

### U. C. M. CONVENTION (Continued).

The roll of our Past Presidents shows many names which have reached distinction in other spheres, but even of the latest ones, Mayor Church alone remains a Mayor. It is the same with the original battles of our association. We were formed because of attacks, by companies and charter sharks, on our rights, in cases which have long since been decided: As a survivor of those battles and those participants, I want to say a few things to the men of to-day and to-morrow:—

#### First—This Union Was Founded in Patriotism.

In 1900, the Montreal Light, Heat and Power Company had just merged all the first electric companies of Greater Montreal and had obtained from the Legislature of Quebec, against the strenuous protests of the citizens, including that of Westmount, of which I was then Mayor, a new charter empowering it to enter upon, place its poles and wires along, and tear up, any street or highway in that large district—the most populous in Canada—without the consent of any municipal authority. Local circumstances threw me into the hottest of the fight and, after the charter had been obtained, I and others, saw the triumph of money and political trickery over honesty and popular right a precedent without limit in its evil presage for Canadian life and character. If money and wrong were inevitably to succeed, it was clear that all our commercial and public life would sink into a festering bog of corruption. It was equally clear that if the public could not preserve these rights, there was a sure end to our liberties, for all their rights could be similarly taken from them and sold for money. The cynical example to our young men that honesty was not the successful policy was one of the most dangerous aspects. Moreover, the triumph of corrupt money was not even good for property in general. It was inaugurating an unlimited reign of plunder, taxes, high costs, and “gatemoney.” And it would with logical certainty lead to what is now called Bolshevism, unless the forces of right and order could meanwhile find a remedy.

The Union of Canadian Municipalities was the remedy which then occurred to me. My friend Howland took up my call and, as Mayor of Toronto, convened the Convention of 1901 in that central city, he becoming the first President, and I the first Honorary Secretary.

In Toronto, and other Ontario places, the charter of the Bell Telephone Company was occasioning similar contests concerning streets and highways; although it must be said for that company that it had obtained its charter quite honestly in days before the future scope of electric enterprises could be known. In due time a reasonable view of vested rights corrected its excessive powers.

It is not necessary to go into the history of the lively struggles in Parliament and the Legislature that followed the formation of the Union. Are they not written in our annual reports and in the volumes of the Canadian Municipal Journal. But there remain vividly in memory the living portraits of able and noble-minded men who carried our standards in the forefront of the fray. Of such were John S. Fullerton, Chief Corporation Counsel of Toronto; Edward F. Clarke, M.P.; ex-Mayor

Fred Cook, one of the wisest of the circle; Sir Herbert Ames; Sir Hormidas Laporte; Chief Attorney Ethier, and Senator David, of Montreal; Hon. Mr. Barker and Duncan McKelean, K.C., of Hamilton; Senator Ellis, of St. John; Richard Paton, of Charlottetown; Senator Claude MacDonell; David Spence; Theodore Hunt, K.C., of Winnipeg; R. T. McIlreith and Judge Chisholm, of Halifax.

Others founded Provincial Unions, such as Fleming of Brandon; F. W. W. Doane, of Halifax; J. W. McCready, of Fredericton.

Sir Adam Beck, and ex-Mayor Detweiler led in the Hydro-Electric line, which was an off-shoot of our movement. But no name of honor and zeal stands higher than that of George S. Wilson, my ever high-minded and invaluable brother secretary. We were all of one mind and one spirit in the movement.

The second thing I was to say is **that the Union is a great power in the state.** And this notwithstanding certain limitations. After fighting for the insertion of municipal protective clauses in various single characters—such as attempts to obtain for nothing all the water powers in the West, powers over all the streets in Canada, and we framed, and obtained the adoption of the well-known standard municipal clauses. For years they have been automatically inserted at Ottawa in all electric company bills and others similar. We also took a chief part in the Act establishing the Dominion Railway Board. In battling for our principles we ran up against the most powerful and persistent combinations in the country and downed them by sheer force of right. Incidentally we demonstrated the creditable and hopeful fact that the bulk of our public men are honest and faithful to their trust, and not boodlers as is so often superficially contended.

In the protection of the rights of the people the question of rates charged by railways, street railways, telephone, telegraph, power and light companies were necessarily prominent. These all partake of the nature of monopolies, either absolute or virtual. That fact shapes certain principles for which we fought, and these I ultimately put into the following form as fundamental and permanent stands to be taken:—

#### Principles.

1. The Canadian people shall not be ruled by any irresponsible monopoly.
2. They shall not submit to methods of fraud or corruption.
3. There shall be no perpetual franchises.
4. Our heritage of natural resources affecting municipalities must not be sold, but leased, if not publicly operated.
5. One generation cannot legislate away the rights of another.
6. Municipalities must control their streets.
7. Each Canadian shall have a fair deal from all who are granted corporate or other public privileges.
8. Some court or council must always exist free and equipped to enforce the fair deal.
9. The life of the poorest citizen must be made worth living, through his share of the best civic conditions and services.