

The U. C. M. Convention

An Appreciation

To the Editor—

As one of the General Public attending the recent Convention of the U. C. M. held in this City. I was much impressed first by the importance and practical nature of the many excellent papers; Secondly, By the earnest attention given by the various Municipal Delegates; and lastly by the unfortunate lack of sufficient time to allow full discussion; now Sir, I have a suggestion to make whereby something might be done to remedy the lack of discussion and at the same time, do something practical along the lines of Teaching Civic Government in Public Schools. (This was a subject on the Programme that was crowded out unfortunately.)

The suggestion is to suppose the Delegates at the recent Convention to consider themselves on Education Committee (with power to add to their number in their respective Towns and Cities sufficient to form good strong local Committees), who will take the Official Record of the Convention, when issued, as a Text Book and then get busy educating their local Public; and thus establish a new feature in Canadian Education. And in order to do so economically why not make use of the Public Schools as Lecture Halls (say at least one school in each ward to begin with) and then in future, as interest increased, any Maps, Diagrams, or Movie Pictures that might be used to instruct the Parents in the evenings, could be employed to teach the children in the daytime; say, for example, in town planning, etc., etc.

I think in starting special concentration should be employed along the lines of your paper on "Municipal Responsibility in Canada's Preparedness" and special endeavour made this winter with the least waste of time to bring such public pressure to bear on the Federal Governments, Provincial Governments, and Municipal Authorities that they should co-operate to establish National Labour Bureaus; whose very first duties should be to obtain reliable Registration of all un-employed in Canada; making very careful notes of all skilled labour, because very possibly there might be many at present unknown specialists in Trades that would pay handsomely if developed systematically; and not only supply goods now imported, but would result ultimately in large factories employing many thousands of hands.

And I would point out that anything proposed to be done for the returning soldiers after the war, could be enlarged into a "National Employment System to include all un-employed for the future; or to put it in another way according to an anxious in Euclid, "The greater always includes lesser" and a "National System" to meet unemployment, which should be inaugurated as soon as possible, would certainly include the Returned Soldiers as having a first claim always.

But the great fact to be kept in mind, and the Public educated up to till practical results are obtained is immediate preparedness so that the whole machinery may be working smoothly when the big bulk of our Soldiers return at the close of the war.

Seeing that the new president, and several other important officials of "the Union of Canadian Municipalities" reside in Montreal and neighborhood, could they be persuaded to start this ball rolling of Educating the Public, and forming themselves into a sort of Headquarters Staff or Chief Executive Committee together periodically the results from the other Municipalities and publish Summaries of same in your Journal; so that practical results may be constantly kept in view and aimed at, resolutions should be adopted by the various towns and cities, be forwarded to the Local Federal, Provincial Representatives and other officials or bodies concerned.

One thing is certain and that is a beginning should be made at the earliest date possible by some body of citizens really in earnest about Preparedness, for the Peace times we hope may arrive sooner than many expect.

Yours sincerely, W. N. DIXON.

We are delighted to publish extracts from a letter to Mr. J. S. Woodsworth, who in his articles to this journal, has given so much pleasure to our readers.

It is a long time since I have been so struck with the fanciful thought-power of an article, as in reading your "Twentieth Century Vision of the Holy City." Within the covers of the Canadian Municipal Journal there is always to be found much of material value; but were I the privileged editor of that journal I would cast around me for just such a brilliant essay as your "Vision" for every issue. The mission of the publication might seem to call them in some other direction—to the superficial—and it may be thinly argued that your "Vision" will be of little aid, in handling the material problems of civic life. This view, of course, is as narrow as (unfortunately) it is widely held. I am satisfied Mr. Woodsworth that it is just the incapacity of the masses of our people, and surprisingly many of the people's leaders, to dwell on their possible service to the community, in your terms of vision, and beauty and power, that makes the social troubles of our day possible.

I felt I could not afford to lose the opportunity of telling you how much your style of thought has appealed to me. "The City itself was one vast Temple." That is the master chord in the melody of the life and religion of tomorrow, amongst man and women "made wiser by the steady growth of Truth". Your words have made a strong appeal, and I simply had to tell you. Among all the good things in the Journal this month (August) "The Holy City" stands as a tribute to its author; and like a beautiful flower in a field of splendid grain. I was charmed."

Big Civic Convention

The following Civic Associations of the United States—the National Municipal League, the City Managers' Association, the Civic Secretaries Conference, the Bureau of Municipal Research workers and the New York Training School for Public Service will meet in Springfield during the week of November 20th to 25th. This will be the largest gathering in the interests of higher municipal standards ever held in this continent.

The National Municipal League deals with political and governmental problems; the City Managers' Association with the question of administration under the city manager form of government; the Civic Secretaries with the problem of keeping officials and citizens interested in civic improvement; the Municipal Research Workers with the introduction of efficient methods of conducting municipal business and the Training School with the training of experts for all lines of public service.

Mr. Lawson Purdy of New York is president of the League, and Mr. Clinton Rogers Woodruff of Philadelphia, whose address on a "Model Charter" delivered before the convention of the Union of Canadian Municipalities is published in this issue of the Journal, is its secretary. Mr. Purdy, as chairman of the New York Board of Taxes and Assessments, represents one of the new type of city officials, as does Mr. Woodruff, who, in addition to serving as secretary of the League, has been for ten years the chairman of the Board of Registration Commissioners of Philadelphia.

Mr. Henry M. Waite, the city manager of Dayton, is president of the City Managers' Association, as well as an active member of the council of the National Municipal League. Their secretary is Mr. O. E. Carr, formerly city manager of Cadillac, Michigan, but now Manager of Niagara Falls, which recently adopted the city manager form of government.