

An Ex-Alderman's Views.

"The colored people of the District want the right of suffrage," said Solomon G. Brown, who represented the colored people as a member of the board of aldermen during the time of the old corporation of the District, to a POST reporter last evening. "The people of the District suffered from the misrule of the men at the head of the old corporation, but the present form of government is infinitely worse; it is anti-republican, it is utterly against our system—it controverts all our ideas of government. And, aside from this, the present government is bad in itself. Look at the school board, what a condition it is in. Look at the police force. Even the commissioners themselves cannot agree; they never could. The disagreement is not confined to those now at the head of the District government. It extended to all who have held the office, and must continue with such a system."

"Do you think this is owing to the manner of their appointment or to the power being divided between three men?"

"To both. We want but one man at the head of the District government, as mayor, and he must be the choice of the people of the District. You may rest assured that the man who is elected to that office will be the best man for the place. Those who oppose suffrage say that corrupt and unprincipled men would play upon the ignorant classes; that they would influence the uncultured negro. This would not be the case. The time may have been when it could have been worked, but it cannot be done now."

"Would the colored people be willing to bear their share of the expense of the government, if Congress would refuse to bear a part as now, and give the people the right of suffrage?"

"They would. They would sooner have suffrage without the financial aid of Congress, than to have their aid without the suffrage. Indeed, I think, and I am sure, that in this I speak the thoughts of all the thinking colored people, that the District ought to be able to support itself. It would be better for it."

"Do you think that there would be any party strife resulting from self-government?"

"There would be no Democrats or Republicans; there would be no color line. The best men in the District would be placed at the head of the government. The leading white men, the old residents of the District, are respected by the colored people, and they will be led by them. The only question arising at elections would be which candidate was the best citizen. The colored people have no confidence in the sharp, tricky men—these shrewd politicians—and if they are ever influenced by them, it is only because those whom they would trust—those they respect and follow—have held aloof from them. They know an honest man and will follow his advice, if he will only stop to give it."

"Is there any movement to this end on the part of the colored people?"

"There is, and a powerful movement, too. It is for this suffrage in the District of Columbia that the colored people will meet in convention at Louisville, Ky. We shall ask the colored people throughout the country who will be represented there, not to send any man to Congress, who will not vote to free the District from its present bondage. We discuss the matter among ourselves and are ready to back up our convictions, but we are waiting for the white people to make a move, and we shall follow and support them. It must not be a move of the colored people, it must be of the best citizens of the District; the whites must take the lead."