

this first election a few words may now be spoken.

The feeling which animated a certain portion of the population in consequence of the great delay in allotting lands did not readily subside. Governor Carleton on his arrival at St. John was received with unbounded enthusiasm, but the conduct of the agents was still viewed with suspicion. Nor did the members appointed to positions in his majesty's council and in the first provincial government command the universal approval of the public. Abijah Willard, Ward Chipman and others had been of the famous "fifty-five," and their appointment was distasteful to some of the new settlers.

In the Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Intelligencer, published at St. John, Sept. 9, 1784, is an interesting prospectus issued by one David Melville of a history he purposed to have printed by subscription, which would supply an accurate account of the settlement of his majesty's exiled Loyalists on the north side of the Bay of Fundy. In his prospectus Mr. Melville states that amongst other subjects he will discuss "The many disputes between the inhabitants and their agents, so called, concerning escheatable land;" "The resolutions of the governor and the opposite resolutions of his council;" "The ruin this settlement has already suffered, is now suffering, and is likely to suffer hereafter, from the delays of locating the lands, etc." The writer was not evidently a man of much education, but he represented quite an element in the community, and one which made its influence felt in the first election campaign held in the city of St. John.

The candidates at this election on the government side were Jonathan Bliss, Ward Chipman, Christopher Billopp, William Pagan, John McGeorge and Stephen Hoyt. (The place of the latter gentleman on the ticket was afterwards taken by Stanton Hazard). On the opposition side the candidates were Tertullus Dickenson, Richard Lightfoot, Richard Bonsall, Peter Grim, John Boggs and Alexander Reid.

The franchise was as broad and democratic as it could well be made. The sheriff, Wm. S. Oliver, announced in the Royal Gazette, under date October 18, 1785: "All males of full age, inhabitants of the city and county, that have resided three months therein are entitled to their votes on this occasion."

There were several independent candidates, but the issue eventually resolved

itself into a contest between the government and the opposition tickets. A variety of issues intensified the feeling. It was in a measure a contest between the aristocracy and democracy of the day. It was also in some measure a contest of Upper Cove versus Lower Cove. In regard to the political questions at issue, the government ticket in the main endorsed the conduct of the agents of the Loyalists, whilst the opposition demanded that a strict enquiry should be made into the conduct of these officials. The columns of Christopher Sower's Royal Gazette were filled with long communications from the belligerent parties on either side. A writer who signs himself "The Lower Cove," claims that the first act of the assembly should be the impeachment of the agents for their fraudulent conduct. In reply to the strictures of his opponents, Attorney General Bliss stated that the courts were always open with powers competent to the trial of all crimes and engaged on his part to give due attention to any person who would now come forth with a specific charge against the agents of any crime demanding a public prosecution. That if a representation as talked of should be made to the king, complaining of the conduct of the agents as a public grievance, all that could be expected would be an order to the attorney general to institute a prosecution and that he was now ready to do this without such order upon an accusation being made on sufficient grounds of any particular crime.

It is curious to note that on the government ticket were two of the famous "fifty-five" petitioners, viz: Christopher Billopp and Ward Chipman, and that the leader of the opposition was Tertullus Dickenson, one of the committee of four who waited on Sir Guy Carleton with the memorial in opposition to the claims of the "fifty-five." An attempt seems also to have been made to secure the services of Samuel Hake, another member of the committee. One of his friends in a letter which appeared in the Royal Gazette of Nov. 1st, 1785, recommends him as "a gentleman whose judicious and spirited exertions in favor of the Loyalists both in New York and England have already procured him general applause and admiration and entitled him to the gratitude of every good subject in this province." Samuel Hake, the correspondent, adds is hourly expected here as his majesty's commissary of stores and provisions.

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