea was to discourage candidates whom the electors did not want, and in the case of candidates whom the electors desired to have he would what certainly get his money back. He thought, however, it would be better to substitute $100 for the $200, but he regarded the principle of the bill as just and good. The tendency of the act would be to do a great kindness to parties who were apt to rush in and run without any reasonable ground of success. It would save them expense and the sleepless nights they were accustomed to spend in running about a constituency where there was no reasonable ground for expecting their election. He recollected once in a constituency where there were about 1,000 voters that there were eleven candidates, the lowest of whom polled fifteen votes after canvassing all the constituency. Another candidate only polled thirty votes. Besides it was a severe strain upon the electors when there were eleven candidates to address the meetings. This took all the evening and the best part of the night. The present bill would, he thought, have a good and salutary effect on both candidates and electors. If a man wished to indulge his pride by running as a parliamentary candidate there was no harm in making him pay $100 for the hallucination that he was a popular man in the district. It would have a wholesome effect. He should be disposed to move in committee that the amount of deposit be reduced to $100.

Mr. Ladner thought the present bill was a step backward, but at present we were living in a progressive age. He remembered that in the days he referred to the provincial secretary saw no difficulty in the length of the meetings, inasmuch as he used to arrange to stand as the bottom of the list of speakers.

Hon. Mr. Robson said that of all the sublime pieces of cheek he never heard or saw such an instance of it as this. When eleven candidates were traveling together, after the first or second of the meetings, the majority of them had put their heads together and come to the conclusion that if he (Mr. Robson) had the first part of the meetings he would occupy all the time and get off with the meetings. He was astounded that the member should have dared to express himself as he had done, when he knew that the facts were that the other candidates had come to him and declared that if not fair to let him speak first. They had proposed to let the speaking be done in alphabetical order. He had informed them that this would put him at the bottom of the list, nevertheless he consented to the arrangement when they found that they had actually played into his hands. It showed the audacity of Mr. Ladner to say that the arrangement was at his suggestion.

Col. Baker referred to cases which had occurred of contests being provoked for the fun of the thing.

Hon. Mr. Robson—And in order to get money spent.

Col. Baker thought the adoption of the bill would prevent the expense of election when the electors did not want one.

Mr. Orr said that the premier had accused Mr. Ladner with having a great deal of cheek. He distinctly recollected that the proposition came from the hon. premier to speak last, and he took every advantage of all that the other speakers had uttered, partially on account of which he was elected. He looked upon the present proposal as a sort of Louisiana lottery, which was intended to get money out of men who could not get elected. He looked upon the provisions of the bill as most unjust in a young country like this where political lines were not distinctly drawn. He should therefore move that it be read this day six months.

Hon. Mr. Beaven contended that legislation of this kind in this province was retrograde, as it practically established property qualification. If the principle were applied in Canada that did not imply that it was applicable here.

Mr. Cunningham pointed out that it was not always convenient for men who would make good representatives and do honor to themselves to put up $200 in cash. He believed in doing things justly and for the best interests of the largest number. If this province must advance it must have in the House representatives of the agricultural industry, and they had not always the money to put up.

Mr. Orr's motion was put and lost on a division of 15 against, 5 for.

The bill then had its reading and passed committee, Mr. Tolmie in the chair.

THE VOTERS' BILL.

Hon. Mr. Davie moved the second reading of the Voters' bill. This measure, he said, was second only in importance to the Constitution Act which had altered the boundaries of some of the districts. That being the case, it became necessary to make provisions as to who should vote in the districts as divided. Up to the present the city of Vancouver had formed a part of the New Westminster district. Vancouver now had a separate electoral district, whose boundaries were those of the city, but the act did not, so far, state who were competent to vote in that district. It was now provided that those who were shown to be registered in the new district should vote in it, and those outside of it should vote in the district for Westminster. Then East and West Kootenay had been formed into districts; Nanaimo had also a city and district, and who should vote in these divisions respectively had to be specified. The same principle had to be offered to a limited extent with respect to Equimalt. One of the provisions of the Constitution Act gave representation to every place in the province. It took in the whole north of Vancouver Island and Queen Charlotte Island, and so with the Albernl district. The people of Cowichan Lake, who had not previously had the right to vote, were placed on the list. To apportioning the votes no pains had been spared by himself and the deputy attorney-general to secure a correct and perfect measure. He must confess that he felt nervous, as it was very easy in the most perfectly drawn statute to make its provisions nugatory. There might be mistakes, and therefore section 17 of this bill was as follows:

"17. It being the intent and object of this Act to make provision for the proper representation of the several electoral districts, in accordance with the boundaries and provisions of the "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," and inasmuch as errors and omissions are liable to creep into the most perfectly drawn statutes—

"It is therefore enacted that if, in the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, any defect, error, mistake, or ambiguity shall arise in the construction of this Act, as applying the same to the "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," or if any provision shall be omitted, either herein or in the "Provincial Voters' Act," whereby or by reason of any such defect, error, mistake, ambiguity, or omission the election of any member to represent any of the various electoral districts may be hindered, avoided, or imperilled, it shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, from time to time, by one or more rules and regulations, either applicable to the whole province or to any one or more districts, to correct and remove any such defect, error, mistake, or ambiguity by such further or other provision or provisions as he may think proper, or to supply any such omission or defect in such manner as he may deem best calculated to carry out the true intent and meaning of the said "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," and so on, from time to time, to the end and intent that the province, at each and every election to be hereinafter held, shall be well and validly represented in the Legislative Assembly by representatives from the various divisions and divisions thereof in manner prescribed by the said "Constitution Amendment Act, 1890," and any such rule or regulation so to be made by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall be published in at least one issue of the Gazette, and shall have the same force and effect as if passed in this act, or as if this act had been passed as modified or corrected by the provisions of any such rule or regulation; and the provisions of this section shall apply equally both before, during, and subsequent to elections, and although the error, omission, or defect may be the subject of a pending election petition."

Mr. Orr asked that the bill be not further proceeded with, as it would be unjust to pass it without comparing it with the Consolidated Act.

Mr. Ladner spoke to the same effect.

Hon. Mr. Davie explained that persons who are entitled to vote should have the right to change the polling division on which they had been placed on proving application. He (Mr. Davie) proceed with the second reading, provided that when the government wished to proceed with it they should be allowed to do so.

On motion of Mr. Orr the debate was adjourned.

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