

There is always difficulty in breaking ground for a new project, however worthy and however real the need that it would fill. There exist, however, certain circumstances which, assuming a sympathetic attitude on the part of the government might serve as a foundation. It is well known that for years past the Library of Parliament has been so crowded for space, books being shelved two and even three deep, that its usefulness has been seriously affected. The architectural plan of the present building makes it practically impossible to add to the shelving within the chamber, and absolutely impossible to enlarge the building itself. It is thought necessary, therefore, either to find room elsewhere for the books crowded out of the present chamber, or to build a new library. These are the alternatives that have hitherto presented themselves. But there is a third alternative. Let the government adopt the policy of a national library; erect a suitable building for its accommodation in some central locality; and remove from the Library of Parliament to the national library all books and other material that would properly find a place in such an institution, but which serve no very useful purpose in a purely legislative library. Of the books at present crowded into the Library of Parliament, probably two-thirds could be removed to a national library without affecting the value of the collection for legislative purposes. This would leave, say, one hundred thousand volumes in the Library of Parliament, embracing all material which would have any definite value as legislative material. Any other work that might occasionally be required for parliamentary use, would still be readily accessible in the national library. Here, then, we would have some two hundred thousand volumes as the nucleus of a Canadian national library, a nucleus around which it would be possible in a few years to build a noble collection of books.

To go even one step further, in anticipating what might be, an ideal site for a national library lies ready to the hand of the government. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has repeatedly expressed the opinion—one which every intelligent person