

inconvenience, large collections of these papers have been scattered, many being sold for waste paper, without its being considered necessary to keep even a small reserve. It would appear to be desirable in future that no such documents shall be thus disposed of, except after the most careful consideration and care taken to secure at least a *minimum* reserve for preservation. The value of these apparently useless documents is often discovered only after the want of the evidence contained in them is felt and their loss has become irretrievable.

The changes that have taken place in the mode of writing history have rendered the collection of papers on social progress of much more consequence in the eyes of historians than was formerly the case. The importance of collecting the political records of the country has by no means diminished, but more attention is now paid to what is taking place in the social life of the various classes of the community to account for the progress or decay of the community as a whole. Political history is now traced to the source from which it springs, and, therefore, whilst the preservation of records of the movements and actions of Governments and Legislatures is of as much importance as ever, other records of apparently a more obscure and less important nature cannot be neglected. The settlement of the country, the cause of the rapid growth in certain localities, of the inertness and what must appear as stagnation in others, should be watched and the records preserved. The histories of the counties from their first establishment, after the population had so increased as to justify the creation of territorial divisions, and the growth and progress of municipal institutions, come properly within the scope of the Archivist. Acting on this view, Dr. Thorburn, formerly Principal of the Collegiate Institute of Ottawa, and now Librarian of the Geological Survey, offered a prize for the best account of the history of the county of Frontenac, one of the conditions being that the prize essay should be deposited among the Archives. The prize having been awarded to Miss A. M. Harman of Ottawa, her essay has accordingly been transmitted.

The respective functions of the Library of Parliament and the Archives Office, are so liable to be misunderstood, that I may be pardoned for referring briefly to the subject. There are certain points at which both touch, in respect to the works which should be found in each, such, for instance, as those relating to the British North American Provinces. Still their different functions are clearly separate and distinct.

The Library, as its name implies, is primarily intended for the use of the members of Parliament (Senate and House of Commons), and during each annual session it is reserved exclusively for their benefit. The works contained in it being for their information with regard to questions to be brought before Parliament, it is essential that the greater part of them, at least, shall be available for private study of such questions, and they must, to be of service, be removed from the Library for that purpose. As a matter of fact, books belonging to the Library are in the possession of members in all parts of the Dominion. There is thus, inevitably, the risk of losing works of great value, and the certainty of their deterioration, however careful the members may be. During the annual sessions of Parliament, there is the necessary exclusion from the Library of those who are engaged in researches. Even if, through the relaxation of this rule, they are allowed to continue their studies, these can only be pursued under the most disadvantageous circumstances, arising from causes with which all are familiar, and such an investigator, coming with the special object of consulting works to be found only in the Library, is unable to obtain them from their being in the hands of members who have immediate need of them.

The Archives Office, on the other hand, is charged with the collection, preservation and arrangement of the historical records of the country, to be kept in one central place of deposit from which they cannot be removed, so that they may be immediately accessible at all times to those who may desire to consult them. The special object of the office is to obtain from all sources, private as well as public, such documents as may throw light on social, commercial and municipal, as well as purely political history. When its aims and objects are clearly understood, it will