

U. C. M. CONVENTION—Continued.

eral special reforms. One of these is the establishment in every Province of a Municipal Department of the Government. It has now been established in most of the Provinces. We hope Ontario will be the next. Two years ago it was Quebec. The splendid work done by the Department of Municipal Affairs of this Province merits our warmest praise. (Mr. Oscar Morin, and Mr. Marquis have taken great trouble to aid and back up every movement of municipal improvement. Possibly they may solve the difficult problems of Housing and Town Planning. The Annual Reports of this Department are models of their kind, and deserve recognition and commendation.

We hope next that the much needed reform of a Dominion-wide system of Uniform Municipal Statistics and Accounting may follow.

During the year the Union sustained the loss of a kindly friend in the person of the late Mr. John Perrie, the efficient Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs of the Province of Alberta. Many will long remember his wise words and genial smile.

The finances of the Union have not been good during the first part of 1920. It is to be hoped that earnest efforts will be made to bring back the normal revenue, and to increase it, which I think can be done. The details will be given by the Assistant Secretary.

A new arrangement of some kind with the Canadian Municipal Journal would seem to be in order. It is hard to see what can be done without increased finances. Meanwhile the paper has gone its own way — although a friendly relation subsists.

I am glad to feel that this Convention meets in the Mother City of Canada, where the two languages interchange in friendly converse, and where broad-minded men are forging another link of brotherhood between the two great races which today unite in the leadership of humanity.

FINANCIAL REPORT.

G. S. Wilson, Assistant Sec.-Treasurer.

The Assistant Secretary-Treasurer presented his re-

port for the preceding calendar year reading as follows:—

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., 1919. Also attached is the Auditors' report.

RECEIPTS.

Cash balance, January 1st, 1919	\$272.43
Bank interest	16.21
Fees from Municipalities	4,001.00
Fee from Nova Scotia Union	50.00
	<hr/>
	\$4,339.64

EXPENDITURES.

Exchange	\$ 5.50
Telegrams and telephone	21.27
Books and printing	62.90
Sundries	19.20
Convention and executive meetings	301.30
W. D. Lighthall, K.C. General expenses	1,710.00
G. S. Wilson, Secy.-treas. Salary, postage, stationary, annual report	1,830.00
Agent	200.00
	<hr/>
	4,150.17
Balance	189.47
	<hr/>
	\$4,339.64

Mr. President, and members of the Union of Canadian Municipalities, on account of continued ill-health, I herewith ask you to accept my resignation as your Assistant Secretary, and I take this opportunity, after many years of intercourse with the municipal men of our country to express my whole hearted pleasure and many thanks for their friendship and co-operation in the work of the Union.

(Signed) G. S. WILSON.

On motion of Alderman C. W. H. Rondeau of Westmount seconded by Alderman Martin of Edmonton, the report was referred to the Executive Committee for consideration.

REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENT.

FRED. COOK (Ex-Mayor of Ottawa).

The Honorary Secretary-Treasurer submitted and read the following report of Mr. Fred Cook of Ottawa, Parliamentary Agent of the Union.

To the close observer of the proceedings of Parliament, nothing is more striking than the evident determination of our legislators to go slowly in the matter of railway charters. In years gone by the mania for railway construction, the duplication and even triplication of lines through the same territory, have imposed a heavy financial obligation upon the country. The need for economy was never greater than it is at present and, so far as Parliament is concerned, it is quite apparent that the absolute need of a line through new territory must now be shown before the requisite authority to build is forthcoming.

At the past session the attention of the Railway Committee was occupied for several days hearing the representations of residents from the vicinity of North Battleford regarding the pros and cons of two projected lines through the district. Hon. J. D. Reid explained that the Cory-Birch Branch conflicted with plans which the Government had completed for the construction of a line from North Battleford to Turtleford through practically the same territory. The Railway Committee was unanimously of the opinion that the construction of the two roads was not justified at present but after considerable discussion, the C.P.R. Bill became law, with an amendment on the lines suggested by the Minister of Railways.

Similarly with regard to the Bill to incorporate the Pabos, Amqui, Edmundston Railway Company, with power to build a line from Pabos, Gaspé County to Edmundston, N.B., considerable opposition developed in the Committee because the projected line would, in part, duplicate existing roads. Eventually the preamble was declared not proven by 31 to 29 on the ground that "the passage of this measure at the present time would not be in the public interest". It is a cheering sign to observe the present trend of opinion in Parliament. So far as the Parliamentary Committees are concerned, I think I am justified in saying that after close intimacy with their procedure during the past thirty years, the greatest care is taken in the consid-

eration of private bills, and never was this more exemplified than at the last session.

From a municipal point of view an amendment to the Railway Act is of paramount importance. Chapter 66 of the Statutes of last session, amending the Railway Act, 1919 confers jurisdiction upon the Board of Railway Commissioners to make "such orders and regulations as the Board, by reason of real or apprehended scarcity of coal or other fuel supplies in Canada, may deem necessary or advisable for the provision of such supplies and for the distribution, control and disposition thereof". The powers of the Board extend to the trading in and to the exportation importation, production and manufacture of coal and other fuel supplies.

This section will continue in force until the last day of the next session, but should circumstances require an extension of the powers of the Board, doubtless it will be forthcoming.

Another amendment to the Railway Act was adopted, to the following effect:—

"Section six of the Railway Act 1919, chapter sixty-eight of the statutes of 1919, is amended by adding thereto the following subsection:—

(2) The provisions of paragraph (c) of this section shall be deemed not to apply to any street railway, electric suburban railway or tramway constructed under authority of a provincial legislature, and which has not been declared to be a work for the general advantage of Canada otherwise than by the provisions of the said paragraph.

Provided that this subsection shall not affect or come into force with respect to any street railway, electric suburban railway or tramway in the province of British Columbia until the expiration of one year from the passing of this Act.

It will be observed that British Columbia is especially interested in this particular amendment. It was opposed by Mr. M. Crossen, Counsel for the City of Vancouver, but was eventually carried by 35 to 6.

Western Canada is pretty well blanketed with railway charters. A new application covering the most northerly section of the Dominion was submitted by an English syndicate, which secured incorporation as "The North-