

SEEKING FOR REFORM. MOVEMENTS IN VARIOUS CITIES ON THE CONTINENT.

Boston is in the front with a Municipal League—What they think ought to be done—An effort to get the Working People to take an interest in Affairs.

Boston, April 12.—When a number of prominent citizens set up a standard of reform, the people are pretty sure to follow in line and make things interesting, it is only for a time.

Take the St. John tax reduction association, for instance. Viewed from this distance it seems to have things pretty much its own way.

I do not know what the tax reductions are going to do when they take hold of the affairs of the city, and a careful perusal of the platform published in the St. John papers fails to throw much light on the subject. It is evident that the reformers are going to change the methods of doing civic business considerably, but just how this is going to be done effectively seems to be a matter of some doubt.

I became more thoroughly impressed with this fact while attending a meeting of the Boston Municipal League a few evenings ago. You must understand that St. John is not the only city that is making an effort to reform its civic government about this time. In fact a great civic reform movement seems to be sweeping over the continent. Not long ago the municipal reform associations of a number of cities sent delegates to a convention held in Philadelphia, and a national league of civic reform was formed. The idea of the national league is that by reforming the political methods of the large cities the gateway will be opened to introduce a great reform in the conduct of the affairs of the nation.

The situation in the large cities of the United States is very different from that in St. John. Here national politics enter into every department of the city. It is a continual fight between the two great parties from one year's end to another, one party is always on the lookout to gain an advantage, but both parties being corrupt one cannot say much about the other. So when a new movement is started many partisans of national politics usually hesitate before giving their support to a new movement, while others will enter in to it in order to lay wires to swing the reformers into line with one of the old parties when the proper time comes, and events have shown that the proper time does come sooner or later.

The fact that so many reformers start out with little to work on, with no definite plan which they can put in operation after having secured control of affairs, has always made it possible for the politician to bury the new movement in one of the old parties which have such thorough organization, and through ward representatives have such a hold on the people, that it is in a city like Boston a great undertaking to try to lessen their influence, even with the best sentiment of the community behind the reformers. St. John is practically free from party politics in its civic affairs and the reformers will probably find favor with the people, and they can keep the good will of the people; they may be able to reduce the taxes, without depriving the people of the things which they have a right to expect from the city.

There is nothing that will make the average voter disgusted more than the failure to keep promises, on the part of his representatives, especially when it is not clear in his mind at the outset just how it would be possible to keep these promises.

This matter was thoroughly discussed at the meeting of the Boston municipal reform league, referred to a few moments ago. One of Dr. Parkhurst's New York lieutenants was there; so was a reformer from Philadelphia, one of the Quaker city's leading citizens; while Mr. Moorfield Storey, a thoroughly representative Bostonian also had something to say.

The addresses all covered the same ground and were pretty much to the point. They explained why former reform movements had failed; now they had been started for the purpose of patching up leaks, in certain city departments, and when the leaks were fixed, or the people thought they were, the usefulness of the reformers was gone. The opinion seemed to prevail that the present system of city government was antique and inadequate; that it was the same as that devised for the towns a hundred or more years ago, and by which towns are governed to-day; the cities having patched up and added to the original plan as the populations grew.

One of the ablest speakers took exception to the generally expressed opinion that a city should be run the same as a private business, with the object of making money, in view. A city, he claimed, should be conducted for the benefit of the people living in it, and in following up this argument he questioned the advisability of giving charters to street railway companies, gas companies, and other corporations which pay large dividends by making their own terms with the taxpayers, who through their representatives have been good enough to give the corporations these exclusive rights.

The same argument was used in speaking of the protection the city should give the people, especially the poorer classes. The rich, it was claimed, could look out for themselves. If poor men were brought into the market, the poor man had to buy it, if disease entered the city the poor man had to stay and face it; the rich could move away for a time, and so on in every department where the city is supposed to look after the welfare of its citizens.

These sentiments cannot be appreciated in St. John, perhaps, because the capitalists do not show their hands so plainly as they do here, where city governments do not govern nor legislatures make laws.

Despite all the bluster one sees in the papers about fighting the corporations, the capitalists always win. The big corporations control legislation, and men who go into the board of aldermen or legislature without a cent begin to build houses and buy real estate before they are there six months.

The idea of those engaged in the present movement is to get all the plants controlled by the corporations under civic control and have them operated for the benefit of the people, instead of making them pay big dividends for the few people who now control them.

Of course no definite plans have been proposed, but the Boston League has already appointed a long list of committees, on which are many representative men; men, too who if they perform their duties faithfully will have to keep a close watch on the department of the city to which they are assigned, so that when election time comes they will be able to report on the fitness of the men holding city offices.

As I stated before, this movement is not a local one. New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and a number of other American cities have taken it up, and Montreal, I understand, has made rapid strides toward civic reform, by means of a local association.

Just at present the heads of the movement are trying to get the working people interested, and expect a thorough organization outside of the political parties. They intend to organize clubs of a semi-social nature in the different wards, to bring all the people in contact with each other, and keep up the interest during the year.

A great deal of this is not pertinent to the situation in St. John, but the point I want to make is the great necessity of having something definite in view; of an association knowing what it is going to do to fulfill the promises it makes to the people.

The men I have quoted, men of wide experience in these matters, knowing a great deal of the ins and outs of city governments in large cities, and many of whom have been reformers for years; these men see the folly of patching up leaks, or meddling with simply the ruptured parts of a diseased machine, which is liable to break out in another spot despite their best efforts.

Mr. William H. Welsh's many friends among St. John printers will be interested to know that he is now in business on his own account, a member of the firm of Welsh, Freeman & Co., dealers in printing supplies, 165, 167 Pearl street. Mr. Welsh made hosts of friends in St. John while the representative of the Cranston printing press company.

R. G. LARSEN. The Brownley Boiler Feeder. The following is a report of an actual test of Brownley Patent Injector received by The Brownley Injector Co., of New York. (recently incorporated for the manufacture of the Brownley Patent Injectors for the United States). The patent rights for the United States having been sold to said firm by Messrs. Stirling & Brownley of this city for a large sum of money.

LOUIS BLOCK, Vice Pres. De La Vergne Refrigerating Machine Co. New York March 29th, 1894. The Brownley Mfg Co., New York City Gentlemen: We herewith give you the results obtained by us in testing one of your No. 35 Injectors.

We started the test on the morning of February 21st., and stopped at 5:30 p. m. February 24th. We give you the average performance under two lifts viz. When lifting two feet and when lifting 18 feet and discharging against a boiler pressure of 120 lbs., the injector stopped working when temperature of water had reached 145 degrees; and the temperature of the water discharged into the boiler was at that time 260 degrees.

When lifting 18 feet against same boiler pressure it broke with temperature of suction at 114 degrees, while the temperature of the water fed into the boiler was again 260 degrees. This performance is evidently satisfactory and most assuredly must be gratifying to you.

We will be only too pleased to show the working of the injector to any one whom you may send, as we have it in use; it taking the place of one which we thought was an excellent one.

Besides doing remarkably good work, the injector is substantially built and is very simple in operation. Yours truly, De La Vergne Refrigerating Machine Co. LOUIS BLOCK, Chief Engineer.

Messrs. Stirling & Brownley, St. John, N. B., guarantee every injector manufactured by them and will be glad to send one on 30 days' trial to any reliable Steam user. They also will pay all expenses in connection with same if injector does not give satisfaction.

Over 150 words a minute written in Simple Shorthand (taught by mail) by Mr. C. J. White, now stenographer for T. C. Allen & Co., Halifax, in a little over 3 months.

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TO THE ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF ST. JOHN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

Several months ago the Tax Reduction Association, composed of our citizens, entered upon the work of civic reform, and being assisted by the masses of our people matured, and in the face of determined opposition carried through the legislature a bill that has changed the mode of elections and broadened the representation, altered the constitution of the council and secured the selection of representatives who will look to the interest of the city as a whole and secure the administration of public affairs with efficiency and economy. This movement of reform has entered its most critical and vital stage, because you are now called upon to elect under the new constitution men who will secure the triumphant completion of the efforts so nobly made on our city's behalf.

Therefore, we, as friends of this progressive movement, solicit your support, and pledge ourselves to absolutely oppose any increase in the debt by the issue of bonds or otherwise, unless in cases of absolute and unforeseen emergency, to keep the annual expenditure of the city within the income, and not to allow more money to be spent for any account than the amount assessed for the current year, to apply for legislation giving the citizens more direct control of school, and other expenditures; to the appointment of many officials at present appointed by the local government; also to vote in the city council the fixing of the salaries of all civic officials, and generally to demand for the citizen the right of responsible local self-government; also to the consideration of the departmental system, with a view to its revision and the abolition of all unnecessary offices, to inquire into the management of the business of the assessors' office for the purpose of having the assessment law or its administration improved and generally to enter upon an investigation of the city's affairs with a view to the practice of the most rigid economy and a sincere effort to obtain a dollar's worth for every dollar spent.

George Robertson for Mayor. Patrick McCarthy, for alderman D. J. McLaughlin, for Guy's ward. C. Burton Lockhart, for Guy's ward. John B. M. Baxter, for Brook's ward. George H. Waring, for Sydney ward. Stephen B. Hazard, for Duke's ward. John W. Daniel, for Queen's ward. James Kennedy, for King's ward. William Shaw for Wellington ward. John H. McRobbi, for Prince ward. James Swaton, for Victoria ward. Thomas Milledge, for Duffin ward. Robert W. DeBury, for Lundown ward.

John McMulkin for Lorne ward. Michael O'Mahoney, for Stanley ward.

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