

*Proportional Representation*

tions of 1920; and the Winnipeg elections of 1920.

I dealt next with the growth of the sentiment in favour of proportional representation throughout the world, referring to a number of places and countries which had adopted this newer system of representation. Among these I may again mention the following: New South Wales—and in that connection I may say that Queensland and Victoria have adopted the alternative vote,—Tasmania; New Zealand; South Africa (for the Senate); England (for the university constituencies); Scotland (for the school board); Ireland; India (the alternative vote); some cities in the United States; Switzerland; Belgium; Bulgaria; Sweden; Finland; Norway (optional for municipal elections); Germany; Austria. Moreover Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Italy and France have adopted half-measures of proportional representation. In addition I pointed out that a number of Canadian cities had adopted this system, among them the following: Winnipeg, Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and so on.

I referred next to the report of the committee appointed by the Ontario legislature about three years ago, which reported two years ago. And lastly I considered a number of advantages and disadvantages, or advantages of and objections, to proportional representation. First, I discussed the idea of majority representation as against proportional representation. In the second place I showed the security of tenure of office of outstanding men which is obtained by this better system of representation. Third, I showed that the claim that proportional representation will necessarily lead to small majorities in legislative bodies cannot be substantiated, and I examined a number of cases to prove that point, namely, British Columbia, New South Wales, Australia and New Zealand. I examined, in the fourth place, the charge that proportional representation encourages the formation of groups, and I think I showed pretty conclusively that that charge could not be substantiated. In the fifth place, I pointed out that proportional representation makes impossible or difficult the spoils system. In the sixth place, I examined the allegation that proportional representation is un-British. In the seventh place, I discussed the supposed difficulties of holding by-elections under proportional representation. In the eighth place, I dealt with the alleged difficulty in canvassing large constituencies. In the ninth place, I discussed the effect of proportional representation on the power of a small minority of floating or purchasable voters. And, in the last place, I discussed the question of the

[Mr. Good.]

difficulty of operating this system in large, sparsely settled areas.

That, Mr. Speaker, in brief, is the case which I presented last year. I want to discuss now just for a very short time one or two objections that were raised last year, and which, owing to the adjournment of the debate, I had not the opportunity of dealing with on that occasion.

I wish to refer to the remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Ladner) last year, which are found in Hansard at pages 1651 and 1652. In answer to a question of mine the hon. member for South Vancouver to-day, spoke as follows:

Unfortunately I did not hear the hon. member—

Referring to myself.

But I have had the advantage of reading Lord Bryce's "Modern Democracies" in which that aspect of the question is very ably dealt with.

A little further on, in answer to another question of mine, the hon. member said:

If the hon. gentleman puts it that way, I may tell him that I heard very little of what he said, and if I had heard it I do not think my view would be changed by the hon. gentleman's argument, having read the words of Lord Bryce and a number of other constitutional authorities for the past fifteen years.

The inference from these remarks is that the late Lord Bryce was opposed to proportional representation. I want simply to point out that Lord Bryce was a vice-president of the British Proportional Representation Society, and I wish to read at this point—

Mr. LADNER: Has the hon. gentleman read through my speech of last year? I do not say that Lord Bryce is an exponent against proportional representation; but I say that he gives such an analysis of the federal systems of government that it is impossible for a person studying those systems to apply in practical politics and statesmanship the principles underlying proportional representation. I do not suppose my hon. friend intends to distort my speech; but that is what he is doing. He is leaving the inference that something which I stated to the House last year is not correct. If my hon. friend will read through my remarks, he will see that in the application of the principle of proportional representation to our federal system, there is a difficulty which he has yet to overcome, and so far, in his speeches of this year and last year, he has not overcome it.

Mr. GOOD: I am very sorry if I misunderstood the hon. member last year. I certainly heard all his address last year, and I think I read it all again this year in Hansard. But it is possible that I misunderstood the hon. gentleman, and I am very glad to