

## The Value of Municipal Co-operation

That the Union of Canadian Municipalities is not the first civic co-operative movement, was brought home to us in perusing the 1914 Report of the Convention of Scottish Municipalities. This Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland—which now number two hundred—was first instituted as far back as 1124-54 by David, then King of Scotland, and is the oldest existing Municipal Union. An extract taken from the minutes of 1734 makes not only interesting reading, but is instructive as showing the value the shrewd Scotchmen put on municipal unions. The extract is as follows:—

“The royal burrows of Scotland have not thought their safety and advantage consisted singly in maintaining their separat and several immunitys as they belong to each individual burrow, not in the wisdom of their separat counccills and resolutions, but in having the power and faculty of joining together in one united body, and having the benefit of the joint counccills and resolutions of their deputies assembled together in order to enable them to enjoy the priveledges which doo belong to them in common, and to bear the burdens which affect them all jointly and severally.”

The same spirit that underlay the writing of these words two centuries ago permeates the Scottish Conventions of to-day, and the same might be said of the Association of Municipal Corporations in England and Wales, which has the effect of making the

municipal life of the Old Country a splendid example to the whole world. In last month's issue we gave a brief outline of what the Union of Canadian Municipalities has done for Canada during its fifteen years' existence; and this in spite of not having the financial support of ALL the municipalities. What it could and would do if every municipality paid its share of the small tax is best illustrated by the single-mindedness of its Executive, who have borne the brunt of the battle against pilferers of franchises, and against the encroachments upon the rights of the people, with the grand result that not even an incorporated village can be robbed with impunity—every franchise it gives or sells is at the sweet will of its people only. But the civic life of this country is really only at the beginning—its future is going to be on a par with that of Great Britain and the Union of Canadian Municipalities is helping to make it so. Affiliated with the Canadian Union in the nascent International Municipal League, are fifteen other Unions which cover the whole of the British Empire, the United States and Belgium—which unhappy country before the war had a splendid system of municipal government—and while the different conventions show that municipal difficulties are the same in all countries, the balance-sheets indicate better support from the individual municipalities than we get in Canada. In Scotland they are even compelled by law to become members of the Convention. And we again make an urgent appeal to the municipalities of this country to support their Union—for in so doing they are protecting themselves.

### FIVE CIVIC SUBJECTS.

Owing to a typographical error the interesting letter of Mr. Andrews in last month's issue was made to read that the boys of his school would write essays on “five” subjects, instead of civic subjects. In a letter pointing out the mistake, Mr. Andrews gives, amongst other suggestive titles, a separate list of “Five” subjects which we commend to others. The headings are as follows:—  
“Who am I?”—“Why I can vote”—“How shall I vote?”—“My utility”—“Civic Patriotism.”

### THE BONUSING OF INDUSTRIES.

The municipalities of Ontario, at least, are getting tired of the “bonus” system. The St. Thomas Journal, from reports from seven near-by cities, each one of which it publishes, shows that the bonusing of new industries has not often been conducive to the permanent progress of a city. With one or two exceptions the only result has been an increased burden on the taxpayers, and one dares venture to state that if a concensus of opinion could be got from all the municipalities of Canada, which have been in the habit of giving bonuses as an inducement to build up an industrial life, it would be found that they have been heavy losers. Bonusing means the paying away of good money, which could be better spent in local improvements, and as an inducement to responsible manufacturers to locate in a given place, it is a very questionable method, for while it might be so much money found, many captains of industry look upon the system with contempt, as being too much like bribery.

### GOVERNMENT SUPERVISION OVER MUNICIPAL LOANS.

We note in an editorial on Municipal Finance that the Montreal “Star” is advocating government supervision, evidently taking an article entitled “Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor and Municipal Finance,” which appeared in this Journal in the March issue, as a basis on which to draw its conclusions with which on the whole, we are heartily in accord, but when the editorial goes on to say that “one result of this haphazard borrowing is that interest rates for Canadian municipal securities have gone out of all reason,” it takes up a position which is not fair, since it gives a false impression of the financial standing of Canadian municipalities, which, as a matter of fact, are equally as high as those in the States, and many of the larger cities are actually borrowing at as low a rate as some of the provinces. The main object of Government supervision over Municipal Finance is to curb undue expenditure and to make officials more careful, and better terms for municipal debentures will naturally follow.

### A JOB FOR THE LADIES.

Why cannot municipal authorities who own and run tramways liberate the able-bodied conductors and replace them with women? Why cannot England, in this respect, copy other countries, who realise that able-bodied man can be more usefully employed than in doing work which can be equally well done by women? Are there not thousands of such men employed in this work at the present time? And will not the war be indefinitely prolonged unless every citizen in this country makes up his mind to do his best to stop it by rendering all the assistance of which he is capable.—Surveyor.