

by removing from the Library of Parliament even the shadow of a function that was other than legislative. A legislative and a national library combined in one does not necessarily constitute an anomaly. The Library of Congress at Washington furnishes a brilliant example of such a combination. But it is a rare combination; one that only the genius of the present Librarian of Congress has made practicable; and one the ultimate wisdom of which is open to question. In most countries the practice is to maintain a national library and a legislative library as separate and quite distinct institutions, each devoted to its own peculiar functions. In Washington, the Library of Congress is not only the national library and the library of Congress, but it also embraces the national archives. In Ottawa, we have a legislative library, and a national archives, under separate management, and it is doubtful if any one familiar with the operation of the two institutions would think of recommending their combination under one head, either as they stand, or as parts of a still greater organization to include also a national library. What is really needed is a Canadian national library, working in harmony with the two existing institutions, but filling its own field, a field which belongs neither to the national archives nor to the legislative library.

Lest there be doubt as to the peculiarly isolated position of Canada in this respect, let us see what the attitude of other countries is towards a national library. We may exclude, for the present, the United States and the great nations of Europe, and confine ourselves to such countries as are more or less on a level with Canada in wealth and population. Most of them, it will be seen, are less able than we are to support a national library. The Koninklijke Bibliotheek, at The Hague, contains over half a million volumes. This magnificent national library is open the year round to all students who may wish to take advantage of its privileges. It not only offers every facility for research within its walls, but permits students to borrow books for