

48, whereas upon the votes, they would have been in a majority of 38.

In 1880 the Liberals gained 44 more seats than they were entitled to upon the votes cast in their favour, but after deducting these and adding them to their opponents, they would still have been left with an actual majority of 78, fully entitling them to office.

The results of the general election in 1885 were not materially different, and the question of office would still have remained unaffected by the proper results of the election in 1886. Here the Tories, whilst entitled upon their votes to a majority of only 29, obtained an actual majority of 119.

So, too, in 1892. The party victorious at the poll was in any case entitled to the administration. With a majority of 200,000 votes, the Liberals secured a majority of 40 seats, although proportionately they were entitled to 30 only.

The climax was reached, however, in 1895. The Tories gained 411 seats, the Liberals 259. Out of 6,331,000, 4,792,512 electors went to the poll, 2,412,100 supporting the Tory party, and 2,380,412 the Liberals, showing a majority of 31,688 electors in favour of the former. And yet upon this insignificant majority of votes, the Tory party secured the enormous majority of 152 representatives in the House of Commons.

As each member represented on the average about 7,000 electors, it will be seen that the true majority would have been 4 to 5.

Further on he says:

The haphazard nature of the present system may be gauged by a comparison between the figures of the 1892 and the 1895 elections. In the former the Liberals, with a majority of 200,000 votes secured a majority of 40 seats only; in the latter the Tories, with a majority of 103,814 (taking the highest figures), obtained a working majority of 152. With half the number of majority of votes, they secured a majority of representation nearly four times as large.

It is sometimes said that the results of the contested elections should alone be used for the present comparison, because it is impossible to determine what votes would have been cast in the uncontested constituencies. In all the figures here given, those for the last contested election have been taken, and this is the nearest approach to accuracy which can be made. Some writers count the whole of the possible votes to the sitting member, a method entirely unjustifiable and unreliable. If in the 1895 election the figures for the contested seats alone are taken a remarkable result is obtained, little flattering to the Unionist party. The Liberals polled 1,800,000 votes and the Unionists 1,775,000 with the result that the latter secured a majority representation of 77 seats, whereas according to Lord Avebury, by proportionate representation the Liberals would have been in an actual majority of three seats. And I venture to again here observe that even this majority of 100,000 votes would probably have been wiped out by the abolition of the plural vote. In England and Wales alone, for the year 1886, there were 68,000 electors with more than one vote. The average number of

votes possessed by each elector was consequently something at least greater than two. It was probably two and a half to three. As three-fourths, to put it moderately, of plural voters are admittedly Tories, even in the disastrous year of 1895, the Liberals would, under a real system of representation, including the abolition of the plural votes, have secured a small majority in the House, instead of occupying the impotent and ignominious position they filled.

The results of the 1900 election were equally unsatisfactory and manifestly unfair. With a majority of about 80,000 votes, the Unionists secured a majority of 134 members. Their majority, apart from the plural vote, should have been about 8. With the abolition of the plural vote, the Liberals would have been in a majority of about the same number.

The figures for the 1906 election are even more instructive. Omitting Ireland from consideration, out of a total electorate of 6,483,000, 5,426,000 went to the poll. Of these 56.4 per cent of the votes were cast for the government, and 43.6 per cent for the opposition. Upon this calculation the real proportional representation would be 316, instead of 428 members for the government, and 244, instead of 132, members for the opposition. Those figures are taken from the 'Pall Mall Gazette' and may be taken as approximately correct.

I shall not quote at greater length to show that in England the general elections have given quite different proportions in the House from what they have produced throughout the country. Upon several occasions within the past 25 or 30 years, a minority of the electors has secured a majority in the House, so that the country has been governed by representatives of the minority. Having shown what very grave instances have occurred both in France and England, let us turn to our own country and examine the results of the last election. But before doing so, I shall quote from a speech made by Sir Richard Cartwright on a motion in the Senate for reform of that body in 1906. On that occasion the right hon. senator spoke as follows of proportional representation, also of the present system, and of some very peculiar occurrences in his own native province of Ontario. He said:

I have long been convinced that our present system of representation is radically faulty, that in some important respects it is not merely vicious in theory, but vicious in practice. I want it to be distinctly and clearly understood that I am the last man to dispute the right of the majority to rule, nor do I desire in the slightest degree to dispute the consequent right of the majority to a majority of the representatives; but I do dispute the right of the majority to arrogate to itself an unfair proportion of the representatives of the people. I will illustrate my position. Let me suppose that one side controls 100,000 voters, and the other side controlled 90,000, and that there are 190,000 representatives to be elected. It is perfectly just and right, it appears to