

tion something like that which he now makes in his proposed amendment, but he certainly did not press his suggestion with any earnestness at that time. After all, the matter is a minor matter and not one of serious import. We have at present only one vacancy in an electoral district, and if the amendment passed it would not affect any election which is at present in sight or which we can reasonably anticipate. I agree that in the case of a general election we should abide by the established principle that all elections should be held on one day; that is the provision in the Bill. I believe also that if several by-elections were to come on approximately at the same time it would be well that they be held on the same day. However, at the last session of this Parliament the House considered this question.

Mr. FIELDING: No.

Mr. GUTHRIE: It was brought up in the form of a public Bill introduced by a private member on the opposite side, and referred to a special committee of the House. That committee recommended that the Government should bring on by-elections to fill vacancies within six months after the day upon which the vacancy occurred. That was not haphazard legislation. The special committee went fully into the question. We considered it at two or three meetings; I was a member of the committee. We reported our findings to the House of Commons and the House passed that law. Now, that is a reasonable safeguard. I can remember when it was a common thing in the old days to keep constituencies open for a long time to suit the convenience of the Government—not of one Government; I think every Government was guilty in that respect, if guilt was attributable to anybody. But now we have a definite, fixed rule on the subject, that only six months may elapse before a by-election shall be brought on and a given vacancy filled. In my humble judgment, the House should stick to that provision.

But my chief objection to the proposed motion is this. So far as we can see now there is no difficulty that it is going to remedy. If difficulties arise we may take steps at the next session to remedy them; I do not think that at this late moment we should recommit this measure. The House has so fully gone into the whole election Bill, has so thoroughly discussed it, that the moment has come when, I think, hon. members are entitled to say; surely this is the end. If we have not an absolute-

[Mr. Guthrie.]

ly perfect measure we have one which comes nearer to a perfect measure than any other election law that was ever submitted to this Parliament. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this proposal may well await another session—if, indeed, it is one which should obtain our serious attention at all.

The House divided on the amendment of Mr. Fielding, which was negative on the following division:

YEAS.

Messrs.

Archambault,	Kennedy (Glengarry and Stormont),
Baldwin,	King,
Boivin,	Knox,
Bourassa,	Lanctôt,
Boyer,	Lapointe,
Brouillard,	Leduc,
Casgrain,	Leger,
Chisholm,	Lemieux,
Clark (Red Deer),	MacNutt,
Copp,	McDonald,
Crerar,	Maharg,
d'Anjou,	Marcile (Bagot),
Déchéne,	Papineau,
Delisle,	Pedlow,
Demers,	Pelletier,
Deslauriers,	Proulx,
Duff,	Reid (Mackenzie),
DuTremblay,	Rinfret,
Euler,	Savard,
Fielding,	Seguin,
Fontaine,	Sinclair (Antigonish and Guysborough),
Fortier,	Sinclair
Fournier,	(Queens, P.E.I.),
Gauthier,	Stein,
Gervais,	Tobin,
Glaéu,	Trahan,
Gould,	Truax,
Halbert,	Verville,
Hunt,	White (Victoria).—58.
Johnston,	

NAYS.

Messrs.

Allan,	Davis,
Anderson,	Drayton (Sir Henry),
Argue,	Finley,
Armstrong (Lambton),	Foster (Sir George),
Arthurs,	Fraser,
Ballantyne,	Fripp,
Ball,	Fulton,
Best,	Green,
Blair,	Griesbach,
Blake,	Guthrie,
Bolton,	Harrison,
Borden (Sir Robert),	Hay,
Bowman,	Hnders,
Boyce,	Hocken,
Boys,	Keefer,
Brien,	Lang,
Butts,	Loggie,
Calder,	Long,
Casselman,	Mackie (Edmonton),
Chaplin,	Mackie (Renfrew),
Charters,	Maclean (York),
Clark (Bruce),	McIsaac,
Cooper,	McQuarrie,
Cowan,	Manion,
Crothers,	Meighen,
Cruise,	Merner,