

Vancouver Conventions and Candidates

(By a Candid Critic).

For information and enlightenment concerning the public men and affairs of British Columbia, the B. C. M. representative attended the Vancouver nomination Conventions of both political parties and also made a point of hearing the party candidates at their first meeting.

The Liberal Convention on Monday night and the Conservative one in the same hall (Dominion) on the Tuesday could not but leave very different impressions with the independent observer. The candidates nominated and selected at each meeting were, in type as in number, notable in contrast. Regarding the Monday convention, perhaps the two dominant impressions left concerned the manner in which eager Chairman Conley wielded the gavel of office and the suggestions given by the renderings of the quartette who sung the praises of the re-nominated candidates in a verse for each one followed with a refrain beginning:

"Glory, Glory be to Honest John."

The sentiment was well meant, and however the words reflected on the head they did credit to the heart, of the composer whoever he was; though the chorus seemed to partake a little of a revival meeting song.

After the nominations seven of which were to be voted on for the six places, the Liberal nominees were asked to address the Convention, and strangers in the gallery exchanged views as to who would be the one left. The decision was not a difficult one to anyone who has observed how easily Western Canadian audiences are influenced by the "gift of the gab," and how impatient they are apt to become with anyone, however learned or able, who ventures to inflict anything of the nature of a written or rather closely-read address upon them. The candidate left out had evidently thought fit to prepare and write out his speech beforehand. The matter of it seemed rather good, and may be too technical, for such a crowd, and the premature applause indicated that the audience was in no mood for such a disquisition. It was more in keeping with the mind of such an assembly for a candidate to announce in brief, as Mr. James Ramsay did, that he stood four-square for the Oliver Government. To Independents this may be too easy-going a platform, but it suits the party voter, who too often needs little more.

But if the Liberals scarcely needed to vote on their nominations, the Conservative Convention on the Tuesday provided such a wealth of choice in the way of candidates—a score or more for the six places—that the balloting lasted till well-nigh 1 a.m. The number of nominations certainly proved that the Convention was being conducted in a thoroughly democratic way, and perhaps it was a pity that the Proportional Representation method of voting could not have been adopted.

Probably the Conservative Party is well enough pleased with the selection, but even before the selected candidates were heard it may have been open to question as to whether some of them would not fail of election, or at any rate miss many votes from "Independents" through their being a little known to the Vancouver public generally.

"Picking the Winners."

As the "Wayside Philosopher" has elsewhere in this issue exercised his option of anticipating the election results generally, we may follow suit, at least so far as our acquaintance with the situation permits. With the result of the recent Prohibition vote in mind, he would be a bold person (apart of course from the Party men themselves) who would predict with unqualified assurance, what will be the result of the election on December 1st. If many maintain that there will be a "turn-over" somewhat similar to that of four years ago,

probably a larger number of prophets hold that the Oliver government will be given another term, but with a decreased majority.

At the same time it is curious to reflect that five of the six members elected for Vancouver last time were attached to one side, the Liberal. This indicates that the Independents, who may have much to do with settling the results, are apt to swing round; and it is conceivable that the desire for a change may again assert itself with surprising results.

While it may be wise to leave the day to declare the results so far as the Province as a whole is concerned, it is open to us, and naturally inviting, to surmise what the results may be in Vancouver City.

Even with a suggested seat in a Liberal Cabinet likely to be open to her if elected, we are not so confident that Mrs. Smith will be at the head of the poll, if among the winning six. There is no question that she was elected last time largely, if not mainly, as the widow of Mr. Ralph Smith, and her own good-natured or jesting utterance from the platform of the Dominion Hall this month suggested that she was open to seek re-election as plain Mrs. Smith or Mrs. Somebody-else. Of course such a remark may attract and win more "good-sport" voters in "the gallery" class than it would repel in the "boxes" or the "pit."

It goes without saying that the partisans or "straight-ticket" voters on each side will support the lady in each case. The opportunity of voting for women members is still a comparatively new one, and if many men and women who vote independently are influenced by it, both ladies may be among the first six. Mrs. Smith's appeal to the electors at this time may have been qualified by her change of attitude from a declared "Independent," to a deliberate partisan. On the other hand, the lady on the other side, though a bright and promising personality, who, like most gentlemen in her profession, is gifted with confidence and practiced in speech, may be held, in the judgment of many, to be too young in years and experience to undertake such a responsibility.

In the circumstances, while we believe that "woman's place and power" may entitle her to a share in the honors and offices and work of the Legislature, we should not be surprised if both ladies fail to get a place among the first six. On the other hand if many of the women voters put sex before party or anything else, both ladies may be returned.

There is a question about "M. A." There seems to be no doubt that he continues to make strong appeal to many as an orator and may be also as a man. Even if it be taken for granted that he was at fault in connection with the matter which led to his resignation of the Attorney-Generalship, he seems none the less to have a considerable following which may in part be attributed to a clannishness (associated with the Scottish Highlands and Highlanders) that is apt to say "The clan first, whatever the argument"; and also in part to the exercise of a commendable chivalrous spirit on the part of some who do not believe in deserting a man because he has made a mistake, or who cling all the more tenaciously to their idol even if he be proved to have feet of clay.

"M. A.'s" personality may seem more forceful than attractive to many independents, and yet it would be a bad business for most humans in any life if they were given no "second chance."

When D. D.'s Differ—Who Shall Decide?

The quoted phrase about a second chance may at once turn our thoughts to the possibility of Mr. W. J. Bowser getting another opportunity to serve as Premier of the Province. Remote, as many may think that possibility, the writer of these