

we have been endeavouring to hasten the construction to the entrance of the Welland canal at Port Colborne. That I think, is perhaps the most important point that needs attention. There is a constant complaint that very large quantities of the products of Manitoba and the North-west go to Buffalo and are shipped via New York, owing to the fact that no large vessels can enter our canals—no large vessels can approach the canals, and it is with a view to enabling steamers drawing 20 and 21 feet to reach the head of the Welland canal that the large expenditure is now being carried on at the entrance to Port Colborne. When that is completed a marked change will take place in the volume of products of the North-west that will find this route through the St. Lawrence and through British ports.

In reference to the Redistribution Bill, my hon. friend's comments, of course, were good natured. It recalls to mind the necessity for a readjustment of the electoral districts—necessarily I say, because I think the measure proposed by our political friends on the other side was a most unfair and unjust one. It was notorious that in many points a successful effort was made to gather in from several constituencies the Grits—hiving the Grits. It was so apparent it could not be denied, and if I were to lay on the table a map of the electoral districts to-day, distorted as it is, it would shock hon. gentlemen who have not taken, perhaps in the past, any special interest in this subject. In the readjustment that we propose to submit to the House I think it will be found we have gone back to the views expressed so earnestly and deeply by Sir John Macdonald before he was influenced by his colleagues in 1882 to bring in the distorted measure that was carried through parliament by the Conservative majority of that date. Sir John Macdonald had frequently expressed the opinion that the only fair way was to limit the electoral districts to the municipal divisions. His argument was that the people of the municipal districts met in the village or town or township or county councils. They knew, and were more in sympathy with each other, and it seemed unfair to divide up a county and tie it to an adjoining county with which the people had no particular sympathy, and that were known to them only as Canadians. Our

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measure will be found, when submitted to the House, to adhere strictly to county boundaries. The question of population no doubt, will be commented upon, but even if you take the measure of 1882 and 1886, you will find that the population was not the standard that was followed, because the constituencies range all the way from 12 or 15,000 up to 25 and 30,000.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL.—That only applied to cities. I might give the hon. gentleman another instance which would make his argument stronger. In Muskoka there were only 8,000 but before the next election it had grown larger than the unit.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Our Redistribution Bill will be governed entirely by the county boundaries.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—When the House rose I had not quite finished the observations I intended to have made. I felt it my duty to make some observations in connection with the imperial conference. My hon. friend rather twitted the mover of the address because he described Sir Wilfrid Laurier as occupying an important position in the recent conference. The conference was called by Mr. Chamberlain, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues were invited to take part in it. The principal subjects that occupied the attention of the conference were imperial defence, inter-imperial trade and one or two minor points. So far as preferential trade was concerned Canada had done her part and Mr. Chamberlain quite recognized that in view of the growing feeling for high tariffs in other important colonies, it seemed hopeless to draw together the various parts of the empire unless indeed they were prepared to entirely revolutionize the financial institutions on which they stood. His view was that if the empire were to be brought more closely together it could only be done by imperial free trade and that was too far in advance. Mr. Chamberlain did not seem to appreciate altogether the value of the preference tariff that Canada had adopted. I think myself that Mr. Chamberlain did not give Canada the full credit it deserved.