

it is not a gross outrage that a county like Huron which, at the last elections, gave a clear Liberal majority over the whole county of 450 votes, should now be so gerrymandered as to secure, as far as any outrageous attempt of the kind can secure, the return of two Conservative members out of the three. We heard something from the hon. member for Frontenac about Parliament immuring public opinion. Here is a county with a clear liberal majority of 452, which the hon. gentleman has so carved up as to return two Conservative members under the last voting. No clearer evidence could be given that this measure is solely in the interests of party and an attempt to override the opinion of the country. Intimations came from the hon. member for North Middlesex, that his hands required to be strengthened, and, in order to make his return perfectly safe, the village of Exeter, which is the only municipality in the whole of South Huron that gave a Conservative majority at the last elections, a majority of 115, is annexed to North Middlesex. The whole of the hon. gentleman's gerrymanderings in the Hurons is only on a par with that practiced in the other counties of Ontario. My own humble opinion is that the hon. gentleman will signally fail in attaining his object, but it will not be by his fault. He has done all he possibly could to hive the Grits in South Huron. By that process he makes the Reform majority 300 votes over, the Conservative having majorities in the other ridings. Yet the hon. gentleman says this is a fair Bill. I believe the hon. gentleman, despite his gerrymandering, will fail in the Hurons, and that the three members returned from there will be returned to support a Liberal Administration.

Mr. BLAKE, The proposal now before us is to improve for the third time upon the constitution of the three ridings of Huron. In 1872, as we all know, the hon. gentleman for the first time proposed to give that constituency three representatives instead of two. We all recollect the exciting debate which took place on that occasion, in which it was shown that the hon. gentleman's effort was to concentrate as far as he could, the Reform majority in one riding, and to obtain two instead of the three ridings in the county which had a preponderating majority of Reformers. We know the measure was changed with that intent; we know that the figures established that intent on his part; we know that he made one clear Reform riding and two apparently Conservative ridings, and he has since that time succeeded in retaining, by a narrow majority, the north riding of Huron, while my hon. friend's power and capacity of attracting and obtaining popular support, has enabled him to overcome the unfair conduct of the hon. gentleman on that occasion, and to retain the south riding of Huron to the Liberal cause. Well, Sir, the hon. gentleman on this occasion had the condition of the Hurons before him for several months, he had before him the geographical position of the Hurons, their position with regard to population, their local divisions, and the election returns as to their political complexion, and with all deliberation he made a proposal to Parliament to destroy the municipal autonomy of the county of Huron, to take away certain townships, to retain a village which was in one of these townships, in the county, while he took away the township to which it belonged, in order, once again, to hive the Grits who had swarmed in Huron, and by that means to increase, taking the figures of 1878, the Reform majority of the centre riding, which was 362, according to that election, to 446. That was the hon. gentleman's proposal. While, of course, you could not increase the Reform majority in the strong Reform ridings in the constituency without weakening in one or other of the two ridings the Reform interest, that was the inevitable result, and at the second reading of this measure we pointed out that the hon. gentleman was repeating his operation of 1872, having found it necessary, in order to

have any chance of success, once again to gerrymander Huron by taking a Reform strength from the weaker riding, in a Reform point of view, and adding them to the centre where their effective strength would be useless.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

The following Bills, (from the Senate), were severally introduced and read a first time:—

Bill (No. 164) to correct certain errors in the French version of "The Dominion Lands Act," and "The Dominion Lands Act, 1879."—(Sir Hector Langvin.)

Bill (No. 165) further to continue in force for a limited time "The better Prevention of Crime Act, 1878."—(Sir John A. Macdonald.)

Bill (No. 166) declaratory of the meaning of the word "Telegraph" in certain cases.—(Mr. White, Cardwell.)

It being Six o'clock the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

Mr. BLAKE. I was observing, when the House rose, that the geographical situation of the different divisions of the county of Huron, the numerical relations of those divisions, the mode in which the county had been divided by the Federal Parliament, and also by the Local Legislature of Ontario, for electoral purposes, were all within the knowledge of the Administration when they selected this particular mode of division which was brought down to us in this Bill; that that had been done after mature deliberation and consideration with various interests, and that the result of this constituency, which had been gerrymandered in 1872, was to produce a very large majority in the then centre riding, was to increase the majority from 362 to 446, thus, of course, taking proportionately from the strength in one or other or both of the remaining divisions of the other. Well, Sir, the hon. Minister who reversed these clauses when the Bill was in Committee before, has come down to-day and proposed a further change in the divisions of the county of Huron, and he asks the country to understand that the reason for the changes he makes is, that he has looked since that time at the divisions made in the Local Legislature, and that he pretty nearly, as he says, adopts them, and he thinks under the present plan the population will be equal. These are the reasons the hon. gentleman gave in Committee. The political results of these changes, to which the hon. gentleman never alludes, are that whereas he had a hive of 446 of a Reform majority in the centre riding, in the south riding, which is, according to the new plan, to be the hive, he increases the Reform majority, according to the same set of figures—those of the election of 1878—to no less than 684, thus effecting a further weakening of the Reform strength in the other two ridings. Coincidentally with this, the hon. gentleman, who, when he was desirous of weakening my hon. friend in the south riding of Huron, thought nothing whatever of leaving the village of Exeter in that riding. Now that he has changed the complexion of the south riding of Huron, and made it a sea in which the Reform strength is to be hived, he takes Exeter out of it and puts it where he thinks it will do more good, in the north riding of Middlesex, thus showing that no principle animated the hon. gentleman, but that he disposes of the different municipalities in accordance with that which is the ruling idea which animates the Bill—the political complexion which he may give to the different constituencies. I say that the changes which are here proposed, are not an act of geographical convenience, not an act of the equalization of the population, not an act of the considerations which were obvious to the hon. gentleman and to the Government long before and at the time when they matured this measure, but the changes are proposed because it has been found, upon examination since the