

lie documents generally. As regards the older papers of historic interest which form the archives of the country, the undersigned are unable to speak more favourably."

There are in the public service, the Commissioners pointed out, a Dominion Archivist, "amply qualified," but never enjoying "anything beyond a casual and perfunctory recognition"—and also a "Keeper of Records"; but these two offices "are distinct and even antagonistic."

"The Commissioners, for instance, understand that for the purpose of bridging over breaks in the archives copies have been made in the libraries of European capitals, when the originals of these very documents were at the time in the custody of one or the other of the public departments."

The report of this Commission marked the beginning of the end of the old state of carelessness and chaos in the control of the public records. The attention of the powers that be was at length sufficiently aroused to take action. It is true that it was six years before the Archives building was opened, but in the meantime much was done towards rescuing invaluable maps and papers from the cellars and attics of the departmental buildings.

In this connection there is a pleasant tale to tell of the too little appreciated activities of our Governors-General. We are prone in this country, with our popular elections and our exaltation of the office of the Prime Minister, to look upon the King's representative as an ornamental but hardly useful part of the machinery of government. We, who do not come into close touch with that machine or that part played in it by the occupant of Rideau Hall, can have no understanding of the manifold labours of the Governor-General quite apart from his official duties. He is not only a link in the chain of Empire; he is not only a pen for the signature of state papers;

he is one of the leading citizens in the country and as such takes a deep and active interest in many movements of opinion and organisation outside of the partisan sphere. One of the spheres in which Lord Minto, who came to Rideau Hall at this juncture, displayed his extra-constitutional activity was in the arousing of interest in the protection of our historical treasures. He had dusty garrets searched and old "lumber" examined in cellars, with the result that many priceless documents were unearthed; among them being the original manuscript plan of Quebec, on which was inscribed a detailed history of the siege of the ancient capital, as well as a minute description of the district. Lord Minto's activity in this direction was sustained throughout his term of office, and his interest was continued by Earl Grey. Lord Minto secured for our Archives, among other documents, four or five hundred volumes of military papers and sixty volumes of the Selkirk papers; while Earl Grey enriched the collection with the Durham and Bagot papers and many of the Grey family papers, including the correspondence between Lord Elgin, Governor-General of United Canada, and the third Earl Grey, then Secretary of State for the Colonies. To their united endeavours is due the possession by the Canadian Archives of a complete file of the original correspondence between the Governors of Canada and the Colonial Office from the time of the cession.

Through all these labours and after all these vicissitudes, the Archives building was opened in 1904. Intendant Hocquart's representations had at last received the attention they had so long merited. The building is of modest proportions, but is well fitted for its purpose. Of gray Nepean stone, its Norman graceful solidity overlooks the Ottawa River just a little beyond Nepean Point. It was constructed under the ministry of the Honourable Sydney Fisher, of