

intercourse. They are in constant communication, and it is a mistake to state the contrary. Community of interests is spoken of. I do not understand what my hon. friends understand by that. According to them, it is necessary to go to the same market, sell produce to the same merchant, buy at the same shop, to have community of interests. I do not conceive matters in that light. By community of interests I understand similarity of object in view, common interests to defend and protect. And in this light, is there not perfect community of interests between those parishes? The principal interest of those localities, their primordial interest is agriculture, for they are two rural parishes. In that respect, Mr. Chairman, there is a community of interest between Belœil and St. Hilaire. Both those parishes have the same interests to have protected by this Parliament. That is what I understand by community of interests. But my hon. friends of the Opposition do not look at the matter in the same light. Public interest is not what concerns them; it is the interest of the party which they have at heart. They have but one object, Mr. Chairman, that of securing for themselves a majority of representatives in this House, without minding whether they will or not have but a minority of the voters of the country. I showed, the other day, that for the last twenty years the Liberals have always been in minority in Quebec, and nevertheless in 1878 they governed the province. Everybody knows that at that time they had only a minority of the popular vote, although they were in majority in the House. In 1882, the Liberals had twelve members representing them in this House, while if they had been returned in proportion to their share of the popular vote, they would have only been six. In 1887, the Liberals only triumphed with the help of a fraction of the Conservative party, and when that fraction of our party abandoned my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, the Liberal party fell back into the position they occupied before. The section of the country now under discussion is represented here by four Liberal members and a Conservative, while the same area is represented in Quebec by a Conservative majority. The Counties of St. Hyacinthe, Bagot, Chambly, among others, are represented in Quebec by Conservatives. These three counties, as well as Richelieu, returned Conservatives by large majorities in March last; and my hon. friends of the Opposition know very well that if we had now general elections for this House, not having, as they had in 1887 and 1891, the assistance of the fraction of the Conservative party which helped them then, the four Liberal members who sit here now would be defeated.

Mr. BRODEUR. (Translation.) Why, then, do you change the boundaries of those counties?

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) How is it that the hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Brodeur) who was elected only by some 60 votes of majority does not recognize the truth of my statement? How is it that he does not realize that the provincial representative of the county was only elected by some 20 votes?

Mr. BRODEUR. (Translation.) I have no fear of keeping my county as it is, while you are afraid of keeping your unchanged.

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) How is it that the hon. member will come here and claim that his

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party would carry these counties, when at the last elections we took St. Hyacinthe, Chambly and Bagot?

Mr. BRODEUR. (Translation.) This should induce you to leave the counties as they are.

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) Let the hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Brodeur) put an end to his childishness. If he wants to be taken for a serious man, let him put an end to his useless recriminations. He has long enough wearied the House with his demonstrations which were at least frivolous and uncalled for. There must be an end. The object of the Government in presenting this measure was to equalize as much as possible the position of the different counties mentioned in the Bill, so that each of these electoral districts should have an about equal population. In trying to attain this object the Government have respected the parish municipal lines. They transferred parishes bodily without thinking of parcelling them out. If this was not to be allowed, it would be even impossible to redistribute these seats. I believe that as a whole the Government rendered justice to that part of the country. Personally I had no desire of having my county disturbed and I have never requested that it should be. If the Government did what they now ask the House to approve, they did it, not in the interest of the county, as has been contended, but in the interest of the public. Besides, I am satisfied that, had the Government submitted to the House a Bill in every particular conformable to the suggestions now made by the Opposition, the gentlemen of the left would be asking for what the Government are now proposing. The policy of these gentlemen can be resumed in a single word, obstruction, always and anyhow. They want to show that the measures originated by the Conservatives are intended to injure the Liberal party. But our concern is not party interest, but public interest.

Mr. LAURIER. (Translation.) Will my hon. friend allow me to ask him a question? If I understood him well, he just stated that the aim of the Government was to equalize the population?

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) As much as possible.

Mr. LAURIER. (Translation.) Can he say by how much the population of Bagot was equalized?

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) No; but it was necessary to disturb Bagot in order to give to Rouville and other counties the standard of population, or a population about equal or nearly so to that of Bagot. As to my county the difference in the result is only about 40 votes. I was desirous of having a county as important as that I had before.

Mr. CHOQUETTE. (Translation.) And specially of a deeper *bleue* complexion.

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) As to the hon. members who have a horror of rivers, the Government, in putting that parish in Bagot, do them a good turn in saving them from the necessity of crossing the stream.

Mr. BERNIER. (Translation.) There is no river to cross in the hon. member's county, and I do not know whether he is afraid of water, but there is one thing he is afraid of—the electors of his county. If my information is correct, I believe the hon. gentleman has in his desk some resolutions passed by