

rented out in stores. The entrance to the library was of stone, with a pavement in mosaic, leading, by a broad stairway, to large reading and book rooms on the second floor, and an auditorium at the top. The windows on the landings were in colored glass and shed a softened light.

The first Board of Commissioners was placed in charge of the institution, about July, 1890, and, upon a very memorable afternoon (the rain was pouring in torrents) proceeded to take stock of the belongings which had been in the old mint building, and which they were informed were stored in the old postoffice (a rickety shed up a steep ascent of stairs, which long lingered at the side of the newer building in which the Dominion Government officials transacted their business. Things were found in complete chaos. The place was one mass of papers, books, and rubbish, shot in heaps on the floor. The glass cases in which had been stored specimens, were broken in by the weight of books carelessly pitched on their tops. The door was off its hinges, the rain was beating in, and the whole was filthy dirty. The £500 worth of books had fallen on evil days, indeed, and, when things had been straightened out, not 200 of the 2,000 books of which Morley Roberts wrote were found serviceable enough to loan to the public.

The reading room was at once fitted up with papers and magazines, and a supply of new books procured. From year to year, these were added to by donations, which were generous from the first, but which, in 1894-5-6, amounted in value to at least three dollars for every one expended by the corporation. Gifts of portraits of well known persons were secured, and hung around the reading room. A leading feature in the reference library was the unique collection of reports of fisheries issued by the principal Governments of Europe and the United States.

In the autumn of 1895, the management reorganized the Museum, obtaining funds

for the purpose of fitting up the auditorium with glass cases, by means of a series of high class lectures on literary subjects. The museum, from its beginning, was successful beyond expectations. Each report of the Library Commissioners, from 1895, was a chronicle of continued prosperity. In the year named, the Library was estimated to contain about 1,500 books, about 1,000 persons were entered as borrowers, and the average daily attendance in the reading room was 130 persons. At the time of the fire, more than 2,000 volumes were on the shelves, and the attendance in the reading room had risen to about 150 a day. There were in the museum, on the night of the fire, six large cases of stuffed birds and mammals unopened, the gift of the Provincial Government. These, together with a variety of exhibits (many of which can never be replaced) were completely destroyed by fire.

The City Council have appointed us a Board of Library Commissioners for the purpose of opening up a reading room and reorganizing the Public Library. The reading room is now open to the public, and is situated on McKenzie st. To replace the library will be a work of difficulty and time, but can be done. The institution which we lost in the fire was largely — pre-eminently — the result of voluntary contribution. The Commissioners have in their possession about 180 volumes which, at the time of the disaster, were in the hands of the public, and they ask the public, who, in the past, found the library so great a benefit to them to assist in speedily reopening the institution by gifts. The Commissioners will thankfully acknowledge any volumes handed to them for this object, whether bound in paper or cloth.

R. E. WALKER, M.D. (Chairman),
JAMES JOHNSON (Secretary),
AULAY MORRISON, M. P.,
FRED. HOWAY,
ARTHUR SHEPHERD,
Board of Commissioners.

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