

**U. C. M. CONVENTION (Continued).**

field. We can benefit by the long experience of the former and the hearty activity of the latter to make of our Union a body as efficient as it should be to help in framing the future destinies of our country. Before taking my chair I desire once more to thank Mayor Newman and the Counsellors of Kingston for having offered us the hospitality of their historic City to hold our Convention.

**Wilson Report.**

To the Presidents  
Executive and Members of the  
Union of Canadian Municipalities.

Gentlemen,—I have the honor of presenting to you the financial statement of the Union of Canadian Municipalities from January 1st to December 31st 1918, with statements in detail and auditor's report.

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS:—**

Cash balance on hand January 1st . . . . .	\$ 487.36
Bank interest . . . . .	10.39
Fees from Municipalities . . . . .	5,772.50
Fees from Nova Scotia Union . . . . .	50.00
Civic League . . . . .	10.00
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>6,330.25</b>
<b>Expenditure . . . . .</b>	<b>6,057.82</b>
<b>Balance . . . . .</b>	<b>272.43</b>

**STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES:—**

Exchange . . . . .	8.35
Telegrams . . . . .	63.52
Books and Printing . . . . .	153.80
Sundries . . . . .	71.55
Agents . . . . .	400.00
General Expenses . . . . .	625.60
W. D. Lighthall, expense account . . . . .	2,735.00
G. S. Wilson, salary rent, stationery, postage, telephone and official organ . . . . .	2,000.00
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>6,057.82</b>
<b>Balance . . . . .</b>	<b>272.43</b>

6,330.25

Before resuming his seat Mr. Wilson bore testimony to the value of the retiring honorary secretary, Mr. W. D. Lighthall, K.C., in the following terms: "It is somewhat with feelings of regret that after so many years of the closest intimacy—in affairs connected with the Union of Canadian Municipalities—I part company with our honorary secretary-treasurer, Mr. Lighthall. During the past seventeen years I have had free access to and have consulted Mr. Lighthall daily—sometimes two or three times in a day—on matters connected with our municipalities, and he has always given me his time most cheerfully. I have often marvelled at the spontaneous and precise information given, and the ready dictation of an answer to some municipal question of a correspondent.

**LEGISLATIVE WORK OF THE UNION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES.****Report of Mr. Fred Cook, Parliamentary Agent.**

After five years' consideration Parliament has passed the Statute to consolidate and amend the Railway law of Canada, but hardly in such shape as to meet the views of the Municipalities of the Dominion. Since 1914 the bill has been stranded each session until this year, owing to the strenuous fight which the Union and its friends in the Commons have put up for the protection of municipal rights. This year's measure would have met the same fate as its predecessors had not the government at the last moment hit upon the expedient of "lifting" the contentious power clause (section 374), and introducing it as a separate measure. The justification for this course was that essential amendments required to the Railway law were being held over year after year simply because the Senate and House of Commons could not agree upon the one section referred to.

The Consolidated Railway bill was first introduced in the Senate and passed with great celerity, but with the power clause greatly weakened. Last year it was termed a "compromise" section, but the promptness with which the

power interests then accepted it tended to cast suspicion upon it from a municipal viewpoint. A few warm senatorial advocates of municipal rights strove to secure the retention of the protection clause as originally drafted by the city of Toronto, and endorsed by the U.C.M., but they were hopelessly outnumbered, and when the bill left the Upper House the clause in dispute stood practically in the form in which the Senate adopted it the previous year. In the original measure there were four sub-sections to clause 374 specifying the conditions under which "municipal consent" should be obtained. They were calculated to fully meet the views of the municipalities, but the value of the clause, in so far as it applied to existing agreements with power companies, was destroyed by the insertion by the Senate of sub-section 5, which reads as follows:

(5) Any specific powers inconsistent with the provisions of this section and conferred on any company by any Special or other Act or authority of the Parliament of Canada or of any province shall not be affected by the provisions of this section, but if any municipality complains to the Board that any company whether incorporated by Special or other Act or authority of the Parliament of Canada is exercising its powers oppressively or in bad faith the Board may hear such complaint and if it sees fit supervise the exercise of such powers: Provided always that whenever any company incorporated by Special Act of the Parliament of Canada acquires the assets of a company operating within a municipality, which said municipality has the right by agreement to purchase any of the assets of such company, then and in every such case the municipality may enforce its rights under such agreement as fully as if such purchase had not been made, and may enforce against such purchaser the provisions of such agreement as if it were the original party entering into such agreement with the municipality.

Upon this section, designed to perpetuate privileges to the Toronto and Niagara Power Company, conceded by the Courts, but never intended by Parliament, the discussion was waged until almost the end of the session. Toronto was vitally and directly interested; every other municipality in the Dominion indirectly. As one observer expressed it "Toronto happens to be the spear-head of the attack to hobble all the cities, towns and villages of Canada."

As in 1917, when the measure reached the Lower House it was referred to a Special Committee with Mr. J. E. Armstrong as chairman. In some quarters it was represented that this committee was "loaded" against the municipalities, but this is an entirely erroneous view. While naturally the committee manifested divergent views upon some of the important questions which came up for consideration, yet I feel free to say there was every evidence of fairness. No attempt was made to shut off representatives; every interest was given the opportunity of being heard. The City of Toronto was represented at the Committee meetings by Corporation counsel, Major Geary, recently returned from overseas, and the Ontario Hydro Commission, whose very existence was threatened, by Mr. G. H. Kilmer, K.C.. The Union of Canadian Municipalities by personal conferences, by letters and circulars to members, materially assisted in the fight. Yeoman service was rendered by the Canadian Municipal Journal.

The chief defender of municipal rights in the Special Committee was Mr. M. M. Mowat, Member of Parkdale, who was vigorously supported by Mr. Tweddle, of Calgary, and others.

The power interests were represented by a formidable array of counsel, chief among them being the Hon. J. M. Beck of New York, acting for the American bondholders of the Mackenzie & Mann power group. In this connection let me call the attention of the Union to the view propounded by Mr. Aime Geoffrion that the Toronto and Niagara Power Company, under the charter which it secured in 1902, has the right to operate anywhere in Canada. This sweeping claim made the members of the Committee fairly gasp, whereupon Mr. Geoffrion endeavored to relieve their feelings by assuring them that it was not the intention of the Company to operate outside of Ontario. Consider the possible effect of the exercise of such a claim, however. Kingston, or Ottawa, or London, or Windsor, pursuing the even tenor of their way may suddenly find