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New Year Greetings from the President

That a new year is a new opportunity we all know as a much told tale. That it is disconcerting to be pushed so rapidly ahead in the realm of time we also realize. 1944! The calendar, with grim and impartial reality, shows it is with "no possible, probable shadow of doubt whatever". Calling "Backward, turn backward" is both pathetic and ludicrous. There is only one thing to do. Let us rise above the post-holiday inertia and buckle on the armor of action. Our wish is for a victorious New Year, and our slogan New, bigger and better libraries.

We are not alone. Hard headed politicians are becoming aware of libraries as vital institutions and not lavender and lace establishments. It is interesting that Wendell Willkie, when asked what he would like to see in Yakutsk, one of the Siberian Republics he visited on his famous world flight, questioned "Have you a library?" "Certainly we have a library" was the reply. The description of what they saw is given in "One World":

"In an old but well-lighted building, clean and well staffed, Yukutsk, a town of 50,000 people, has accumulated 550,000 volumes. The stacks were wooden; the machine for delivering books to the reading room worked like a primitive country well. But the reading room was well occupied. The card catalogues were modern and complete. The records showed that over 100,000 people - many had come from the countryside around - had used books during the past nine months. Special exhibits hung on the walls. Soviet periodicals and reference works were on open shelves. There was an air of great efficiency about the place. This was a library any town of its size might well be proud of."

How many cities in Canada have as much in the way of a library to be proud of? It is more astonishing because before the Revolution the government of St. Petersburg sent many of its political prisoners and convicts to Yakutsk, which was known as "the people's prison".

There is good news from Halifax. Miss Bateson has been asked by the Halifax Rehabilitation Committee to make a survey of library needs in the city "with a view to considering the adoption of a regional library system", to quote the local papers. The Mayor and the Committee members, as well as a large number of Halifaxians, are very much interested in the establishment of adequate library service for the city, with the possibility of its being part of a larger unit.

There is probably no librarian in the Maritimes who is not interested in the C.B.C.-Canadian Association for Adult Education series of broadcasts "Of Things to Come - A Citizens' Forum - Canada in the Post-War World." Every Tuesday evening at 9.30 "politicians and professors, industrialists and labor leaders, bankers, merchants and plain people from all parts of Canada, with all sorts of ideas, will discuss the weekly topics on the air. They will state their opinions frankly, suggest solutions and try to find some areas of agreement about what needs to be done. The broadcasts will highlight the main issues, and stimulate discussion in the groups. The conclusions you arrive at in your Citizens' Forums in all parts of Canada will also be reported in these broadcasts." Libraries are natural centres for many of the adult education activities in the community, and undoubtedly some have listening groups under informed leaders and are sending in reports to the provincial head-quarters. We should do everything we can to draw attention to the broadcasts and to supply groups and individuals with books and pamphlets recommended in the study outlines which supplement the broadcasts. The desire for a better world is almost universal. Here is a great opportunity "to get the facts, weigh the evidence, make up our minds about the big issues, help influence public policies, do something about the post-war world now".

Marion Gilroy.

Libraries in Canada

Since 1931 a biennial survey of Canada's libraries has been issued by the Education Branch of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Late in 1943, the fifth in the series was published under the title, Libraries in Canada, 1940-1942, - being Part III of the Biennial Survey of Education. From the preface by Dominion Statistician S. A. Cudmore we quote the following:

"Except in a few localities the work of public libraries in Canada has shown little increase during the ten years this biennial survey has been made. Well over half of the Canadian population is still without public library service, as compared with one-fourth in the United States and less than 1 p.c. in Britain. Expenditure for libraries here continues to be less than 20 cents per capita, while it approaches 30 cents in Britain and is more than 40 cents in the United States.

The total volume of public library reading is less than it was ten years ago, and has declined particularly in adult fiction during the war years. One obvious reason for the wartime decline lies in the number of readers who by joining the armed services have gone out of reach of the libraries, -to training centres, defence areas overseas, etc.- There has, moreover, been no general plan by means

of which librarians could provide a compensating service to enlisted readers. Some library boards out of local resources have made special attempts to meet the library problem of training centres in or near their cities, but in the main the provision of reading material for service personnel has been left to voluntary agencies.

Children's reading shows an increase. The newer school programs of study, placing less reliance on a few text books and recommending access to a wide selection of books, doubtless have much to do with this".

Halifax, N.S. plans survey of City Library needs

A decision to make a survey of the library needs in the city with a view to considering the adoption of the regional library system was made yesterday by the Halifax Rehabilitation Committee when, on the approval of Dr. H.F. Munro, Superintendent of Education, the committee agreed to engage the services of Miss Nora Bateson, director of regional libraries in Nova Scotia. Miss Bateson will study the situation in this city and report her findings to the committee. The meeting yesterday was presided over by Ira P. Macnab, Mayor J.E. Lloyd present. The committee decided to accept as a basis for its work the terms of reference as decided upon by the finance and executive committee of the City Council on Monday. Final preparations were made with a view to the committee starting its active work after the first of the year. It was decided to meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Public Utilities Board's office.

The Halifax Chronicle Dec.23,1943.

Library is received by Queen Elizabeth High School, Halifax, N.S.

A deeply moving ceremony took place in Queen Elizabeth High School yesterday afternoon when Dr. and Mrs. G.A. MacIntosh formally unveiled a photograph, library and plaque in memory of their son, Capt. Ian Harris MacIntosh, of the West Nova Scotia Regiment, who was killed in the Battle of Sicily. A former and popular student of LeMarchant Street School and Halifax Academy, he was most interested in cadet work, and enlisted in the Halifax Rifles shortly after war began. After training in Canada, he was posted to overseas duty and through his ability as a soldier was selected for service in the Middle East. James Myrden, School Board Chairman, who presided emphasized that great benefit could be derived from the books by the present and future students. While the unveiling was taking place, George Little, school director of music, played "The Song of Nova Scotia," a great favorite of Ian's, and which has been used frequently overseas by his regiment. It was Ian's copy of the song which was used, autographed by the author-composer, his mother. Dr. F.G. Morehouse, Supervisor of Schools, accepted the library, to be known as the Ian Harris MacIntosh Memorial Library, plaque and picture on behalf of the Board of School Commissioners, and expressed their gratitude for the gift. "It will be just the beginning of the expansion of the library," Dr. Morehouse said.

The Halifax Chronicle Dec.22,1943.

Saint John Branch of the
Maritime Library Association
Annual Report, 1942-1943

President and Ladies of the Saint John Branch of the M.L.A.

Madam President: -

During the season 1942-1943 the Saint John Branch of the Maritime Library Association held four meetings and sponsored a talk by Louis Arthur Cunningham, together with the Friends of the Library.

The following books were reviewed:

Pangoan Diary: Head-hunting on the Solomon Islands;
The Aleutian Islands.

Special talks were given by the following speakers:

"The Museum - its ideals and aims." Miss Edith Hudson
"Who dare to live." read by Miss Mary Fleet
"Virginia Woolf." Miss Bessie Wilson
"Jane Austen." Miss Margaret Evans.

The club now has a membership of nine and one Honorary member.

Nov. 25, 1943

M. Hope Jarvis
Secretary

(A further note from Miss Jarvis is appended:)

We had our Annual Meeting on the 25th of November and Miss Vaughan was re-elected President and the other members of the executive remained unchanged. Miss Kay Smith gave us a very interesting talk on the "Recent developments in Canadian Poetry". I reviewed "A surgeon's fight to rebuild men", by Dr. Fred H. Albee. At our October meeting this year Miss Pauline Powell talked to us on "Southern Italy" with special reference to Sicily and illustrated her talk with material she had collected from both recent magazines and her last trip to Italy.

Library Interests in Moncton, N.B.

The Librarian of Moncton Public Library, Mrs. B.F. Moore, writes good news of the library activities in that city. From November 29 to December 4 the Friends of the Library Association celebrated Library Week, chiefly by a drive for new members. At the beginning of the week the membership was 250; the aim was to raise this to 500. We have not the latest report, but we believe this objective was in a fair way of being attained. The Moncton Transcript, The Moncton Daily Times and the Moncton Broadcasting Company all cooperated to make the drive a success. One of the newspapers published a history of the whole library movement in Moncton from its beginnings in 1911

until the present. The first home of the Library was in two rooms of the City Building, soon destroyed by fire. The undaunted citizens acquired from the C.N.R. an attractive home for the Library known as the Archibald property, and opened it to the public in January, 1927. Since that time progress has been steady and rapid. Under the gallant and efficient management of the Librarian, Mrs. B.F. Moore, the Library serves not only 7000 of the citizens but 725 members of the Air Force.

Notes and Personals

We have received a copy of the first issue of The Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions. This is a strong-venture in the cause of co-operative scholarship. The distinguished American poet and critic, Allen Tate, who has been appointed to the Library's chair of Poetry in English, has agreed, at the request of the Librarian of Congress, to undertake the editorship of the journal.

Those members of the M.L.A. who attended the A.L.A. Conference at Montreal in 1934, will remember Miss Marion V. Higgins, then on the staff of the McGill Library School. At that time Miss Higgins was compiling a guide to the official publications of Canada. A few months later this book was published by the A.L.A., under the title, Canadian Government Publications and is still an invaluable tool in the hands of competent librarians. In 1937 Miss Higgins joined the faculty of the Library School of Emory University, from which position she retired September 1, 1943.

Miss Marjorie Wickwire, Assistant Librarian at Acadia University from 1922 to 1943, and now a member of the library staff of the Department of Mines and Resources at Ottawa, is taking evening classes in advanced Library Science at the University of Ottawa.

From the P.E.I. Libraries we have received lists of the books added during 1943. Certainly the young Islanders have a rich heritage in their regional library system. The book lists are mimeographed and bound in strong paper covers of various colors, decorated by an original artist. When we look within we conclude the Selection Committee has not omitted one new book of any distinction. These are books for everybody, young and old, and in choice abundance.

On the night of 16th-17th April, 1941, about two thirds of the Malet Place premises of the National Central Library in London was destroyed by fire caused by enemy action. As a result of the damage caused the number of books in the Library was reduced from 176,961 to 72,612. The latter figure had been increased to 81,740 by the end of February, 1943.

Library Journal, Dec. 15, 1943.