

hon. gentleman himself and the effect of the amendment. Now, in regard to that part of his proposal that the present Dominion constituencies shall be taken as a definite basis for the subdivisions of the new province, I have only this to say, that the Dominion constituencies are delimited for purposes entirely different, having no connection near or remote with the purposes for which the local constituencies are delimited. While it might be a reasonable proposition to make the Dominion constituencies accord with those of the local, it is not a reasonable proposition to make the local constituencies necessarily correspond with those of the Dominion constituencies. The Dominion constituencies are delimited only for the purpose of electing members to this House, it makes little difference where the dividing lines are, as every one from the Northwest knows very well.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Why?

Mr. OLIVER. Because the local government has to deal with matters closely affecting the people, such as the school districts, the statute labour organization, and particularly the building of roads. The roads above everything else are important as leading from settlements to centres of trade. There is the greatest community of interest between certain settlements and certain centres of trade, and it is highly necessary that that community of interest should be observed in the distribution of the local constituencies, otherwise grievous injury is done. That fact has always been recognized. I will make my meaning clear by giving a case that existed some years ago. A large part of the trade of Edmonton is done with Athabaska Landing, over a road 100 miles in length. The local district of St. Albert intervened between Edmonton and Athabaska Landing. Every interest of Edmonton and every interest of Athabaska Landing was in the up-keep of that road, the St. Albert electoral district being entirely agricultural, the different settlements in that district had no interest in keeping up that great road from Edmonton to Athabaska Landing. Now this became so great a hardship that at the redistribution made in 1892 the local government took cognizance of the fact, and cut and carved the different constituencies in a way that looked like a gerrymander on the map, but it was in reality conserving the interests of the respective peoples and trading points. Now what was the case there is the case all over the Northwest Territories, and it is for that reason we desire to be careful, in setting apart particular constituencies, that we throw together people who have a community of interest. Under the system that has been followed in the Northwest the local representative has the most to say in relation to road improvements, and it is possible, if you link together two centres of business which are in rivalry, to have the business withdrawn from one and given to

the other by the improvement of roads leading to the one and away from the other. While this may seem to be a matter of detail and of small importance to hon. gentlemen who are not acquainted with the circumstances, it means everything to the people out there; and we cannot afford to have their interest disregarded in this very important matter merely for the purpose of gratifying a whim of hon. gentlemen opposite in favour of absolute equality in the population of the constituencies. We are desirous of equalizing that distribution as much as possible, but we are more desirous of giving the people that community of interest which will tend to their wellbeing.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Is there not the same general community of interest recognized in the federal divisions of 1903?

Mr. OLIVER. Merely the community of contiguity, there was no other to be recognized. This Dominion has nothing to do with local matters which so intimately concern the people.

Mr. LAKE. The hon. gentleman forgets that the Dominion government is retaining control of the lands; surely that is a business that closely concerns every individual in that country.

Mr. OLIVER. Surely. But that has nothing to do with the business relation between town and country, between settlement and settlement. That is the business of the local government. Let me diverge from the line for a moment to say that in the province of Ontario, and possibly, in the eastern provinces generally, these matters are dealt with by municipal organizations; but in the Northwest they are dealt with by the local government. Hence the great importance of the division being made along these lines. Hon. gentlemen opposite will not take the last census as the basis for distribution in the old part of the province of Alberta, but, — except the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) himself, every one of them has insisted on taking that census as a basis in the district of Athabaska.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. What other evidence have you?

Mr. OLIVER. I do not know what other evidence the hon. gentleman has.

Mr. LAKE. I denied last night taking that census as a basis.

Mr. OLIVER. I would say that if the hon. member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) has no other evidence as in regard to the district of Athabaska that is not the fault of the people of Athabaska; they ought not to suffer because no means have been taken to find out what the population of the district is or what their rights are. But, if hon. gentlemen opposite insist on taking the census as the basis of calculation in regard to the district of Athabaska they must, in all fair-