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Editor: Mrs. Mary Kinley Ingraham, M. A.
Acadia University, Library,
Wolfville, Nova Scotia

CHRISTMAS

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring,
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.
- John Milton

A CORRECTION

On page 4 of our last issue, in the report of Mr. Bramwell Chandler's address at the Moncton Conference, please read "bomber" instead of "bomb". We made a hopeless blunder, for which the editor hopefully apologises.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Early in October the Maritime Library Association received word from the British Columbia Library Association that the latter had taken the initiative in requesting government action with regard to the ten per cent tax on books imported from the United States. To quote from the pertinent and convincing letter sent by the British Columbia Library Association to the Minister of Finance, the Honourable J. L. Illsley:

"Specifically, we request that the following classifications be exempted from the tax.

- (a) Library reference aids published in United States and not available elsewhere--such as H. W. Wilson indexes and bibliographies (Readers' Guide, Industrial arts index, Agricultural index, etc.) which are indispensable to the modern library; year books such as World almanac and Mineral industry, etc.
- (b) Technical books. British works are not always applicable to conditions here and for this reason volumes published in the United States are essential in many branches of science and industry in Canada, e. g., Architectural Forum's Year Book of small houses 1936- ; Bennett's Chemical formulary; Dyke's Automobile and gasoline engine encyclopedia, and Thompson's International cyclopedia of music and musicians.
- (c) New and worthwhile books in the field of literature. "It is of first importance that the lamp of real literature should be kept burning during war's blackout..." says the Times Literary Supplement in a news note of August 17, 1940, in its campaign against the Purchase Tax on books.
- (d) Gifts. Under present circumstances many libraries are not in a position to accept gifts of books from United States sources. The import tax, based on the value set by the customs department, in many cases would make the gift too expensive to accept.

The letter also quoted the opinions of well-known writers in connection with a similar tax proposed in Great Britain which is an inspiring quotation from an editorial in the Times Literary Supplement:

"The librarian should be regarded as a public servant of high importance, not as a mere minister of amenities that can be dispensed with in the more momentous hours of the people's destiny, and all possible private and public support should be given to enable this vital national service to be maintained."

The co-operation of the Maritime Library Association was requested, and the Executive approved the following letter which was sent to Mr. Illsley:

"Re Import Tax on Books

The Maritime Library Association earnestly requests that the ten per cent import tax be abolished on all non-recreational books imported from the United States.

We feel that the need for knowledge in Canada is even greater than the need for the amount of money secured by the tax. In some fields of learning it is impossible to secure books elsewhere than in the United States. The rate of exchange is in itself a handicap in securing these; the additional tax makes the purchase of books from the United States almost prohibitive. Even gifts are embarrassing to the limited budgets of most libraries.

May we draw to your attention the fact that in Great Britain, where the need for money is surely equally as urgent as in Canada, the Government determined not to place a tax upon books. Would it not be possible for the Canadian government to recognize the need for books and the spreading of knowledge in the same way? The Maritime libraries are eager to co-operate with the Government in any educational plans, and hope that it may be possible that the obstacle to their work provided by the ten per cent tax may be removed."

Mr. Illsley replied that the matter will receive consideration when preparations for the next Budget are under way.

As an added incentive to government action, it is suggested that the libraries of the provinces secure, through newspapers or other mediums, as much publicity as possible for the benefits which will result from the removal of the tax. The Secretary, Mrs. M. K. Ingraham, will be glad to have clippings or reports of such publicity in the Maritime provinces.

Another matter to which members of the Maritime Library Association should give consideration is the suggestion of the Ottawa Library Association that a Canadian Library Association be formed. The letter on the subject received by Mount Allison university requested an opinion on the following points:

1. Do you approve of the formation of a Canadian Library Association in the near future? If so,
 2. Have you any suggestions as to the form of the organization, e. g.
 - An organization similar to the A. L. A. where all are "members at large";
 - An organization of representatives from provincial associations;
 - A combination of the two in which all members would take part in the meetings but in which voting would be restricted to official delegates.
 3. What are your ideas about an organizing conference (dates, programs, etc.)
- Presumably if an organizing conference is held it will be at a later date than that of the Provincial meetings, so there will be an opportunity for general discussion at our meeting next spring.

-Winifred Snider

LIBRARIES FOR HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES

The Canadian Legion War Services Inc. and the Nova Scotia Regional Libraries Commission are cooperating in providing libraries for the Forces in the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland. The Canadian Legion War Services Inc. is providing funds for the books and the Nova Scotia government has consented to lend the staff of the Region-

a. Librarians Commission to select the books and arrange for their distribution.

This library service is a part of the educational programme of the Canadian Legion War Services Inc. and technical practical books are the nucleus around which the librarians will be built. Some seven thousand books are now on order, carefully selected and covering a wide variety of subjects.

The plan is to put libraries in the large camps such as Debert, Aldershot Sussex, and smaller collections and boxes in the outposts, batteries, etc. Provision is also to be made for the Navy and Air Force.

Mr. Robert England writing last September as Director of the Educational Services of the Canadian Legion War Services Inc. said, "It seems to us here that there is a chance at this time to develop the regional library idea and at the same time encourage the reading habits of the men. Contacts which the men will have with such a developing library service would have an incalculable influence on the future of library work in Canada when they return to civil life throughout the Dominion." The plan met with the most enthusiastic reception from many Commanding Officers in the Services.

We wish that the start had been made some months ago. It takes some time to select, order and get ready for library circulation about seven thousand books and winter is already here. We expect the books to come in within the next few weeks and before January is over we hope that some of them will be in circulation in camps and outposts.

With regard to regional libraries for civilians, we had hoped to start one in Cumberland County this winter or early in 1941. Interest was very great there in April and May but the events of the last five months in Europe have postponed action.

- Nora Bateson

LIBRARY SERVICE TO MILITARY CAMPS IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Not very much has been done thus far to provide books for the military camps in Prince Edward Island. This regrettable situation has been due, here as elsewhere, to the peculiar system the military authorities adopted at the beginning of the war in distributing responsibilities for various war services to voluntary organizations. Sometime in November, 1939, the I. O. D. E. was given charge of book service to soldiers --the service depending largely on collections of cast-off books and back numbers of magazines. That this arrangement could not possibly provide for the situation should have been evident to the most simple minded organizer. Unfortunately this was not the case and while there has been some realization of the need for thought and system in the provision of book service, the present rate of progress indicates that a number of years will have elapsed before adequate provision of reading for the soldiers can be achieved.

In the fall of 1939 two artillery batteries were in training at Charlottetown, one of which left the province at the end of the year. The remaining one, consisting of about 150 men, stayed until the spring of 1940. For this group we attempted to provide a library and, with the Canadian Legion, developed a series of popular lectures and entertainment. Both of these projects met with only moderate success. The chief stumbling block to further development was felt to be the attitude of commanding officers. Most of the commanding officers of military units are men who have been taken from occupations where not much demand is made upon their ability to organize or plan on any considerable scale. When faced with the problem of organizing the lives of a group of men they are all too frequently baffled and extremely worried by the task. The result is that they are always "busy" and "have no time". By some devious extension of personality they attribute the same condition to their men. The men in turn profess that they have long periods in which there is nothing to do and no way in which to spend their time other than by forays into the nearest town or village. However, as the officers have the decision in the matter of outside interests it is often difficult for the voluntary organizer to be of any real help to the men.

It would appear that the only satisfactory solution to the problem of supply-

ing libraries to military camps is to place the whole organization under military authority, that is, under the Department of Defence, which would be able to enforce among local officers the adoption of such a scheme.

The provision of book service to aviation training schools can be fairly easily managed by voluntary organizations because of the generally superior qualities of officers of the R. C. A. F. to those of the army. They at least understand and appreciate what the provision of books means.

The official organization of libraries for camps has somewhat changed recently. Whether it will improve or further complicate matters remains to be seen. The Canadian Legion War Services have been given the responsibility of providing subject matter, or non-fiction books, while the I. O. D. E. still clings to its function of supplying the lighter sort of reading. The uncomfortable fact remains, however, that a very high percentage of Canadian troops are without books of any sort, without the hope of receiving any considerable help in this direction for some time to come, and without the general support from military authority which would make such a book service of much value.

An indication that the provision of libraries is likely to prove a task beyond the capacity of the Canadian Legion War Services, already demonstrated in the case of the I. O. D. E., is the fact that they do not plan to assist in any way the men called up for compulsory training. While it is true that at present these men are in training for a month only, that seems to be no justification for complete neglect. Furthermore, these training centres have large, permanent staffs which are much in need of the saving grace of book learning as any other set of individuals in the country. Incidentally, the chaplain of our local training camp recently asked me to go with him to interview the commanding officer of the camp to see if he would make arrangements for providing a suitable room and care for a library which we were prepared to place there. The net result was that the matter was put off for the present as the commanding officer was "awfully busy".

Some objection has been made that the educational level of the Canadian army is too low to expect any benefit to be derived from providing libraries for the soldiers. I have heard one important Legion official say that the educational level is about fifth or sixth grade. This is a very neat piece of statistical hokum. However, if it were true, which I doubt, and there has been no real survey made on the matter, the fact in itself has absolutely no meaning as far as libraries are concerned. Much is being made of the discovery that a few soldiers have been found to be illiterate. The infinitesimal number of such persons in the population is of course overlooked. The Bureau of Statistics has computed the total proportion of such people in each province and the percentage is not in the least alarming. The implications, however, as far as action by the Canadian Legion War Services is concerned, are more of a menace. An elaborate scheme of classes is being planned and there is every prospect that a great amount of the money available for educational work will be used up in providing educational equipment and instruction of doubtful importance. The amount left to be spent on libraries will hardly be impressive.

One should not despair, however, for there is news that the United States army authorities are cooperating with library associations and educational authorities on a plan to provide the sort of service which we ourselves might have done. It is possible that in the course of time we may see a Canadian copy of the United States military camp libraries. This is becoming an orthodox procedure in our social history and perhaps we should not expect much divergence from the customary pattern of action.

- Bramwell Chandler

NEWS AND PERSONALS

From Saint John, N. B.

Miss E. M. A. Vaughan writes that there have been already two meetings of the Saint John Branch of the M. L. A. At the first of these Miss Bessie Wilson gave a stimulating talk on the subject: Trends in Modern Poetry. At the second meeting,

November 22, the following officers were elected: President: Miss E. M. A. Vaughan; Secretary-Treasurer: Miss Hope Jarvis. During the evening black-out Miss Annabelle Dole reviewed Lady Tweedsmuir's "Mice on Horseback", and later Miss Violet Gillett traced the development of the book from its beginnings to its modern format.

At the Saint John Free Public Library the circulation has dropped a little owing to war conditions, but took a renewed start after the library's exhibit at the third annual Book Fair of the Business and Professional Women's Club of Saint John. Miss Evelyn Eaton, author of "Quietly My Captain Waits", gave the address at the opening of the Fair.

Miss Ethel G. Shaw is making a good recovery from her recent serious illness, and is able to attend the meetings of the Branch.

The engagement is announced of Miss Janet Cox of Saint John to Mr. M. W. Bartley of Toronto, the marriage to take place December 14. Miss Cox was formerly on the staff of the Saint John Free Public Library.

From Saint Andrews, N. B.

Mrs. Thomas J. Coughy, Librarian of the St. Andrews Public Library, recently unearthed the constitution of Saint Andrews Library for 1815, with a catalogue of its books. We wish we had space for its publication in this issue. It would appear from the list that the reading habits of the Maritime public 125 years ago were much more serious than they are at present. Under its gifted librarian the Saint Andrews Library is making excellent progress.

From Miss Muriel Lutes, Lutes Mountain, N. B., Secretary to the Friends of the Rural Library Association for Kent, Westmorland, and Albert Counties:

May I draw your attention to the following: Our group is the Friends of the Rural Library Association for Kent, Westmorland and Albert Counties. We feel that the fact that we are a rural group working for a rural library service is very important. You will remember that the purpose of our organization is to care for the books Her Excellency, The Lady Tweedsmuir, so kindly sent us and other gift books until such time as they can be turned over to a Regional Library in this area. In the meantime to work by every means within our reach to educate and mobilize a demand for a Regional Library.

We have just recently, through the kindness of the Moncton Public Library Board, the Women's Council of Moncton and other interested Friends acquired a garage situated back of the Moncton Public Library and converted it into a Book Depot as headquarters of the F. R. L. A. We now have between three and four thousand books which will be circulated during this school year to over 100 rural communities. The demand for books far outreaches our power to supply. We must as soon as possible have a Regional Library!

Our books are now being catalogued which is a big job to be undertaken by volunteers. Mrs. Thompson, who is a trained librarian, is in charge of the cataloguing.

From Halifax, N. S., Miss Charlotte Allen writes:

The Club resumed its meetings in October. The programme for this season consists of papers on the history of printing, reviews of library journals, and biographical sketches of contemporary authors. At the first meeting Miss Ellen Webster, Librarian at the Archives, presented a very interesting paper on "printing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries". Miss Fraser gave a report of the Conference, and Miss Harris reviewed library journals.

Miss Bateson was the speaker at our November meeting. She told of the work being done by the War Services Committee of the Canadian Legion and the Regional Library Commission in establishing libraries for service men.

The Library Club is to share in this work, by pasting book pockets in 8,000 books.

We were sorry to lose one of our members this season. Mrs. Maclean has moved to Hantsport.

Members of the Association will be interested in the marriage of Miss Muriel Hibbard to Mr. Doane Hatfield, which took place at All Saints' Cathedral, Halifax, on November 9th. The couple will live in Halifax.

Prince Edward Island Libraries

Miss Dorothy Cullen writes: Book Week was celebrated in the Charlottetown Public Library this year with the usual display of new children's books and posters. Bookmarks on which were printed suggestions for the care of books were distributed to the children visiting the library during the week. Miss Gill sent a letter beforehand to the four city schools calling their attention to the exhibit, and many of the teachers and pupils came to see it; a few teachers brought their classes in a body to visit the library.

A fifteen-minute play entitled "Book-Week's Birthday Party" was presented over the radio station CFCY one evening by Miss Marianne Rogers of the station staff. The parts of Heidi, Christopher Robin, Mary Poppins, Meg, Jo, and Amy and other well known book characters were played by several pupils of Prince Street school.

Most of the branches of the Prince Edward Island Libraries received during the summer a group of pictures from the Carnegie Art Collection to be put on display for a year. Miss Grace Campbell made selections from the main collection, arranging them according to country, period or subject. Some of the headings used were: Spanish painting, French sculpture, Famous statues, Early Flemish painting, English Gothic architecture. A typewritten note on the subject in general, as well as information on the artists represented and their work, was posted with the reproductions themselves.

Mrs. Esther Clark Wright, Ph. D., of Wolfville, N. S., recently compiled and published a genealogy of her branch of the Clark family. The book came off the press in time to be presented as a birthday tribute to her father, Lieutenant-Governor W. G. Clark, of Fredericton, N. B. Dr. Wright on November 21 addressed the Library Science classes at Acadia University, telling the story of her researches and discussing genealogical methods. The book, which should be in every Maritime library, is sold by The Kentville Publishing Co., Kentville, N. S. The price is 75 cents.

A new periodical, Maritime Art: the Journal of the ~~Journal~~ of the Maritime Art Association, made its appearance in October. The first issue has an attractive cover, 56 mimeographed pages, and reproductions of paintings of Maritime scenes by Mabel Killam Day, Annie Louise Ricker, and Arthur Lismer, A. R. C. A. The editor is Mr. Walter Abell, Professor of Art at Acadia University, and the assistant editor is Mrs. Thomas J. Coughney, of Saint Andrews, N. S. There will be five issues a year, published every second month from October to June. The subscription price is one dollar.