

two things: Provincial franchise and provincial lists. The very resolution the right hon. gentleman read to-day coupled the two, and in that resolution he tied himself to not only provincial franchise but provincial lists. Read his arguments in 1885 and in 1898, and over and over again he repeated that notwithstanding there may be grievances, notwithstanding there may be inequalities, notwithstanding there may be things that militate against us in the Dominion, yet taking it all in all his basic principle was the provincial franchise and the provincial lists as they are made by the provincial authorities. Does my right hon. friend object to that version of his views? I shall read some citations from his speeches on that point, not because they have not been read before, but because they are mightily pertinent to the very thing we are discussing at this moment. In 1898 my right hon. friend had a Bill introduced by Mr. Fitzpatrick, and Mr. Fitzpatrick stated the object of the Bill to be:

The object of this Bill is to repeal the existing franchise and to substitute therefor the laws of the different provinces as to the qualification of voters, polling divisions and preparation of the lists.

That is the legal interpretation of the Bill given by the hon. gentleman who introduced it and who was fully able to state its meaning. There is no talk there about municipal systems, or municipal officers preparing the lists at the start. Now, every province had a different system at that time as it has now, but no matter about that, as Mr. Fitzpatrick said, the object of the Bill is to adopt the different provincial qualifications the provincial polling divisions and the provincial preparation of the lists. Sir Wilfrid Laurier put himself largely upon 'Hansard.' Sir John Thompson had introduced a franchise Act and Sir Wilfrid Laurier criticised it and said in 1898:

The blemish in the Act introduced by Sir John Thompson, and it is to me an absolute and irredeemable blemish, was, that while he adopted the provincial franchise, yet he retained the revising officer and the preparation of the list by the revising officer. I say this is the blemish of the Act. The wording of Sir John Thompson's Act was that the Governor in Council may from time to time appoint a proper officer to be called a revising officer, and so far as that is concerned that was a blemish.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier goes on to say:

It was far more logical according to our view, having adopted the principle of provincial franchise, to also accept the voters' list so prepared under the authority of the provincial legislature. On this side of the House we have an absolute hostility to the revising officer and the lists prepared by the revising officer.

That is sufficiently plain. He goes on:

I propose that we shall revert to that system. If we apply the principle of the provincial franchise why should we not take at the same time the means and methods by which the principle is applied.

Again he said:

If hon. gentlemen opposite have a better way, let them offer it. But as between the Dominion and the provincial franchise as between a Dominion list and provincial lists there can be no hesitation because we have had for 19 years the provincial lists and the provincial franchise.

That is clear, is it not. Again he said:

Local legislatures are likely to represent the people of the province.

That is exactly my argument this afternoon:

They are elected to represent the same people we represent here and no other people. It is supposed, and it is not a very violent supposition to make, that they will exercise that power to the best interests of their constituents according to their judgment and light. It is supposed they will adopt the best franchise to suit the province.

And having done that the right hon. gentleman says that he adopts the provincial franchise. Again he said:

It is possible that the control of the several provinces may pass into the hands of the Conservative party. Still, on a question of this kind, I am quite disposed, for my part, to accept the franchise prepared by the legislature, whether Liberal or Conservative. Would it not be far better as a matter simply of good government if the elections for this House should be conducted on the local lists and that the members of this parliament and the members of the legislature should represent the same body of people and should be elected by the same electors?

There cannot be anything more definite than that, but he goes further and he says:

There can be no difference of opinion, at all events from this point, that even if we had the power to pass such an amendment, its adoption would create great confusion. You would have a set of lists prepared for the local elections and by this amendment you would introduce federal legislation to take effect at the same time which would take the lists away from the local jurisdiction and bring them under federal jurisdiction as to the method of their preparation.

That is as explicit as it is possible to make English words. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick situation was brought up. My right hon. friend was ready for it then:

I have no doubt that if the people of Nova Scotia find the present system not satisfactory, the system which has given satisfaction hitherto, if they thought that the sheriff being appointed by the executive authority did not give them the same security as in former times, when the sheriffs were appointed by the judicial authority, they will undoubtedly in the exercise of their rights as citizens of