

U. C. M. CONVENTION (Continued).

They express forms of our original British constitutional birthright of personal liberty and right. In asserting them under fire, we have in fact been making constitutional history.

The third thing I want to say is that **we are now at the beginning of a vastly important struggle** which is connected with the foregoing principles. Control of all the essential necessities of life—bread, meat, oil, shoes, rubbers, textiles, have recently passed into the hands of mergers which are virtual monopolies. By the nature of monopoly the monopolist fixes his price. The era of the laws of supply and demand has thus passed away. The people will not obtain the fair deal unless these irresponsible monopolies are absolutely controlled. In bringing about such control—in which process I believe a series of special tribunals like the Railway Commission are necessary—it is the duty of municipal men to take a leading part.

The fourth thing I wish to say is that fighting has not been our sole aim, but rather we have principally sought to confer together for improvements in all that concerns the happiness of our communities. When we visit the cities and towns of both East and West, the results of the Union's past work in pressing for parks here, incinerators there, and vast systems such as the Government telephones of the three prairie provinces, testify to the imprint we have been able to make by thus standing together, by thus standing together we are indebted for much light on these things to the municipal men, and Unions of the United States, as well as to those of Great Britain, with whom we have kept up a constant contact. The National Municipal League and its splendid Secretary, Mr. Clinton Rogers Woodruff, have been invaluable.

The fifth thing I wish to say is that **Municipal office is a great privilege, a great opportunity for service, a dignified and most important part of the Dominion's system of government.** Not only so in itself, but in this and our Provincial Unions, the humblest holder of office in the smallest rural municipality will find that he has an opportunity outside

his local circle, to help forward and upward the whole national life—be it only by faithful attention to a part of the work of his Union, or by some loyal and inspiring word fitly spoken at a Convention. And I have taken some personal satisfaction at times in feeling that this Union has enabled me to help at introducing far more beneficent legislation into Parliament, and to contribute far more to the establishment of beneficent institutions like—rural telephone systems, hydro-electrics, parks, playgrounds and so forth, than at least nine-tenths of our Members of Parliament.

We have seen the mayoralty of our principal cities eagerly sought by Cabinet Ministers and Senators as a crown to their careers. It is so because they recognize the large field open to municipal activity.

My advice then is to value highly your municipal office, and regard it from the point of view of an opportunity to serve, and of making as many human beings as possible happy.

The sixth thing I want to say is: **Do not let this union die.** It will always be needed. Even were it to fall to pieces temporarily, it would have to be recreated, because the needs for which it has existed will continue. Appoint a small special committee to consider its future. Find an energetic and zealous secretary, knowing Canada well and if possible speaking French. Let him study the methods devised out of our experiences of the past twenty years, and improve on them if he can.

Form some good financial plan which may afford a permanent and adequate support to the institution, which it has lacked in the past. Bring the permanent officials into our councils. Make the Union thus a permanency in place of an interesting makeshift. It will then have a more regular place and a still more powerful influence.

My last word is an appeal to you to **preserve the spirit in which the union was established.** If it should fall down to self-seeking for salaries and positions, it will go to pieces, and rightly so. But if its single and persistent aim be to advance the ideal of a happy and free people, it will have a field as large as the Empire, a message as profound as life, and results as far reaching as time itself.

THE VALUE OF PROVINCIAL UNIONS OF MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Arthur Roberts, K.C., Secretary of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, then read his address on "The Value of Provincial Unions of Municipalities."

"In this age of Unions, with much of Unionism gone mad and overleaping itself, it is well at our Conventions to 'take stock' of our own Unions, to consider whether the records justify their continuance, and if so, have they become slightly 'fly blown' or 'shop worn', or are they in a proper state of repair and efficiency for the work in their own particular sphere of influence in the civic life of Canada under the trying conditions immediately before us. With this end in view, and hoping to evoke constructive criticism, let us for a short time discuss the Provincial Unions.

It is stating a truism to say that the value and success of all Unions depend on the men behind them. Unions for purposes unimportant and trivial with good men in charge may prove to be of real worth in the life of the community, which in the hands of unbalanced amateurs might be not only useless, but positively mischievous. On the other hand, Unions for which their is a crying necessity, because of lack of energetic and sane management, may have a humdrum existence and an untimely and inglorious end. But at the first the interest, sympathy

and enthusiasm which the Union will arouse will very largely depend upon its platform, the principles for which it stands and the work it seeks to accomplish. With this criterion then, is it not obvious that Municipal Unions at least started with a fair promise of public sympathy and support and with every expectation of doing splendid work in the public service. The pioneers in the good work could surely say—

"Tis not in mortals to command success,

"But we'll do more, Sempronius: We'll deserve it."

There was then—a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood" might lead on to municipal good fortune.

Of the three governments under which we live—the Federal, the Provincial and the Municipal, it is the latter with which our citizens come most directly and continuously in contact, which has most to do with the comforts and conveniences of their life, and for whose maintenance they make the largest contributions, and yet, if not now, at least at a time within the memory of all of us, it was the one with respect to which they showed the most indifference. But during the present generation there has been a decided change in public sentiment, from year to