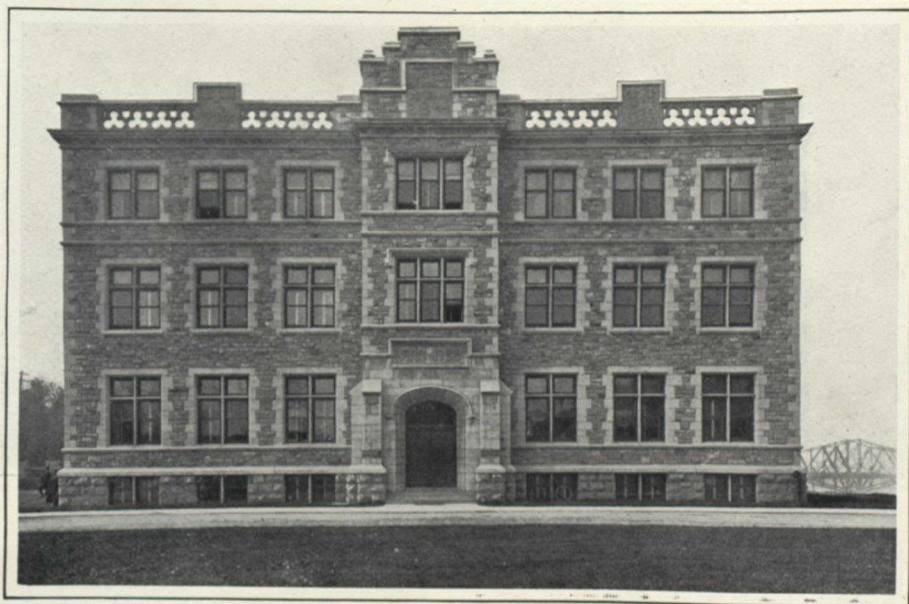




THE ARCHIVES BUILDING, OTTAWA

of a national sentiment to follow. But we must go to the same spring as did the Germans for the inspiration of our national spirit. We must drink deep of the history of our country. We must fathom its hidden meanings until these meanings become prophetic of the future.

And just here our first task lies in the fact that, in a very real sense, our history is yet to be written. I do not mean that we have not had many books upon our past. Nor do I deny great merit to some among them. But, to a very large extent, up till now the raw materials for accurate history have been quite unavailable. Of a country so rich in historians as England, Lord Acton has said that "the honest student finds himself continually deserted, retarded, misled by the classics of historical literature"; and he had in mind in so speaking recent discoveries in the English archives. It is therefore not at all to be wondered at, and involves no aspersion upon our historical writers, that a similar condition should exist in regard to

our history. Indeed, with us so far only a small beginning has been made in the work of collecting these raw materials. For nearly forty years the process of gathering maps and public documents and private papers has been going on, but it is less than a decade since a building was erected where these papers could be placed and where they would be available for the future historians of our Dominion. This is the work of the Archives Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State at Ottawa.

The Archives itself has a history of its own. The work is modern, but the project had its origin nearly two centuries ago. Its father was Gilles Hocquart, one of the last of the intendants to exercise authority in New France. Hocquart, who was chief civil magistrate in the colony, appears to have been a painstaking and industrious official. He did much to make known in France the natural resources of the territory in his charge. He sent an expedition as far as Lake Superior to examine the cop-