

12. Preparation of the Dominion and Provincial voters' lists by the municipal officers.

This is a principle that obtained in practice from the time of Confederation, 1867, till the passage of the Dominion Franchise Act in 1885. This Act was introduced March 19th, and came up for its second reading April 16th. There followed the most memorable parliamentary battle in the history of Canada. The opposition of the Liberal members to the bill was continued till the early hours of July 4th, when the bill received its third reading, and the preparation of the Dominion lists was taken from the municipal officers and placed in the hands of the revising barrister. This useless, expensive, and unjust measure has at all times received the unsparing condemnation of the Liberal party, and one of their first acts upon returning to power will be to sweep it from the statute book and return to the lists prepared by the municipal officers, and now used for Provincial purposes. (See resolution 7, Liberal platform.)

13. Conformity of electoral districts to county boundaries as constituted for municipal purposes, as far as the principle of representation by population will allow.

The resolution is a well deserved condemnation of the most infamous gerrymander bill of 1882, and the subsequent bill of a similar though less flagrant character. The bill of 1882 was a servile imitation of the worst form of political rascality practised in the United States. The bill readjusted the bounds of some fifty ridings without regard to county boundaries or public convenience, and deliberately disregarded popular rights. The bill was vigorously opposed by the Liberal members of Parliament, but received the solid Government support, and passed its third reading May 12th, 1882, by a strict party vote, 103 to 37. This measure also will receive the attention of the Liberal party when it comes into power, and will then cease to disgrace the Canadian statute book. At the last Dominion general election there were polled by the Liberals 182,000 votes in Ontario, and by the Conservatives 186,000. These figures are from the returns checked by the bye-elections. The Conservatives have 59 members in the House from Ontario, and the Liberals 33, but if the seats were fairly distributed the Liberals would have 45 and the Conservatives 47. For every 3,159 votes which the Conservatives received they have a member in the House, while the Liberals have a member for every 5,550 Liberal votes polled. Why should such unfairness be tolerated? (See resolution 8, Liberal platform.)

The Liberal party, guided by noble leaders, inspired by its history, doctrines and principles, has ever championed the rights of the people and for years has sought to remedy the abuses complained of by the Patrons of Industry. (See resolutions moved in the House of Commons by Liberals, and pages of Hansard above referred to.) Had the farmers stood firmly by the Liberal candidates and Alexander Mackenzie in 1878, the N. P. fallacy would not have been imposed upon the people. The Liberal party claims the confidence and votes of all who agree with it and profess to seek the success of its own time-honored and stoutly-maintained policy.