

## MCGILL LIBRARY'S ADDED TREASURES

Extensive Purchases Made in  
Zoological and Ornitho-  
logical Books

### AN EXPERT'S TRIBUTE

Dr. Gerhard Lomer Back  
From Europe After Making  
Acquisitions With Dr.  
Casey A. Wood

"So far as Great Britain is concerned, McGill University library in its departments of general zoology and Ornithology, is inferior only to that of the British Museum. It is worthy to rank at least with the library of the Zoological Society of London in these branches of science, and it is almost certainly superior in these respects to the library of any other British institution, not excepting the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

Dr. Gerhard R. Lomer, librarian of McGill University, who has been over in England, together with Dr. Casey Wood, making purchases for the Blacker Library of Zoology and the Emma Shearer Wood Library of Ornithology, reached Montreal on Saturday on the Minnedosa, and when questioned about his mission he cited the foregoing expression of opinion, which had been made by an English expert familiar for twenty years with the libraries of Great Britain, who had looked over these purchases.

No available source of valuable material was passed over and books were obtained from out-of-the-way dealers in the English provinces as well as from London and Paris specialists in scientific literature. Every effort was made to obtain books in the best possible condition, and in many cases the works were splendid examples of the bookbinder's art, and owing to excellent shipping arrangements, more than half the books have already been delivered in Canada. A special effort was made to obtain material from Russia, as there is every reason to fear that in that country scientific publications have been pulped for Bolshevnik propaganda purposes or other reasons. Early Australasian periodicals which are frequently referred to, but difficult to find by reason of their rarity, were also bought whenever the opportunity offered. In the Emma Shearer Wood Library of Ornithology, especially, the utmost endeavor was made to ensure representation of every ornithological journal, and Dr. Wood has already well under way a descriptive catalogue of all bird periodicals ever published.

#### SCIENTIFIC VOYAGES.

"The reports of scientific voyages are of great zoological interest," remarked Dr. Lomer, "and the Blacker Library is now fortunate enough to contain such classics as 'Coquille', 'Sulphur', 'La Recherche', 'Uranie et Physicienne', 'Belgica', 'Astrolabe', 'Astrolabe et Zelee', 'Erebus' and 'Terror.' The last three are of great rarity, and until the Godman sale of early this year, it was next to impossible to trace a sale of a complete set of the 'Astrolabe et Zelee' voyages for upwards of twenty years.

Among monumental works the zoologist will be glad to find at McGill such publications as Godman and Salvin's *Biologia Centrali-Americana*, Spix and Martins for Brazil, Milne-Edwards for Mexico, Granddier for Madagascar, Smith for South Africa, Deshayes and Lucas for Algeria, and Prince C. L. Bonaparte for Italy. To the average layman these are but names, but to the scientist they will indicate how thoroughly the library is being equipped with essentials.

Of great historic, as well as intrinsic interest, is a copy of the famous 'Historia Naturalis' of Pliny the Younger. This third edition in point of date, but first in point of beauty, was printed at Venice in 1472 and may be regarded as the chief glory of Jenson's Press. This copy has a unique and beautiful historiated initial of the 15th century in perfect condition, representing Pliny offering his book to the Emperor. The volume is further interesting as doubtless having had its share in influencing the type of the Kelmscott Press, for the copy belonged to the library of William Morris and still bears his book label.

It was also learned from Dr. Lomer that the library had been successful in purchasing a number of Gould's

superb zoological works, and these, with those already in the ornithological library, form a complete set. In the same manner the works of Daniel Girard Elliot have been collected. Noteworthy additions have also been made to the Emma Shearer Wood Library of Ornithology, including Selby's book on British Ornithology, second only in bulk to his Audubon already in McGill, and various works by Levaillant, with superb illustrations color-printed from copperplates and hand-finished. Mathew's splendid work on the birds of Australia, now entirely out of print, is another addition.

The library has succeeded in obtaining the entire collection of letters addressed to the late Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, the eminent ornithologist, which comprises thousands of letters from zoologists in all parts of the world, and is a mine of information to the historian of Natural Science. After it has been arranged, its importance as direct evidence in regard to events concerning Natural History in the latter part of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, cannot, in the opinion of Dr. Lomer, be over-estimated.

The gift of \$40,000 for the establishment of a library on zoology was made by Robert R. Blacker and Nellie Canfield Blacker, of California, early this year. Dr. Gerhard R. Lomer went over to Europe at the end of May, and he and Dr. Casey A. Wood have devoted a large part of the summer to looking over purchases for this library, together with the Emma Shearer Wood Library. Dr. Lomer was also able to secure a number of books of general interest for other departments of the library, and, in particular, some very fine specimens of manuscripts and early printing for the Morgan collection, which forms already an admirable nucleus for an exhibition of the history of printing.

Dr. Casey Wood is returning to Canada by a later boat.