

A Proper Voters' List

In 1910 and 1911, when Mr. Evans occupied the mayor's chair, it was strongly urged that the law with respect to the compilation of the civic voters' lists be changed, so that aliens would not be recorded among the citizens eligible as voters, and the present possibilities with respect to duplication of votes for mayor and controllers would be eliminated. No action, so far as we know, was taken at the time, and in recent civic contests the law has been such that it was not only practically, but wholly, impossible to prevent citizens so disposed from voting for mayor and controllers more than once.

Since the election in December we have been pleased to see that Mr. F. H. Davidson, in his aldermanic capacity, has declared on several occasions his intention of pressing for a civic investigation into the matter of duplication of votes, with a view to ascertaining the true condition of affairs, and if, as expected, there has been much duplication, impressing further upon his associates the imperative necessity for a radical change in the compilation of the lists. In Wednesday's Tribune we commented on the need for enquiry and amendment of the law as follows:—

To what extent has there been duplication in voting for the mayoralty and board of control candidates? The opinion of several members of the Council is that the practice of voting "early and often" is altogether too common. It must be assumed that every member of the Council is anxious that absolute honesty shall be recognized as the only standard to follow in our elections, therefore it may be taken for granted that the enquiry suggested by Ald. Davidson will be prosecuted at the earliest possible moment. If thoughtless, or possibly unscrupulous, electors now vote not once, but three, four or five times, for mayor and controllers, the man who conforms to the law demands that the practice shall cease. The enquiry will determine whether the practice is general. If it is common, or if the present law is conducive to laxity, then we have brains enough in the city hall to devise a better law. The enquiry should be held at once.

Mr. Davidson, in the more important office of mayor, will be in even a better position to press for enquiry. Every member of the Council desirous of protecting the franchise of every honest citizen will stand behind him. Mr. Davidson, during the campaign, took commendable and advanced ground, going so far as to urge the abolition of canvassing, and the ordinary election practices which are not always conducive to ascertaining the true desires and free verdict of the electorate. An opportunity has arisen to give to Winnipeg better laws. If it is necessary to go to the Legislature, the hearty co-operation of that body may be counted on.