

CONVENTION OF U. C. M.—(Continued).

palities might, at periods, participate, the Convention should move about from Province to Province almost in regular cycles. In this way the smaller municipalities' representatives with the delegations that would appear from the larger municipalities, would guarantee the success of the Convention each year.

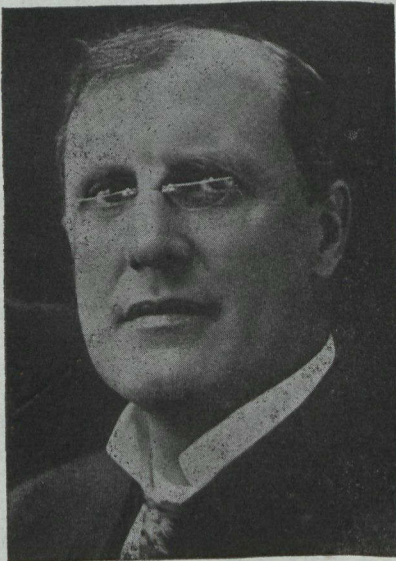
Each Province in this way would be stimulated to make the Convention held within its boundaries, a complete success. Also the smaller Municipalities in this way would aid the Union by way of funds to take care of municipal interest in Ottawa and at the various Provincial Capitals, which is neglected at the present time for lack of funds.

I am fully convinced if the great importance of the convention were properly and urgently laid before these municipal bodies that they would take a hearty interest and be represented. Also it is very important to have the Minister of each Provincial Government who has charge of Municipal affairs, present at our annual meetings.

The functions of this body are two in number:

1. To promote social intercourse and exchange of opinions between the men who for the time being are guiding the various municipalities of our wonderful Canada.
2. To publicly discuss the various problems that confront those who guide municipal affairs.

The proper and intelligent government of Municipalities is of far greater importance to the building up of Canada than either the Provincial or Federal Government. Those bodies are closer to the people and reflect more truly than any other government the calibre of the citizens which make up the population of a great state. As the



**MAYOR HARDIE, of Lethbridge,
President of Convention.**

Municipalities are so must be, through reflection, the whole body politic of our country. If they are good, clean and virile so will be Provincial and Federal Governments. I am often told that the talent that engages itself in local government is never of a high order because there is not sufficient scope to develop or attain the prominence that men of talent desire. If this is at all true, which I doubt, it is the fault of the Municipalities or the Communities in not paying sufficient respect and honor to those they elect. There is only too much truth in this last phase, because immediately the electors have put the men of their choice into office, they turn round and abuse their servants in very unmeasured language. They seem to think this a duty and necessary to keep their servants up to the mark. If we will encourage earnest, capable men and overlook the minor mistakes, there will be no question about drawing the very best men in any community into civic life. They are vitally interested. There is, however, one viewpoint which I must present with all the force I know how. It is the lack of continuity in offices and the consequent lack of direct responsibility in municipal government. We have patterned our form of Civic Government after that in effect in Great Britain, but we have not followed it to its logical conclusion by having well posted and capable permanent servants. Indeed I doubt if we are ripe or ever will be for the old country system of training permanent employees.

In the old country men grow up from boys into these jobs. The more capable ones taking the lead and attaining the higher position.

Again there is in the old country an army of highly trained experts on financial matters, provided by Imperial authorities, who guide and direct the financing of the Municipalities. We are trying to imitate this in some of our Provinces through Public Utility Boards, but unfortunately so far as I have been able to discern, the members are selected for political services rendered. If these Boards were composed of men of known ability for municipal management and financing, and were given the necessary and proper authority, then they would be trusted by the various municipalities and would be of incalculable value to the state and the municipalities.

The foregoing may be regarded as a departure from the real object of my address and in a measure that is true. I have, however, introduced it here to show how this body, if it were exercising its proper influence could accomplish untold good by impressing on the public mind and through it on the members of our Legislature, the very great necessity of legislation along lines that would help to build up municipalities instead of making laws that hang mill stones on the necks of those guiding civic affairs. With complete Home Rule and the assistance of a highly trained Board of Public Utilities in each Province, I am fully convinced that municipalities would soon find themselves in a better position, which would be a great credit to the Provincial Government that made it possible. Haste would necessarily be made slowly, so that reform would be laid on a solid foundation. But progress is slow enough at the best and the stimulating influence of a body like this, if it were fulfilling its functions, is necessary to make progress even slowly, possible.

Another point I wish to make is that no individual or section should impress itself too strongly on this organization. All must take a reasonable part and be encouraged strongly to do so in order that the interest will be general and almost consuming. Great earnestness is one of the most important principles of success in any line of endeavor. I want it to be distinctly understood that what I have said is no reflection on any persons or groups. Whatever criticism I have offered is on the system or systems that have been or are in vogue.

I am fully aware that destructive criticism is one of the easiest things in this world. My position of Mayor of the City of Lethbridge, for the past nearly six years, would have brought this home to me very vividly even if I were devoid of imagination, and it has not been my object, but rather constructive criticism has been my aim. In constructive criticism it is necessary to point out the weak places and the omissions in order that constructive work may replace the weaknesses that are apparent. I have taken a very wide view of the object of this convention and have invited delegates from all the Provincial Governments, from all the sister municipal governments and from Boards of Public Utilities. In this way I hoped to create an interest that has been lacking and I fondly express the opinion that it is the will of this convention that these invited guests will have the full liberty of the floor of the Convention to discuss any subject or phase of a subject which they may think will be of interest to this Country and Municipal Government in particular.

Financial Report.

The financial report of the assistant secretary, Mr. G. S. Wilson, was read:

Montreal, July 2nd., 1918.

To the President, Officers and Members
of the Union of Canadian Municipalities.

Dear Sirs:—

Herewith I beg to submit my financial report, with Statements in detail, and vouchers of receipts and expenditures for the year ending December 31st, 1917. Also is attached the auditors report.

Statement of Receipts:

Cash balance on hand January 1st.....	\$ 56.94
Bank interest	2.24
Fees from Municipalities	5,231.00
	\$5,290.18

Expenditures	\$4,802.82
Cash balance	487.36

\$5,290.18

H. J. ROSS, L.L.A.,
Auditor.

G. S. WILSON,
Assistant Secretary.

This report was referred to the Committee on Resolutions.