

: : : THE COLLECTOR : : :

A LIBRARY of 50,000 volumes, many of them old and rare, together with numerous manuscripts and documents of almost priceless value, was lost in the fire which destroyed the oldest wing of St. Joseph's Seminary at Three Rivers, Que., on November 13. The manuscripts included a grammar of the Cree Indian tongue written by Bishop Tache during his missionary days. This work alone was valued at \$10,000. Other documents dealt with surveys in the St. Maurice and Saguenay Districts, made by Bouchette in 1812. Among the books were old editions of the relations of Cartier and Lescarbot, treating of the customs of the North American Indians; first editions of Charlevoix' *History of Canada*, the *French Encyclopedia* of Diderot, the works of d'Allembert and Voltaire, and a biographical dictionary of prominent families of France in the seventeenth century, with information concerning emigrants to New France. There were also rare Dutch works on physics, done on parchment, and sets of the now rare 1880 edition of the Jesuit Relations.

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It might have been supposed that one of the first effects of the recent stock market crash would be to depress the rare book market, but the results of a sale which took place in New York City on November 6 and 7 did not indicate anything of the kind. At any rate, this sale saw the disposal of a first edition of Holland's *Baziliologia: A Book of Kings*, published in 1618, and narrating the lives of England's Kings from the Conquest, at the record price of \$13,000. Only ten copies of this first edition, which was an item in the library of the late John C. Williams, of Morristown, N.J., are said to be extant. A first edition of Robert Herrick's *Hesperides* (1648), sold for \$2,600; the same price was paid for a first edition of Hollinshed's *Chronicles*, with an undescribed errata leaf; a first issue of the first edition of Herbert's *The Temple* went for \$1,250, while a copy of the first illustrated edition of Dante's *La Divina Commedia*, with two engravings after Botticelli (Florence, 1481), brought \$1,100.

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Among other rare and old works added recently to the Gest Chinese Research Library at McGill University is a collection of Buddhist sutra (religious works) which, according to Dr. Berthold Laufer, of the Field Museum, Chicago, an eminent authority on Chinese art and literature, makes the McGill collection the finest Buddhist library in existence. The collection totals 5,323 volumes, the earliest volumes antedating by centuries the earliest European printing.

The library of the fifteenth century books formed by Dr. Otto H. F. Vollbehr of Berlin, numbering some 4,500 and said to be the finest collection of incunabula in private hands, is to be sold at auction either in London or Berlin. Decision to sell his library has been reached by Dr. Vollbehr after failing to find an American philanthropist willing to join him in presenting the collection to the Library of Congress or some other great public library. Dr. Vollbehr had announced that he would present half of the collection if someone else would buy the other half for \$2,500,000, and present it also. The outstanding item in the library is a copy of the Gutenberg Bible on vellum, one of the three known vellum copies in perfect condition. A paper copy was sold in New York City in 1926 for \$106.

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Dr. A. G. Doughty, Dominion Archivist, has recently secured for the Archives at Ottawa a collection of letters to and from "President Louis Riel, of the Northwest Territories," written in March, 1870, at the time of the Riel Rebellion, together with copies of acts passed by the first session of the first legislature of Rupert's Land, of which Riel was president, and also a copy of Riel's proclamation prior to the rebellion under the caption of "The List of Rights," setting forth the reasons for the upheaval which came to be known in later years as the Northwest Rebellion. The collection was obtained by Mr. Doughty from York, England, from relatives of a British soldier who, apparently during the rebellion, seized the letters at the Riel home and elsewhere.

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\$7,800 was paid at auction at the American Art Association, Anderson Galleries, Inc., in New York City, on December 17, for an autograph letter which Lincoln wrote in 1860 to Henry J. Raymond, then editor of the *New York Times*, a Republican and supporter of Lincoln. In this letter Lincoln declared that he was not pledged to the ultimate extinction of slavery, that he "does not hold the black man to be equal of the white, unqualifiedly," and that he never stigmatized Southern white people as immoral and unChristian. Forty-four pages of the original autograph rough draft manuscript of Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, were sold at the same sale for \$4,100; a letter by Edgar Allan Poe, describing his financial ambitions and his parting with *Graham's Magazine*, brought \$3,500, while a manuscript of Washington's farewell orders to the armies of the United States, in the handwriting of John Singer Dexter, Assistant Adjutant-General of the Continental Army, went for \$2,000.

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