

the provisions of subsections 2 and 3 of section 51.

May I in brief form give to the House the net result of the effect of the census upon the redistribution as it will be under the legislation of this year as compared with the legislation of 1914. The unit of representation as I have already mentioned, this year is 36,283 as against 30,819 in 1914. The total membership of the House of Commons will hereafter during the next ten years be 245 as against 235 during the past ten years, or an increase, in all, of ten members.

In the case of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Yukon the representation will remain the same as it is at the present time, respectively 82, 65, 11, 4 and 1. In the case of British Columbia, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, the representation will be increased—in the case of British Columbia by 1, from 13 to 14; in the case of Manitoba by 2, from 15 to 17; in the case of Alberta by 4, from 12 to 16; in the case of Saskatchewan by 5, from 16 to 21. In the case of Nova Scotia, unfortunately there will under the provisions of the British North America Act be a reduction of two, from 16 to 14.

I need hardly say, particularly to our friends from Nova Scotia, that in this matter of redistribution the government is not, as I mentioned at the outset, exercising any discretionary right; nor, indeed, has it any discretionary powers. It is simply obliged to accept the law as it is and to apply its provisions as set out in the act. In the application of the law it is very largely a matter simply of mathematics.

That, I think, is all I need say with reference to the representation of the several provinces so far as its numerical aspect is concerned.

I come now to the method whereby the government proposes to effect the redistribution of the various constituencies or electoral districts under the measure which is being introduced. Prior to 1903 the government of the day in introducing a redistribution bill brought down a measure which it had previously prepared in a complete form. The measure outlined the electoral districts as the government of the day had prepared them in advance. The bill was submitted to the House in that form, and as all who are familiar with Canadian political history will recall, the redistributions effected in that manner gave rise to perhaps the bitterest controversies which have taken place in this Chamber and in our public life. Too often those redistributions suggested an element of unfairness, and endeavour on the part of the government of the

day to profit at the expense of its political opponents in virtue of the power that it possessed.

In 1903, under the administration of the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, a new principle was adopted. Sir Wilfrid brought into the House, not a bill which contained the boundaries of all the constituencies as originally drafted by the government itself, but a bill which set forth the number of members to which each province under the redistribution was entitled, leaving blank for subsequent determination the delimitations or definitions of the several constituencies to be represented. Sir Wilfrid proposed when in power what he had suggested when in opposition. He maintained that in seeking to effect a redistribution, a larger measure of satisfaction in the House and greater confidence throughout the country would result if the government invited the opposition to join with it in a committee to work out the details of redistribution. The hope was expressed that the conferences in the committee room would be carried out in such a spirit of fair play and goodwill that the bill could be brought back to the House of Commons and passed without contention or dispute. The adoption of that principle by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in 1903 had beneficial results, so much so that when the government of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden had occasion in 1914 to introduce a redistribution measure, Sir Robert followed the principle that Sir Wilfrid had adopted and invited the opposition to name members on a committee to join with the government members in determining the boundaries of the constituencies which were to be arranged under the redistribution. We propose to follow the example set by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and later followed by Sir Robert Borden, and I think in doing so we shall meet what my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen), when speaking on the Address, said he hoped the government would do, namely, have the details of the redistribution measure worked out by a joint committee of hon. members of this House.

The bill which I am about to introduce sets forth the number of members to which each province is entitled under the redistribution and makes provision for the division of the province and the territory into electoral districts as provided in a schedule to the act. The schedule to the act, however, is being introduced, so far as this bill in its present form is concerned, in blank. It is the purpose of the government, if hon. gentlemen op-