

the Constitutional Act under which we are governed,—makes this provision, that every ten years there must be a redistribution of seats upon the principle of representation by population as near as practicable. I do not say that that can be done exactly. If you redistribute the seats now in accordance with what is indicated by the hon. gentleman who moved the Address, adhering to county boundaries, I say it is practically impossible—for I have studied that question a little in the past—if you are going to have the representation based upon that old platform of the Liberal party in Canada, which has been preached ever since the Hon. Geo. Brown's time, of representation by population. Neither do I think, and I do not know that it is necessary in the election of representatives to the House of Commons, a body which has to deal with the affairs of the whole Dominion, or even practicable to have the constituencies limited by county boundaries. We know very well that it is not the case in Ontario. If you look at the Hurons you will find that townships are actually divided, in the constituencies for the Ontario Legislature. When you talk about the population, all you have to do is to look at the past and examine the Redistribution Bill in Ontario. I refer to that more particularly, because my hon. friend (Mr. Kerr) is an Ontario man. He will find that they have not adhered rigidly to population or county boundaries, because they retained Niagara with 5,000 and Cornwall with 7,000, while other constituencies have three and four times as many. What I should like to know from my hon. friend (Mr. Mills) when he arises to address the House, is, upon what principle, if he thinks it advisable to give the information, this redistribution is to take place. Is the whole of this country to be redistributed in order to adhere to the county boundary lines and in accordance with population, or are you to commence at the eastern portion and divide it up, giving each section a representative by population, or is it for the purpose, as I should say is indicated by the letter, a copy of which was telegraphed from British Columbia the other day, to deal with it from a strictly party standpoint, which is the meaning put upon the word "gerrymander" by my hon. friend? I read the other day with some surprise an answer made by the Minister of Justice. I hope he will state that it is not correct. In

communication with his British Columbia friends he told them frankly that he knew very little about the geography of the constituencies in that province, and asked them to apply to the Reform Associations and supply the information when required. Does not my hon. friend know enough of politics to know that information so sought, and information so received, would not be reliable? There are other sources of information which the hon. gentleman might apply to without seeking it from a Reform or any other association. It is the last place that I would apply to if I wanted an unbiassed opinion. Take British Columbia at the present moment and see what position they are in. Thousands and tens of thousands of people are rushing into the Atlin and other mining districts of the province. Is British Columbia to be distributed on the basis of a mining population? You know that the mining population in any locality may consist temporarily of thousands and thousands of people. Two or three years ago I went through the Crow's Nest Pass. I went to what is called Wild Horse Mining Camp. There were ten to fifteen thousand of a mining population there at one time, but only about half a dozen people when I was there. Is the redistribution to be based on a population of that kind, or in what way? Perhaps the hon. gentleman will enlighten us on that subject before the debate is closed. Then you must bear in mind that even if they cut up the whole country at the present moment to suit themselves, or in accordance with the population or the county boundaries, they will have to do the same thing again two years hence, if they are in power—I might parenthetically say that I hope they will not be—that is after the next decennial census. If they succeed in carrying the country two years hence or a year hence, whenever they go to the people, they will have, under the constitution, to redistribute the whole country, and here, just a year before taking another census, we are asked to redistribute the constituencies of this country in order to please them, or to convince the people that they were sincere in their declarations that what had been done in the past was not correctly done.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Hear, hear.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—My hon. friend says hear, hear. I knew he