

## CONVENTION OF NEW BRUNSWICK MUNICIPALITIES (Continued)

annum on the assumption that the population of Nova Scotia is 522,000 and thirty-three widows per 1,000 of the population. In Nova Scotia it is proposed to assess the municipalities 50 per cent. of cost of operation. Figuring on the ratio of population to Nova Scotia, our province might expect to provide mothers' pensions at a cost of \$105,000 without allowing for expense of administration, but allowing for the Workmen's Compensation Adjustments to mothers.

The cost to the province generally and on the counties particularly would not be burdensome, when it is pointed out that the weight of the tax would be borne by the manufacturing centres in the cities and towns. It is a just rule of proportion that "Whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap," and upon this rule it would be an investment to care for the child life providing means for mothers to maintain their young families in the home. The scheme of mothers' pensions is not one of charity but a business problem of government to conserve the child life.

The report of Mr. King Kelley was placed on the table for further discussion.

### Presidential Address.

H. R. McLellan, president, addressed the Union as follows:

Officers and Members of The Union of  
New Brunswick Municipalities:—  
Gentlemen:—

At this the sixteenth annual convention of this Union, as president, it is my privilege to address you.

The last convention was held in St. Stephen in 1916, when I was honored with the presidency, which selection, I regret to state, was not productive of such results as you no doubt anticipated.

War and resultant conditions did not appear to warrant a continuance of meetings, and therefore it is, that the present time has been deemed opportune to convene again, as the guests of the Municipality of the City and County of Saint John.

Such conditions as I have referred to not only prevented meetings, but discussions of such legislation as might have been promoted by this union, and while it is regrettable that only a minimum of legislation has been enacted, through your efforts I respectfully submit that one piece of legislation, promoted and made effective, has been most satisfactory in its results.

The president's report went on to say that this piece of legislation was that through which any man, woman or child in New Brunswick could be afforded free hospital treatment. The report treated of the necessity for a union of municipalities and concluded with an eloquent appeal for a more aggressive and more vigorous development of the community spirit.

### Premier Foster's Address.

"The best representation in the local legislature is the man who has had experience in municipal affairs, and the reason is that many matters which come within our sphere are matters with which he has been familiar in the discharge of his municipal duties. And, therefore, it is that your work and mine are very closely interwoven. I believe the meeting together of the various representatives from our different counties is a good thing and never

more so than just now because such problems as confront the governing bodies to-day have never been equalled.

### Government's Heavy Responsibilities.

As for myself and the Government which I represent, we have never faced such a heavy weight of responsibility as we do at this moment. We thought during the war period our difficulties were great, but we have discovered that, apart from the sacrifice of life, our after-war period is going to be the real test in so far as the business aspect of our affairs is concerned. Everything in that respect was booming so long as the printing press was turning out paper money and the engraver was running at high speed manufacturing bonds to sell the public. The paper money had nothing behind it, the gold standard was abandoned, and the bonds were sold by the hundreds of millions to the public. Capital which should have been utilized for the development of industries and our resources was used for non-productive purposes. Nearly twenty millions of dollars from this province was put into Victory Bonds. During the war period most individuals found it impossible to avoid making paper profits, a portion of which was paid in cash to the Dominion Government. Actual cash was withdrawn from our business and industry.

We are living in a fool's paradise. The folly of thinking this apparent prosperity would continue was responsible for the utter collapse which occurred about a year ago. But we are now in a period of the worst depression in business that has been known for some time.

### The Present Situation.

And what is the matter? Why is it the lumberman cannot sell his lumber nor the miner his coal, nor the agriculturist his agricultural products, nor the wholesaler his wares? It is because the war brought disaster upon Russia, Austria, Italy, France and other nations, while some are straining under heavy loads of taxation and a tendency toward socialistic madness. Some of these countries which were formerly our best customers, owing to these conditions, have no goods to exchange with us for our products, and then there is the lack of confidence. We can give a reason why we cannot sell lumber or some other commodity, but one can observe throughout it all the pessimistic state of mind. People are buying from hand to mouth, holding off while the process of liquidation goes on, with the result that the consumer cannot or will not buy. The retailer has goods on hand which do not sell. From that to the wholesaler and to the manufacturer and the producer of the raw material. With the result that the machinery is all clogged and unemployment and depression exists.

### New Brunswick Conditions.

Fortunately in this province the same unemployment difficulties that prevail in larger cities and manufacturing centres in Canada are not met with, but in certain localities it is feared that the unemployment situation may become acute and render it necessary for steps to be taken to meet the conditions. With this end in view and with the object of ascertaining if such conditions are likely to exist I have had drafted and sent to the warden and the secretary of each county a letter asking that a general survey be taken of the conditions prevailing, or