

He said: This is not a matter of very great national importance, but it is of considerable interest to British Columbia, and very greatly concerns one constituency in that province. When introducing this Bill a year ago I pointed out that considerable confusion had arisen owing to the title of the electoral constituency in question which it is proposed to change, which confusion still obtains. The purpose of the Bill is to change the name of the electoral district of Westminster to the electoral district of Fraser Valley. The change is eminently fitting, inasmuch as it is not only a geographical designation, but of historical significance.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the first time.

RAILWAY BELT ACT AMENDMENT.

Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Minister of Interior) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 3, to amend the Railway Belt Act.

Hon. CHARLES MURPHY: Explain.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The purpose of this Bill is to carry into effect a principle that is already in operation as regards other Dominion lands, enabling the Crown to convey to a deceased entrant.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the first time.

YUKON ACT AMENDMENT.

Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 4, to amend the Yukon Act. He said: The first purpose of this Bill is to amend the Yukon Act by permitting the Yukon Council to consist of three instead of twelve members, thereby reducing the cost of administration. There are other clauses in the Bill of a minor character, but that is its main object.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the first time.

DEATH OF RIGHT HON. SIR WILFRID LAURIER, G.C.M.G.

Hon. Sir THOMAS WHITE (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker; I rise to refer to that sad occurrence, the sudden and lamented death of Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier which has cast a pall over the proceedings attending the opening of this session of Parliament, touched the hearts of all his fellow members, and created a profound and melancholy impression throughout the entire Canadian community. In years Sir Wilfrid Laurier

had considerably exceeded the allotted span, yet such was the vigour of his mind, the animation of his appearance, the freshness of his interest in affairs, the charm and vivacity of his manner, and above all the great and conspicuous place which he had so long occupied in the minds and affections of his countrymen, that we had almost come to look upon him as immune from the vicissitudes of human infirmity, and, in a measure exempt from the conditions of our common mortality. For this reason the news of his departure has come with a sense of shock as well as of grief to all.

His death removes a most distinguished and commanding personality from the stage of Canadian public life. How considerable a part he played, we may realize when we reflect that he was actively engaged in national affairs at a period before many of us were born, that he was for almost half a century a legislative representative of the people, and for forty-five years a member of this House. He has been leader of the Liberal party for over thirty years, of which he was for fifteen years Prime Minister of Canada. During his long career he has been identified with all the great political controversies since the period of Confederation. His fame has carried far beyond the boundaries of Canada, and in Britain, France and United States, as well as in other countries, the name of Sir Wilfrid Laurier has long been known, respected and admired as one of the outstanding statesmen of the age.

With such a career, with such titles to distinction, we of this House, who, next to his own immediate family and intimate personal circle, knew him best, may well upon this occasion, with profit to ourselves and in appreciation of him, examine as to the nature of the political principles to which he subscribed, his characteristics as a statesman, the personal qualities and attributes of the man himself, and the sources of the great power and influence which he exercised within and without the halls of Parliament. I am deeply conscious that there are many within sound of my voice who through longer association and acquaintance with him are much better qualified for this task than myself. Particularly do I wish that the head of the Government, the Prime Minister of Canada, Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden, could be here to bear eloquent tribute to his great political opponent and warm personal friend.

It is not my intention to refer to the various controversies in which Sir Wilfrid Laurier during his long career was so ac-