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13th Annual Convention

Saskatoon, Sask., July 15th, 16th and 17th

The Convention opened with the President, Mayor L. A. Lavallee, K. C., of Montreal, in the chair.

The President:—Your Honour and Mr. Mayor of Saskatoon: It is my privilege to have the honor of opening this Convention under the best auspices, as the Province has deputed the Lieutenant Governor to honor us with his presence. After the address of welcome by the Mayor, you will be delighted to hear the first citizen of this Province, Lieutenant Governor Brown.

Mayor Harrison, on behalf of the Council and citizens of Saskatoon, extending a cordial welcome said: It is not often that we have a body of men presenting such important public interests as you do, and authorized to speak on behalf of so many widely separated communities.

This Union, although counting in its existence such a comparatively short period as twelve years, has exercised a marked influence in fostering an interest in municipal affairs and in provoking a more thorough and sustained discussion of municipal questions throughout the country. The special circumstances of the various Provinces differ among each other in many respects, but the main features of municipal life are everywhere the same, and the experience of local governing bodies in one part of the country is most helpful to those living elsewhere.

Saskatoon is a City which had no existence ten years ago. There was at that time a population at this point of one or two hundred, so that the present City exemplifies the rapidity with which progress goes forward in the West. It is natural that we should have had to cope with unusual difficulties in consequence of such swift growth, and in laying the foundations of the great City, which, in the near future, will be built up at this point. We have made mistakes, and many of them; but we believe that we have also achieved a reasonable amount of success. We take a deep interest in the work of this Union, and in the subjects which

are coming up for discussion. We are now at the very beginning of our career as a City, and we are anxious to have all the light that can be thrown upon the problems which confront us. We believe that we shall benefit greatly by your stay in our midst.

The President introduced His Honour,

Lieutenant Governor Brown

Mr. Chairman: Your Worship: In addressing such an assemblage as this, I feel considerable diffidence and hesitation, because I see before me, representing the Municipalities, a body of men that has to deal with one of the most complex, the most important, the largest problems that it is possible to conceive; many men laboring under different conditions but yet, in the main, administering the most intricate and complex form of government, namely, the municipal government of the different communities which they represent.

When you think of the expenditure of the great city of Montreal and compare it with the expenditure that is possible for the Legislature of the Province of Quebec (and the same might be said of the other provinces), you have some idea of the great financial responsibility that rests upon you, because upon the wise expenditure and the wise carrying out of the great schemes that are necessary for the development of the various communities, depends largely the success of the country at large. When you think of the complex questions that you have to deal with, the different conditions in which you are situated, you might ask: why are we brought together here today to discuss these questions at all? It is only because by coming from the different parts of our broad Dominion, you are able to find the questions that you all have to deal with in common, and are thus enabled to go back to your own particular spheres and work out the local conditions in connection with the great general principle that underlies the whole administration of municipal affairs in this country. When you think of the importance that must be attached to the success of your work, that the comfort of our homes and the credit of our country, depends upon the executive ability that must be developed in each and every municipality in order that the success which we may look forward to may be obtained, then we may have some idea of the width and breadth of the outlook. We feel in the Western Provinces of Canada that we have a clean sheet, as it were, upon which to write, but, on the other hand, we are surrounded by inexperience and are dealing with new problems.