

1893 I went over the whole ground with some care then, and I think I satisfied members of the House of Commons on that occasion that the inequalities which exist at the present time between the constituencies with the largest population and those with the smallest is greater than would exist if the principle of respect for county boundaries were observed. There is no difficulty in showing that undoubtedly that is so; and it is, therefore, of immense consequence in this country, if we by any possibility can do it, that we should adopt a rule which would be accepted for all time to come, so that no matter which party might control the affairs of the country after the census, that we should be assured of one thing, the county boundaries would be respected and that whatever alterations were made in constituencies would be made within those county limits. I think that is a safe rule. It has been said by my hon. friend that we disregard the principle of representation by population in adopting a rule of this sort. Let us observe what the British North America Act provides for in that regard. It does not provide for representation by population in electoral districts. That we have never had. It cannot be contended for a moment that was adopted in the distribution of 1872, or 1882 or 1892. In every one of these cases the inequality shows that there was very little attention given to the subject of representation by population between constituencies. That is not what the Act calls for. It is representation by population between the provinces, and each province is given representation in proportion to its population. Now, one constituency may have a larger population than another. That is of far less consequence than to undertake to break up the division which exists by the common co-operation of the people within county limits. I need not pursue that question further, because the measure will be before this House and we shall have an opportunity of fully discussing it. I simply point out that there is no gerrymander contemplated, none intended—that the intention is as far as possible to place the two great parties of the country upon a footing of equality for the elections and to restore the principle of county boundaries with that end in view.

My hon. friend referred to the question of taxation. He says “you have violated all your principles; you have disregarded all

those theories of taxation which you have been promulgating for twenty years” I do not think that my hon. friend is warranted in that contention, I never proposed that there should be less taxation than is required for the public service. I have always maintained that the tax should be with that object in view.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—But that all that was collected for taxation purposes should be diverted into the treasury.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—That is my opinion, and I think it is desirable to carry that principle out, so far as we possible can. The great difference between my hon. friend (Mr. Boulton) and myself on this point is that he seems to think that unless you move on a direct line you are not moving in the direction that you claim you intend to travel. On that point I differ from him. There are many questions connected with taxation. There are many prejudices associated with it, on the part of people having important interests that it is not our business to shock—that it is not our business to make war upon. We trust to the force of the progress of the country and the gradual adoption of principles which those who are inclined to dread them will see have not associated with them the evils which they anticipated. Now, let me say that in this respect I, to some extent, hold to the view expressed many years ago by Mr. Lowell, that the movement of a party is something like that of a great river. There are many great bends and sweeps in the course in which it moves forward until it reaches a broader level, and so it is with those who have the charge of public affairs. We are moving onwards towards the point at which we aimed. We will certainly, if the country sustains us, and I believe it will, ultimately reach that destination, but we purpose doing it without revolution. We purpose doing it without undertaking to run over mountains and carry the country down precipices. We deviate from a straight line so far as that is necessary to guide public opinion, to avoid public excitement and to secure by quiet means, by means which in the end it becomes obvious to everybody will lead us to the point which we intend to reach. It is not our business to provoke agitation. It is not our business to lead any portion of the people to suppose