

duly considered ; we have plenty of time before the third reading.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). The hon. gentleman told us that the reason for not uniting Laval and Two Mountains was the fact that a river intervened ; but there is a river between Laval and Hochelaga, and the hon. gentleman annexed Laval to a portion of Hochelaga.

Mr. OUMET. That is not fair. I said that the rural part of the County of Hochelaga was better with Laval, because they have a community of interest, and it was better to divide Hochelaga as we have done, adding to Montreal those parts of Hochelaga which are mere suburbs of the city, giving to Jacques Cartier those rural parishes of Hochelaga West adjoining that county, and giving Laval those parishes which ought not to belong to that suburban division. These people complained that their voice was drowned by the city population of Hochelaga, that, practically, they had no voice in this Parliament, and they wanted to be united to a rural constituency. That is the reason it was done—not to serve my interests, because I have been elected for 19 years for that county, four times by acclamation, and three times with very large majorities, and I do not fear any one there.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). If the hon. member were to deal with Laval as he proposes to deal with Verchères, he might put one-half of it into Two Mountains and the other half into Hochelaga. Then the hon. gentleman would be acting towards his own constituency somewhat in the same way that he is acting towards my hon. friend from Verchères (Mr. Geoffrion). Now, my hon. friend from Verchères has pointed out that the eastern or northern portion of his constituency has no community of interest with Richelieu. The people do not associate, the river intervenes, their trade is with Montreal ; they have much more communication with Chambly than they have with Richelieu. The hon. gentleman overlooks the geographical obstacle of the river ; he overlooks the absence of community of interest, he overlooks the natural associations that exist between Chambly and Verchères, and he undertakes to deal ungenerously with an hon. member who has sat in Parliament for upwards of 30 years. If the hon. gentleman were to allow a feeling of magnanimity to influence him in the smallest degree, he would have taken the geographical obstacles into consideration on behalf of Verchères. I appeal to the Minister of Customs whether he is dealing fairly with an old member of the House, who has been a member for upwards of 30 years, who knows his constituency and whose constituency knows him. I appeal to the Minister of Justice, and I say to him : If you unite Verchères and Chambly you are not removing the hon. gentleman from Verchères from contact with the people with whom he has associated all his life. What do you propose to do when you take off the northern part of his county and put it into Richelieu ? You propose to put him in contact with a population to whom he is, except by reputation, a stranger—a population with whom he has had no association. You break up the historical associations that have existed. There is not a principle that hon. gentlemen have conceded in this discussion that is not violated by the proposition of the Minister of Public Works. Let the Minister

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propose to deal with Laval in the same way as he proposes to deal with Verchères, let him annex one-half of it to Two Mountains and the other half to Hochelaga, and then we will believe the hon. gentleman is undertaking to deal with his own case in the same way he is undertaking to deal with Verchères.

Mr. GEOFFRION. The hon. Minister says that no petition or complaint has been presented. I do not know what he calls a complaint, but I have presented a resolution from one of the municipal councils, against the scheme. I am willing to leave the decision of it to a vote of the people, and I am satisfied a majority of the Conservatives would oppose it. If this blow is intended to strike at me, I am prepared to resign and let the people get another member in my place. There are few of the people in the county who would approve of such a division and association. I understand the people of the upper part of the county, such as at Varennes and Ste. Julie, have a good deal to do with Chambly. With the exception of the lower part of the parish of Contrecoeur, the others have to cross to go to Montreal, and have nothing to do either for church, law court or for commercial business with Sorel. I may explain that Verchères is entirely Roman Catholic, and as our Bishop resides in Montreal, our church business is entirely in that city. I may state on my honour that I only know two or three men in the village of Verchères who have anything to do with Sorel, and they are fishermen who go there to buy fish to smoke for the Montreal market. I really believe the Administration will gain nothing by the proposed change, because some of their friends on that account will vote against them at the next elections. I will not speak for myself personally ; I am old enough to go out of politics if need be, and I am willing to do it. This proposition, however, treats the constituency with great unfairness. I would even ask one of the Ministers who ran against me if, in his opinion, the division proposed is a fair one ? I admit the county is a close one politically, and I will allow hon. gentlemen opposite to change it, but it should not be divided in a manner that is unfair to the people. I protest against the action proposed, and I believe most of the people of the county will also protest against the division. Hon. gentlemen opposite say they are willing to adopt any suggestion which can be shown to be more just than that proposed in the Bill. But there is no one so blind as he who will not see ; and if the hon. Minister of Public Works cannot see any injustice, it is useless to continue to point it out, nevertheless any candid man who will look into the matter and consult the people will consider that the amendment proposed is one in the public interest. The only possible object of the present proposal of the Government is to get rid of a political opponent in this House, and it is not creditable to the Administration, if they wish to get rid of a political opponent to endeavour to secure that object in this way.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Is there not railway communication with Sorel, and is not the portion of Verchères which it is proposed to add to Richelieu nearer to Sorel than it is to Verchères ?

Mr. GEOFFRION. It is not. The shire-town of Verchères is further from Sorel than from Montreal ; it is 9 or 10 miles further from Sorel than