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Report of the U. C. M. Proceedings

Our last issue (October) was given wholly to the report of the annual convention of the Union of Canadian Municipalities. The union during the twenty-one years of its existence has held upwards of twenty conventions and probably as many meetings of the executive. For seventeen of these years all the conventions and most of the executive meetings have been reported in the columns of this journal; not always in detail it is true, for the executive rightly considered that such details would bore the readers. With the passing of time municipal education advanced which affected the quality of the reports, consequently more space was given them each year, and for the last few years the convention reports have been fully reported. We make this assertion in view of the following statement made at the last convention by the President of the Union in reference to the publishing of the report.

"I would make the suggestion that as soon as our finances enable us there should be a proper report following each convention of all the proceedings of the convention. The report published in the Canadian Municipal Journal is well enough in its way; but it is not as valuable as a report, published in book form, and sent officially to the members of the union and to every municipality in Canada. Those who are not members are, perhaps more in need of it than those who are members."

Mr. Roberts evidently assumes that unless a report is published in book form—and marked official—it will not be read by those to whom it is sent. Our experience tells us quite a different story, as instance the destination of the average blue book and report sent out by the different governments and public bodies.

Too many really valuable reports have found their way into the waste paper baskets. We take it that the principal object in sending out reports of any kind is that they will reach and supposedly be read by a larger audience than those who actually heard the

papers and discussions. Such an audience, not having the benefit of the spoken word, must have the reading matter served in an interesting form which cannot be done in any report published in book form. The only benefit of a report in book form is that it can more easily be kept for reference. It may be instructive to state here that in the early days of the Union its reports were published in pamphlet form, but the then executive, realizing the limited value of a pamphlet induced and encouraged the founding of this journal by guaranteeing an annual grant towards the printing bill each month. Latterly, of course, this grant ceased and the management had to look directly to the councils for support. This has been a good move for not only has it relieved the Union of a large expense, which can be used for other purposes, but it has assured a larger income to the Journal to enable it to carry on its research and propaganda work.

At a later stage of the convention, Mr. Roberts assured one of the speakers that his address would be "published and have a wide circulation and will do good to many more than those present." In this Mr. Roberts was correct for not only does the Journal cover all municipal Canada, but is mailed to the civic institutions of India, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, South Africa and the United States. It is even sent to Siberia. Now our charge for printing and publishing the report was \$500, or less than the actual cost of printing. Had the Union printed the report in book form and sent it to all those who received a copy of the October issue, containing the report, the cost would have been upwards of \$1,750. We state these facts so that friends of the union will realize that in so far as this journal is concerned it has no axe to grind other than to urge the best interests of the union. The advocacy of good municipal government in Canada is not a side issue with us, but something that takes of our best.