

suggestion was made by a member of the government, I think the Minister of Finance, that possibly an equitable arrangement, in so far as the representation of the smaller provinces is concerned, would be that the population of Quebec, for the purposes of representation, would be counted in accordance with the dimensions of the province at the time of confederation. That would be one way of preserving a reasonable representation for the maritime provinces, because there is an apprehension that in consequence of the enlargement of the area of the province of Quebec there is danger that our representation will be materially reduced. A provision of that kind might perhaps save it. I personally think that a provision of that kind would be somewhat complicated, and I would very much prefer that when this matter is under consideration we should take steps to have placed in our constitution a provision somewhat similar to that which is in the constitution of the Australian Commonwealth that there shall be a minimum representation from every province; either that or that a condition should be inserted that the representation from the maritime provinces would not fall below what it was at the time of confederation. I do not think that a provision of that kind in the constitution could possibly do any harm to any province or any individual in any province. I do not think that the larger provinces of the Dominion could object, and it would certainly satisfy the maritime provinces. The representation even under these circumstances would never be unduly large. I am satisfied that confederation would not have been possible if the men who arranged the basis of confederation had ever looked forward to the time when the representation of the smaller provinces would be so reduced that we would practically have no voice in the great council of the nation. But, as the statement has been made by my right hon. friend the leader of the government that the amendment moved by the hon. member for Colchester (Mr. Stanfield) and seconded by the hon. member for Queens (Mr. McLean) is at the present stage unnecessary, and that we will be just as free in a subsequent session when this matter comes up for final consideration to consider all the details of the question and particularly the detail of representation as we are to-day, I do not see the necessity of inserting this amendment, and for these reasons I shall vote against it.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD (Pictou). Mr. Speaker, I desire to say a word or two if the House will pardon me. Without going into a discussion at great length of the whole argument of the hon. member for Kings and Albert (Mr. Fowler) I would like to say that I listened to him with a

Mr. J. J. HUGHES.

great deal of attention, but I fail to appreciate wherein he has given the House any logical or reasonable argument from a legal or constitutional standpoint that would convince any hon. gentleman that because the boundaries of any particular province may be increased therefore any right of compensation flows to any other members of confederation. It seems to me that the proposition of creating a new province is one which would give just the same rights to the older members of confederation as would an accretion to the boundaries of any of the existing provinces, and no one has ever asserted that in the former case any such right has arisen. I rise not so much for the purpose of discussing that point as to refer to the amendment which has been moved by the hon. member for Colchester (Mr. Stanfield). I desire to say in reference to that point that the hon. member's amendment is entirely outside of any question that is involved in the resolution before the House. It is absolutely nugatory and can have no effect of any kind whatever. No amendment such as that which he proposes to be introduced into this resolution can be held either by the Dominion government or any of the provincial governments to be of any value or to limit their powers or to give to any of the provinces increased rights in regard to the matter of representation. The question of what the representation of the maritime provinces in this parliament shall be, cannot depend on any conference that may take place between the federal government and the provincial governments of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec; it must depend upon legislation that may be subsequently passed by the imperial parliament. If as it is anticipated the result of this resolution will be to increase the area of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, then a condition will arise in the smaller provinces which this parliament would be bound to recognize and to ask the imperial parliament in view of the changed conditions to create increased representation for them.

Mr. CROCKET. The hon. gentleman contends that the representation of the provinces would depend altogether upon legislation of the imperial parliament, and that being so how does he justify the statement of the Prime Minister that when this legislation comes before the House it is to be passed upon terms and conditions agreed to by the provinces and by this parliament, and that these terms and conditions will cover representation as well as other matters, and hence there was no need of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Colchester.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I did not understand the Prime Minister to make any statement with regard to that. Of course the result of this conference may produce conditions under which this parliament may