

THEY CRY FOR REFORM, BUT ARE WILLING TO WAIT FOR A YEAR OR SO TO GET IT.

HALIFAX Will Have Its Civic Elections Next Week—The Mayor Will Have a Walk Over—Candidates For Mayor Next Year—The Aldermen to the Front This Time.

HALIFAX, April 19.—The Halifax civic elections take place on Wednesday of next week. The contest will be remarkable for little else than one fact—that it furnishes a new evidence that the citizens like to talk "reform" all the year through, except at election time, when for a couple of months they lose all interest, or seem to think everything is all right with the civic machine.

During the past winter the air was full of "reform" propositions. The "tax reform" men were "sleeping with one eye open," waiting for what they thought would be a good chance to do something, yet the chance came not. An active campaign was pursued by the so-called "citizens' reform association," headed by Senator Power and some of the wealthier people in the community. They went so far as to spend a little money in hiring a hall and in printing, and they expended considerable time in lobbying the legislature. It ended there. The mayor propounded a scheme of "reform," and so did Alderman Foster, the "King of ward 5."

Now that an election is on, one would think that something might be heard of these reform measures, or of some plan embodying good points from each. But not a syllable has been uttered. The word "reform" has not even been whispered. All the schemes, so far as present interest in them is concerned, are dead as mummies. Citizens so exhausted themselves in preliminary talk that now when the time for action has come they are not able to say one word and will not cast one ballot.

The prominent feature of the civic election of next week will be the celebration of the death for another year at least of reform in city government. This is not because people are satisfied with existing conditions, but that they are too lethargic to do anything about it. Talking at election time without voting would be some what inconsistent, so they stop talking now to resume when it can be safely done—after the election. Ten chances to one it will be to again stop talking just before next year's election. By the way, Alderman Hamilton, who secured the abolition of the board of works, is rewarded with opposition and W. B. Mahoney will give him a hard fight.

M. E. Keefe, goes in unopposed for a third term as mayor. A fortnight ago it looked very much as if he would have to fight for the gown. An influential requisition was signed asking J. C. Mackintosh to run as a guardian of good government and a Prohibitionist. Mr. Keefe's friends put forth the plea that their man was entitled to a third term, and they were right in saying his worship had done nothing to forfeit his claim. If he had been opposed it would have offended the Mayor's co-religionist supporters. Mr. Mackintosh looked at the matter from that and other points of view, and excusing himself on account of his health and business engagements, declined the honor that was being forced upon him, but hinted he might be on deck next year.

Next year will show a lusty scramble for the mayoralty. Ex-alderman Pickering would dearly like to run, and this was talked of for this year. A serious hindrance to him was the question which was raised—"Has W. F. Pickering the necessary property qualification?" The general opinion was that he had not, and he will likely be handicapped next year by the asking of the same question.

Alderman Saul Mosher, the man from Ward 6, has his eye on the chair, and he will try, with the support of the North end, to get his hand upon it next year. The south will be against him. Alex. Stephen and George E. Boak are also aspirants for the mayoralty. But it may be set down as an assured fact that if J. C. Mackintosh consents to be a candidate, he will be the man who will enjoy the honor of presiding at the city council and of drawing the \$1,000 which goes with the office. It will easily be Mayor Mackintosh.

mason, and in other ways he has lost the confidence of those electors of ward 4 who think they are entitled to a Catholic alderman from that part of the city. The best man they could find, who was willing to go into the contest, was J. F. Kelly. He will unite the discontented voters, but there is a strong chance that ald. Ryan's new-found temperance friends will vote for him solidly and that he will receive the support of many who don't approve of the raising of religious or denominational considerations at the polls.

Ald. Hamilton of ward 3, is a crank, and a man who is far from possessing the faculty of making people like him. He is more likely, whenever he gets the opportunity, to say something which will offend a man rather than please him, though he might just as well be pleasant as disagreeable. He is too outspoken and too ready to condemn everything that is, merely because it is. His motto sometimes seems to be: "Down with everything that is up, and up with everything that is down." At the same time Hamilton is a good alderman, honest and free of charge of civic hoodling, and he deserves re-election. [None of the aldermen are hoodlers, however, or even "suspects"]. The combination of traits in Alderman Hamilton's character, civic and personal, he has to thank for the opposition from W. B. Mahoney which now faces him. No one before ever heard of Mahoney as a civic politician. He is a billiard board and cabinet maker, and property owner, and may, if he succeeds, in his election, make a good alderman. Hamilton is a decided anti-clerical man, whilst Mahoney is said to be a staunch roman catholic. In these days of three protestant members in the local legislature, and with so much whispering about the P. P. A. and that sort of thing, there is no telling what effect the denominational standing of Hamilton and Mahoney, or of other candidates, may have on their election.

Ald. Redden first went into the council from Ward 2 three months ago, unopposed. For a week past it looked as though he would have to fight for a continuance of his aldermanic honors, for Thomas J. Barry, a painter, came into the field. He stayed a week, but last Monday retired leaving Ald. Redden to a walk over. Redden had taken his coat off for work, and it is probable that such a display of energy frightened Barry, because there was an impression abroad that Redden would retire if opposed. This was a mistake and it was Barry's privilege to do the retiring.

Ald. Allen, Ward 1, is retiring from the council, the only man of the six who seems tired of city council life. Ald. Allen was a well-meaning city father, perhaps, but impractical and unsuccessful. He started with loud professions and helpful resolutions, but he has done little to make civic government better than he found it. Whether that was because of the depravity of his colleagues, or on account of his own weakness, or a combination of both, is a question for Ald. Allen himself and for those he leaves behind him in the chamber.

John M. Geldert, jr., was the first to announce himself as a candidate to succeed Ald. Allen. Mr. Geldert is a lawyer and shorthand writer, but is hardly the kind of stuff of which aldermen are made. He is a thin, nervous, little fellow, and rides a bicycle. George Musgrave, of the commission firm of Musgrave & Co., has also come out as a candidate for Ward 1. He would have the better chance of the two, though Musgrave, like Geldert is no new man in civic matters, and has hitherto taken so little interest in them, that it is pretty hard for voters to make a choice, except that Musgrave has the possible advantage of possessing a business rather than a legal training.

Freaks in the French Army. The French army will soon present a fine appearance. In his desire to bring up the military establishment to the largest number possible, the Minister of War has issued an ordinance which does away with many exemptions hitherto in existence. In future the following defects shall no longer exempt a man from being drafted into the so-called auxiliary services of the army administration: Dwarfish stature, hare-lip, baldness, toothlessness, squint-eyed, supernumerary or wanting fingers or toes, fat belly, varicose veins, hernia, stuttering, abnormal ugliness, &c. What a fine collection of oddities will have to do the uniform.

CITY ELECTION RETURNS.

The table given below will show readers of PROGRESS outside of St. John the way the candidates on the anti-reform ticket were snowed under by the ballots of the citizens last Tuesday:

Table with columns for MAYOR, ALDERMEN AT LARGE, BROOKS WARD, SHINNEY WARD, DUKES WARD, QUEENS WARD, KINGS WARD, PRINCE WARD, VICTORIA WARD, DUFFERIN WARD, LANSDOWNE WARD, LORNE WARD, STANLEY WARD, WELLINGTON WARD. Rows list candidates like George Robertson, Daniel J. McLaughlin, etc., with their respective vote counts across various wards.

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An Angel Unawares. An insurance agent, albeit a useful and, at times, attractive person, is not always a welcome visitor, says the Detroit Free Press. To some people, indeed, he is a decided bore. One of this class owns a handsome residence, and even the thought of an agent provoked his ire. One evening, recently, he was enjoying his otium cum dig. when a man walked in on him very unceremoniously. The visitor was a total stranger to him, and before he had time to throw an inkstand at him, or to ask him, to sit down, he began quite calmly, and in a most business-like tone, to talk.

"Have you any insurance on this house?" said he. Well, Mr. Otium-cum-dig, was afire in a minute. "What do you mean, sir," he stormed, "by breaking into my house, sir, in this manner—breaking into my house, with your internal insurance business? It is no concern of yours, sir, whether this house is insured or not. Get out, or I'll throw you out." The visitor was as calm as a May morning. "It is no concern of mine, whatever," he replied, "but I thought"— "You have no right to think about what doesn't concern you, sir," interrupted the house owner. "I want no insurance agents forcing themselves upon me, sir."

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