

of the country, and supported by an annual appropriation of about \$65,000. Here, also, the national library is not intended to serve the needs of the Houses of Congress, each of which has its own special legislative library. Even Cuba may boast of its national library; and, to reach the very lowest depths of our humiliation, the despised little Central American republics of Costa Rica and Honduras each possesses what we lack—a national library.

May we bring Japan into the discussion? Japan is now recognized as one of the great nations of the earth; but is any Canadian content to admit that this people, whom we counted only a few short years ago as semi-barbarous, should teach us how to make the most of available educational facilities? Content or not, we cannot do otherwise than admit that we have done nothing, where they have been singularly successful. The Imperial Library of Japan, with a quarter of a million books, embraces not only the classics of Japan and China, but also the cream of European literature. It is preserved in a handsome, modern building, embodying the best features of European and American libraries. It is open all the year round; its books are freely accessible to all the people of Japan; and it has already exerted a powerful influence upon the growth of public libraries throughout the empire, and upon the intellectual development of the people.

It is, perhaps, too much to expect the Commonwealth of Australia to attempt the establishment of a national library until it has had time to settle in its much-discussed national capital; but at any rate the governments of the two principal states of the Commonwealth have long since proved their faith in national libraries. The Public Library of New South Wales is supported generously by the state, and its books are not merely accessible to the people of Sydney, but may be borrowed by country libraries, groups of students, or individuals, anywhere in New South Wales, free of charge. The Public Library at Melbourne performs the same service for the people of Victoria. Each of these