

be called upon to ask the imperial parliament to deal with the question of representation. But the hon. gentleman knows full well that any conference between these provinces and the Dominion cannot increase or lessen our representation in any degree.

Mr. CROCKET. I agree with the hon. gentleman, but he is in contradiction with the position taken by the Prime Minister who said that when this parliament dealt with the matter it could and would adjust the representation.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I did not so understand the right hon. gentleman and I am quite sure my hon. friend (Mr. Crocket) did not so understand him.

Mr. CROCKET. I certainly did so understand him.

Mr. LENNOX. So did we.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I am sorry my hon. friend takes that view, because I did not understand the right hon. gentlemen to make any such statement. There can be no doubt at all about the constitutional principle that the imperial parliament alone can increase the representation of any province in this Dominion, and no doubt the imperial parliament would act upon the request of the Dominion parliament.

Mr. FOSTER. Hear, hear.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. But that is an entirely different matter from what we are now discussing, and every hon. gentleman must see that the amendment is entirely outside the point.

Mr. LENNOX. Not quite.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. My hon. friend (Mr. Lennox) knows very well that the representation of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island cannot be affected in the slightest degree by anything that the provincial governments of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec may say, and that this parliament alone by address to the imperial parliament subsequently can deal with that question. Now as to the point that the representation of the maritime provinces has been affected prejudicially by the increase of the electoral unit of the province of Quebec, I think hon. gentlemen will find that the decreased representation which came to the maritime provinces in 1901 did not come as a result of the increased unit of representation in Quebec, but as a result of the tremendous increase in population of western Canada. As a result of the readjustment which had to be made under section 51, subsection 4, a reduction of the representation of the maritime provinces was brought about chiefly because of the increased population of the west.

Mr. DANIEL. Is it not a fact that the increased unit of representation caused by the increase of population in Quebec was

also a large factor in the loss of our representation?

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. As a matter of construction of the statute both these conditions must concur before representation can be decreased.

Mr. DANIEL. But you only referred to the increase of population in the west.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I was endeavouring to point out that the suggestion that the increase of the electoral unit in Quebec must necessarily decrease the population of other provinces, is not absolutely correct, because in addition to that you must have an abnormal increase in the population of western Canada so as to bring about a proportionate diminution of the population of the other provinces.

Mr. LEMIEUX. As a matter of fact the increased population of Quebec has taken place within the old boundaries of that province and not within the area of any territory which has been added to Quebec since confederation. My hon. friend from Beauharnois will corroborate that.

Mr. HAGGART. Every one knows that.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. The statement of the Postmaster General is absolutely correct. The population of the province of Quebec has increased and the electoral unit has increased but that is not due to increased territory; it is entirely due to natural causes.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. We must approach this question from the standpoint that the diminution of representation which took place in 1901 was not alone due to the increased population in the province of Quebec, but that there must also be considered in it the abnormal increase of the population of the west, which was a very potent factor. Now, if I correctly apprehend the decision given by the courts with reference to the proper interpretation of section 51 of the British North America Act it was, that the population of Canada for the purpose of the computation to be made under section 51 subsection 4 was to be deemed to be made up not merely of the population of the four original provinces, but also of the provinces which now constitute confederation, and in that computation there was not to be considered the population of the territories. The consequence is that by the addition of territory to the provinces of Manitoba and Ontario, in the next computation which takes place in 1911, the population of Canada, for the purposes of this computation, will be increased by the additional number of people who may be within the territory thus added to these provinces.

To that extent the representation of the smaller provinces will ultimately be affected. I think this House will be bound, in