

even in Toronto. There is a Liberal force strong enough to be of great and valuable assistance in spreading Liberal principles and carrying them to a successful issue in the surrounding constituencies. We Reformers of the Province of Ontario must never forget what I am frequently reminding you of from the platform, that our force amongst the people is relatively greater than the force which the so-called Redistribution Act permits the people to send to Parliament on the Liberal side. You must not forget that under all the unfavorable circumstances of the late election, circumstances which I shall not now particularize—our political force compared with that of our opponents was almost as 45 to 40, as evidenced at the polls. You must not forget that the popular force, great as it was then, is greater now, that not many months elapsed after the general election before that series of events began which have been sounding even in unwilling ears the truth of the views which we have been pressing upon the people, and that, at this time the subjects which formed the principal topic of debate at the late election are discussed in altogether a different spirit, and that altogether a different temper prevails in the ranks of the adversary. It is

IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO APPEAL

any longer to certain apparent facts as proving beyond controversy the soundness of their policy. From a period within a few months after that election had taken place, and up to the present day, circumstances have been accumulating, facts have been coming forward, events have been precipitated upon the minds of the impartial and the intelligent in favour of the conclusion that a mistake was made in 1878 and repeated in 1882. (Loud cheers.) I maintain that the almost even balance which existed between the political parties in Ontario in 1882 has now been reversed, and that the preponderance of sentiment is with the Liberal party. I cannot forget, nor can I lose the present opportunity of referring to losses which we have sustained. Within the last few days we have sustained grievous losses. We have lost from the ranks of our party, from our fellowship as citizens, two men who were well known to most of you, and whose reputation had spread far beyond the bounds of the city which they called their home. We have lost James Bethune and William Johnston. They were young Liberals, not so long ago, and early in their lives they assumed a prominent place in the councils and ranks of the Liberal party. In 1871-'72, those critical years in our Provincial history, James Bethune valiantly contested and won the County of Stormont, when it was of the last consequence to the Liberal party that not a county should be lost. I, at that time, engaged actively as I was in these Pro-

vincial politics, felt under great obligations to him for the course he took. In the year 1882, ten years afterwards, when the Liberal party, crippled by the Act to which I have referred, and by an election precipitated upon it unexpectedly, was forced without preparation to enter into the contest, William Johnston volunteered for the fray. He offered to take charge of the organization of Ontario for the election, and he labored, as few men have labored, as few men could labor, through that contest and the one which followed a year later. We owed them gratitude for their services in the past, we owe to ourselves not to forget in any short time those services, but to keep their memory green. (Loud applause.) They were both, besides being political friends, personal friends of mine. They both happened to be students in my office, and to have received their professional training there, and therefore I feel as one who has lost two of his best personal friends, and as a public man share with you the feeling of sorrow for their loss. I trust that

THEIR NOBLE SERVICES

will remain enshrined in your hearts, and that the lesson they taught us will not be forgotten. They took an active, honorable, noble, manly part in the political life of their country. They worked while it was to-day and, may we not say of them as it was said by a great man of political friends gone:—

"From the eternal shadow rounding,
All our sun and starlight here,
Voices of our lost ones sounding,
Bid us be of heart and cheer,
Through the silence, down the spaces,
Falling on the inward ear.

Let us draw their mantles o'er us,
Which have fallen in our way,
Let us do the work before us,
Cheerily, bravely, while we may,
Ere the long night-silence cometh,
And with us it is not day."

(Loud and prolonged applause.) Now, Mr. Chairman, there are many topics, each of which deserve a speech by itself, which I might address upon. There are many questions of a most pressing character. The constitution under which we live was settled, unfortunately, without an appeal to the people, without that threshing and sifting, and crucial discussion in Parliament, in the newspapers and at the polls, which would have undergone had that appeal been taken. It was settled very largely by a public man, who was avowedly of the opinion that it was a mistake, that the union should have been a legislative, not a federal union, and it bears unmistakable marks of that handiwork. There are defects and inconsistencies which would not have appeared had it been submitted to the test of public discussion. You have alluded, Mr. Chairman, to one defect—the Senate. As Senate, we have—we, living in a democratic country, in an age of democratic principles—a