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Official Organ:

"THE CANADIAN MUNICIPAL JOURNAL"
29 Royal Trust Bldg., Montreal.

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The Convention

It was intended to get at least a portion of the Report of the Convention of the U. C. M. at Medicine Hat and Calgary into the current issue, but the extended trip to the cities on the Pacific slope has made the return so late that it is impossible to do so. Therefore the Report will appear in the October issue.

Meantime, it may be said that the Convention was a great success, and that the delegates, in spite of the overwhelming hospitality and kindness of our hosts in both cities, managed to stick to business, and get good discussions on the valuable papers which were presented.

On the important question of Uniform Municipal Accounting, the Special Committee presented a Report which was given in full in our April issue. This was discussed, and it was decided to refer it to the various Provincial Unions, and to take it up, along with their reports, at the next Convention. The feeling in favour of uniformity in municipal accounting was very unanimous and firm, and it was pointed out that even a divergence in actual systems would be overcome by some common basis on which to make uniform reports. The great value to the whole country by reports which would offer a comparison was considered to be a tremendous advantage over the present irregular way of doing things.

The Eastern delegates came back enthusiastic over the wonderful possibilities of the West, and greatly impressed with the kindness of their reception.

Queer Taxes

Some enterprising man has been collecting a list of curious taxes. Among them are:

Germany, by sending out charwomen to clean houses, and charging a small fee, added considerably to the revenue. The Government monopolized tooth powder, and charged an exorbitant rate for it.

Austria, swept every chimney monthly, charging 45 cents, and raised a large sum.

Italy has a tax on lotteries.

France raises revenue on duties collected by stamps, on account, cheques, theatre tickets and posters.

Great Britain also uses stamp duties on cheques, and

on receipts over \$10.00, besides duties on armorial bearings on carriages, plate and even on rings and seals.

Paris has a duty on all food and drink entering the City.

Holland taxes every person who enters an hotel before noon, two cents. Burials out of the district to which the deceased belonged cost double. Boots and shoes were formerly taxed.

In Switzerland, it costs \$25 a year to be exempt from military duty.

Greece tried to tax smokers, but they were too numerous. Then she insisted on every person having a national emblem, which was made and sold by the government.

Opposed to Water Meters

The Halifax Herald has led the people, so far as its influence went, to oppose the modern system of selling water by meters, in fact making people pay for what they get. The experience of places where meters have been adopted has been uniformly in favor of their use. But the Herald aided in a campaign to set aside the contract by which the city bought a quantity of meters. The company which supplied the meters have taken suit, and have won their case, which lets the City in for eight or nine hundred dollars of costs, besides having to pay the bill for the meters. It has recently been shown, by the City Engineer's Report, that while the Herald Company is only paying \$120 a year for water, it is using according to the quantity measured by a meter, no less than \$569 dollars' worth. Naturally the Herald looks upon water meters as very unpleasant and unnecessary inventions. The attitude of some papers on public questions is based on good — but selfish — reasons.

Cheap Gas

The fight of New York City to secure gas at cheap rates has succeeded, as the Supreme Court of the United States has declared that the New York State laws of 1905 and 1906, which fixed the price of gas in New York City at 80 cents per thousand feet were constitutional. The Consolidated Gas Company is thus beaten, in spite of its pull and wire-pulling, and will have to repay a large amount, for overcharges collected since 1905-6.