street at Bloor street. Of the four divisions South Toronto had at present the largest population, but from the nature of things this was the division that was least likely to increase its population, while the other three divisions were bound to increase in their population. The voting population of the divisions he believed to be as follows, but was not absolutely sure of the figures :—East Toronto, 7,686 ; North Toronto, 7,611 ; West Toronto, 8,722 ; South Toronto, 10,666. Coming to Hamilton, Mr. Gibson mentioned that in 1885 he had endeavored to have an extra member given to that city, but without avail, though a good many members of the House had supported him. It was now, however, given an extra member. It was proposed to divide the city into two divisions, Hughson street being the dividing line. The division he thought a fair and impartial one. It cut the city almost into two equal parts. There were 65 polling places in the constituency at present, and, with the city divided by Hughson street, West Hamilton would have 32 of these, so that from that standpoint the division could not be more even. The populations would be about even. The only other change in the representation of the Province was in regard to Ottawa, which was to receive another member. But it was proposed to add to the present limits of the city three villages adjacent to the city. The incorporated villages of Ottawa East, with a population of 714, and Hintonberg, with 800 people, and the incorporated Village of Mechanicsville, with a population of 500, were to be included in the constituency, which would then return two members. The population would thus be increased from 44,154 to 46,168. Mr. Gibson said he was sure a study of the changes made and the divisions in the case of Toronto and Hamilton would be found fair and impartial, and that it could not be charged in connection with the bill that the Government had taken any unfair advantage from it.

Mr. Meredith said he observed that in 1894 the Government had recognized the truth of what the Opposition had pointed out in 1885, and had recalled their minority representation scheme. Had they listened then to what had been said on that side of the House, they would have avoided that blot on their escutcheon. The scheme had been universally condemned, and even the Government's supporters had felt ashamed of it. This change was a concession to the position of the Opposition. The gentlemen opposite said that the bill was not framed with a view to the political advantage of any party. Well, there was only one party which they would be disposed to assist. Why were the three sections of Carleton County added to the City of Ottawa? He could not see but that such a mangling could be denounced just as vigorously as the so-called mangling of constituencies by the Dominion Government had been denounced, and he was afraid that it might prove that the Reform party would prove the gainer by the change. He objected, however, to the increased number of representatives which this bill would give.

The Attorney-General said the minority representation scheme had been very well worthy of experiment. It had been tried in England, just as here. The experiment was one that had not been of any special use to the Government. The Government, possibly, secured by it a seat it would not otherwise have acquired. It was of no use to it, in view of the large majority the Government had. As to the increase in the number of members, the only alternative to the increase was the reduction of the number of rural constituencies, and the Government had not considered this was a wise thing to do.

The bill was then read a first time.

THE MINING BILL.

Hon. Mr. Hardy moved the second reading of the bill relating to mines and mining lands. He mentioned that during what might be called the mining boom in 1891 the Government had imposed a royalty on the mining output. There was at the time every likelihood of great activity in mining matters in Ontario. Mr Hardy reviewed the various amendments to the mining law in 1891 and 1892, which included the imposition of a small royalty. Some of the amendments had had the effect of limiting the sales or leases. Mining had been, also, very much depressed during the few years since this legislation. The hon. gentleman ran over the figures of sales and leases of mining lands for a number of years, showing that they had increased from 1886 to 1891, when they began to fall off. He thought a large falling off would have occurred no matter what the law had been. The closing down of silver mines, presumably because they did not pay, owing to the low price of silver, had reduced the mining output. There had been some activity in gold mining, especially in the Sultana and Ophir Mines. A great difficulty with mining operations in Ontario was that owners of claims preferred to syndicate them rather than work them. There had been discoveries of gold on the American side in the same formations as those in Ontario, and marvellous stories had been told of them. He thought, however, the richer veins were on the Canadian side. The first clause of the bill proposed to suspend all royalties for five years. He thought the majority of the public approved of the royalty provision, but it might be difficult to re-introduce it five years hence if it were abolished altogether now. He proposed to reduce the price of mining lands about 50 per cent. along the whole line. These were the principal provisions of the bill. In closing, Mr. Hardy said he feared mining development in Ontario would be slow until British capital was put into it, and quoted figures showing the remarkable extent to which depression exists at the present time in the American mining industry.

Mr. Meredith criticized the bill, and did not think it would do very much to help the mining industry of Ontario. He thought more might be done than the Government was doing to encourage the development of the mining industry. He thought, also, the suspension of the royalty should act also on lands sold under the royalty clause.

PERSONATION.

Hon. Mr. Gibson moved the second reading of his bill to secure the prompt punishment of persons guilty of personation at elections for the Legislative Assembly. He referred to the serious nature of the evil, especially in large cities, where personation was carried on in some cases on almost a scientific basis. The bill provided that the deputy returning officer could receive an information against a personator, and could have him arrested on the spot; could have him also held during the drawing up of the information. The bill provides for from three months' to a year's imprisonment if the fine imposed is unpaid. The rest of the bill provided the machinery for the working of the bill. The forms to be used for drawing up the informations are to be supplied by the County Crown Attorney for the sum of $4 each, which Mr. Gibson said he thought was a fair allowance. The act applies only to the Cities of Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa and London. Mr. Gibson said there was some feeling that the act should have a wider application, but on the whole he thought this would be found sufficient for the present.

Mr. Meredith regarded the bill with favor generally, but would have it go a little further. Personation existed outside large cities, and the act should apply generally. He would have the suspect arrested immediately, instead of being held while the information was being drawn up. As a punishment, he would have imprisonment without the option of a fine. At the same time he would have a safeguard that persons making a wrong use of these powers should be liable to a heavy penalty.

Mr. Marter held that the operation of the bill should not be confined to a few cities. The law should extend to every polling subdivision of the country. There should be imprisonment as a punishment instead of a fine.

The bill then passed.

THE LIBEL LAW.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt then moved the second reading of his bill to amend the libel law. He thought that the press of Ontario has not sinned much against the rights of personal reputation. The course followed by the Province has been of a safe middle character, going neither to the one extreme nor the other, and he thought that the present bill would be found to be equally moderate. The bill referred to the cost of litigation and the question of appeals, and was intended to keep down litigation, and to prevent spiteful, blackmailing actions. Power was given to the defendant to put in certain evidence in mitigation; a time was set in which the plaintiff must commence his action. A consolidation of actions against several newspapers for the same statement was provided for. It was provided that the contributor of the statement complained of could be made a joint defendant, and appeals against orders for security of costs were forbidden.

Mr. Meredith concurred in the bill on the whole. Mr. Stratton supported the bill, and Mr. O'Connor spoke opposing the bill, saying that if newspapers wished to avoid libel suits they should avoid publishing libels, and that the majority of country papers contain numerous libellous personal paragraphs. Mr. Balfour warmly defended the character of the newspapers of Ontario, remarking that the speech of Mr. O'Connor was itself libellous. He hoped the bill would pass. Mr. A. F. Wood spoke, and then a division was taken, which resulted in the bill being carried by a vote of 45 to 21. The division was not on party lines.

Several other minor Government measures were also advanced a stage during the afternoon, the House adjourning at 6.25 p.m.