

REPORT

—OF THE—

Goldstream Mechanics' Institute

—FOR—

1894.

LIST OF OFFICERS :

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JACOB MARSH, Librarian.

Library and its Contents.

This circular is published by order of the Board of Directors of the Coldstream Mechanics' Institute for general distribution among the people of Lobo, in order that they may become aware of the excellent nature of the institution and the advantages enjoyed by its patrons.

The Institute was organized and incorporated in January, 1892, and received the Government grant in that year. The books belonging to the Lobo Union Library, a concern which had been in existence for some years previous to this, were given over and amalgamated with the new Corporation's property. Since then the number of books has rapidly increased, until now the aggregate is nearly 600 volumes.

They have been chosen with the utmost care by the Directors, and are all pure, elevating, instructive and entertaining productions of first class standard authors. There is, indeed, not one objectionable book in the entire collection. Prof. Charlton Black, Professor of English Literature in Haward University, after inspecting the Library expressed great satisfaction at the superior quality of the reading matter contained therein.

The Historical Section contains such standard histories as Macaulay's History of England, 7 vols., Justin McCarthy's History of Our Own Times, Parkman's splendid works on Canadian History in a complete set of 12 vols., and also includes comprehensive histories of Rome, United States, the Jews, etc. Besides these, there are many interesting and instructive historical novels by such authors as J. A. Henty, Conan Doyle, Church, etc.

In Science, the list is composed of the brightest and most readable books by Proctor, Figuier, Rev. J. G. Wood, and others on scientific subjects of general interest. In them, facts are presented not in the Gradgrind method, but in an enjoyable manner.

The works of Shakespeare, Burns, Shelley, Tennyson, Whittier, Browning, Schiller, etc., elegantly bound in cloth and gilt edges, afford the subscribers the pleasure of reading noble sentiment without the incongruity of cheaply bound books.

The Sections of Travel, Biography, and Religion, are well selected and contain many valuable books.

In Fiction, none but the best authors are represented. Complete sets of Scott, Dickens, and Edna Lyall, have been purchased along with the best works of J. M. Baine, Geo. MacDonald, Geo. Elliott, Lew Wallace, J. F. Cooper, Augusta Evans Wilson, Geo. Ebers, Mary Jane Holmes, Bulwer Lytton, Thos. Hardy, Robt. Buchanan, Charlotte Bronte, Wm. Black, Jules Verne, Anthony Trollope, Mrs. Oliphant, and very many others of whom lack of space forbids mention.

In addition to these sections is one containing General Literature comprising moral tales by Pansy, Annie S. Swan, T. S. Arthur, and others, together with a miscellaneous collection on many and various subjects.

A complete Encyclopædia and other books of reference are always kept on the Library shelves.

The Directors make it a point to purchase new books as soon after they come out as they practically can. By this means the subscribers have been enabled to read such books as "The Prince of India," by Wallace, "Marcella," by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, "The Hundredth Man," by Frank R. Stockton, Lady Aberdeen's book "Through Canada with a Kodak," etc., shortly after their publication, while yet they are being reviewed in the papers and magazines, and so have their enjoyment of the reading largely increased.

Subscribers are cordially invited to recommend books they would like purchased for the Institute.

In addition to the books the following magazines are subscribed for: Review of Reviews, Cosmopolitan, Canadian, Quiver, and McClure's. After these have remained in the library for six days they are put into general circulation, and a member may take a copy in addition to a book.

The Directors intend have complete Catalogues of the books in the Library published early in the fall.

Any one desirous of obtaining one may do so by applying to the Librarian or Secretary.

A large amount of time, labor, and even money has been expended by the Directors in their efforts to further the interests of the Library, and it is but fair to them that their efforts should be warmly seconded by the public at large.

A well sustained Mechanics' Institute is an educational institution of great importance in a community and worthy of the warmest sympathy and support of the people. Your patronage is, therefore, solicited for the COLDSTREAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTE. The fee for membership is only fifty cents per annum, and may be paid to the Librarian or any of the Directors. Subscribe soon and your enjoyment of the long evenings of the coming winter will be assured.

REPORT

Prepared by the Directors of the Coldstream Mechanics' Institute, and read at the Annual Meeting of Members held in the Town Hall, May 7th, 1894.

Our first regular meeting held May 12th, 1893, was chiefly occupied in the appointing of officers and various standing committees for the ensuing year as follows:—Library and Reading Room Committee, Messrs. Smith and Snelgrove; Class and Lecture Committee, the entire Board of Directors; Finance Committee, Messrs. Munna, Gray and Mitchell; Librarian, Miss Emma Marsh, at a salary of \$25.

The sum of \$2.00 was voted Mr. Jacob Marsh as rent for his premises.

A rule concerning magazines was passed, providing that they be retained on the library shelves for two weeks immediately after their receipt.

Owing to the lack of a quorum no business was transacted on August 14th, the date of our next regular meeting.

Our third regular meeting was held October 17th, with seven members of the Board present.

An order for \$5.25 for the payment of a bill for binding seven volumes of the Century and Scribner's Magazines was passed. These books form a valuable addition to the Library.

A year's subscription was voted for each of the following magazines:—Review of Reviews, Quiver, MacClure's, Canadian and Cosmopolitan.

The Book Committee was authorized to purchase books and a list prepared for them. A few days afterwards, as many of the Directors as conveniently could visited London and purchased something over a hundred volumes from Jas. Anderson.

A special meeting held December 8th, an order was drawn for \$25.00, the librarian's salary.

A committee consisting of Messrs. Vanderburg, Gray and Snelgrove, and Misses Cutler and Carmichael, was appointed to get up an entertainment for the benefit of the Institute.

A second special meeting was held March 27th, 1894. The President, with Messrs. Snelgrove and Vanderburg, were appointed to prepare annual reports for the Government and for the annual members' meeting.

The Entertainment Committee reported an entertainment held February 16th, in which Frederick Abbot, of London; Miss Bessie Merrilees, of St. Thomas; and Miss Lillie Houlding, of Brantford, had taken part. A high-class programme was rendered and the net proceeds amounted to \$3.50. The report was accepted and the committee discharged with thanks.

W. H. Vanderburg was engaged at \$1.00 per day to canvass for subscribers for the Institute. Several of the Directors kindly placed their horses and conveyances at the disposal of Mr. Vanderburg, and in three days he succeeded in obtaining nearly forty members, several of them being new subscribers.

On April 21st a Purchasing Committee procured over 50 more volumes from Mr. Anderson, costing some \$27.00.

On Friday evening, April 27th, a meeting was held to consider the reports. They not being forthcoming nothing was done, except to pass a by-law allowing a member to have a book and a magazine out of the Library at one time.

To these records of our work during the past year might be added a few comparative statistics and general remarks, showing how prosperous the year has been with our Institute and how certain things might conduce to its future prosperity.

Our first Legislative Grant drawn in 1892, amounted to \$58.60. In 1893 it had increased to \$100.00, and this year we expect it will amount to nearly \$135.00. The largest grant that can be drawn from the government in one year by an Institute supporting a library only is \$200.00, and we think that by careful and energetic management this figure may be reached next year by the C. M. I., and be so maintained each year through all time to come. Again in 1892 our expenditure in books amounted to \$43.60, in 1893 to \$79.25, and in 1894 to \$105.16, purchasing in 1892 seventy-one volumes, in 1893 one hundred and nineteen volumes, and last year one hundred and seventy-five volumes. We find in comparing these results with statistics given in the annual report of the Education Department of Ontario for 1893, containing our first government report, that even then, in the very first stages of our chartered existence, we compared very favorably with other Institutes, surpassing in many respects the record of a great many rural institutions, and nearly approaching the status of several thriving urban corporations. We added nearly 40 volumes more to the Library last year than did Strathroy.

Our membership in 1892 was 64, in 1893 when free membership was granted to members of the old Lobo Union Library, our paid membership decreased to 51, but last year again reached 64.

A significant and encouraging fact is that while in 1893 five hundred and twenty-six volumes were issued to 64 members, last year nine hundred and fifteen volumes were issued to only 51 members, showing that the privileges of the library are becoming more highly valued and appreciated by its members.

In 1893 \$6.60 was spent in periodical literature, and last year \$8.85.

There is now a total of 573 volumes in the Library, and the total assets of the Institute are valued at \$240.50. The weak, struggling days of the Lobo Union Library have passed away, and in its stead we have in the Coldstream Mechanics' Institute a powerful, vigorous and successful corporation.

In view of these facts it appears to your Directors that the Library is not as readily and heartily encouraged and supported by the intelligent people of Lobo as it should be. It seems strange indeed that not more than sixty-four of them have availed themselves (after having been solicited to do so) of the advantages of so excellent an institution, containing now a well assorted and carefully selected collection of standard literature, especially when they may be obtained for so small a yearly fee as fifty cents. We believe it is in the power of the members to increase the membership, and that they should assist the Directors in this matter. We are confident there is not one of them but could by a little exertion induce a neighbor or a friend to join, and so increase the list to 140 and the annual income by \$90.

We will here quote from the Report presented the Educational Department in 1893 by Dr. May, Provincial Superintendent of Mechanics' Institutes:

"The Libraries are gradually improving, and are supplied with a higher class of reading than formerly. They are also increasing in size. This is very gratifying and encouraging, as it shows the good management of the Directors, and their carefulness in expending the grants so liberally contributed by the Legislature, at the same time we must consider how far the public appreciates these efforts for their benefit. I regret to say that in several Institutes, although they are supplied with new and popular books, the Directors have a difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of members to entitle them to a share of the Legislative grant. As it is not the special business of any individual member or director of the Institute to make a personal canvass—the library is not so great a success as it ought to be.

"In Mechanics' Institutes every member has a right to recommend or object to the purchase of any book to be paid for out of the Library funds. This method excludes books of a pernicious character and supplies a greater proportion of high-class literature than can be probably found in any other public libraries of the same sizes and value.

"In these days of cheap literature, when dime novels of an injurious tendency are so largely circulated throughout the Province, Mechanics' Institute Libraries are doing a noble work. Directors and members select works containing the thoughts and sayings of the greatest thinkers of every age, some of whom have devoted their lives to the study of the great and profound secrets of nature for the benefit of their fellowmen.

"Every Mechanics' Institute is a great accessory in the education of our children, who, by its means, are taught to read good books, which expands the minds, increases the perceptive powers, and affords that rich culture which will be inimical to fostering or creating a taste for the introduction of that cheap and trashy literature which contaminates the mind and has an injurious influence on the morals of our young people.

"I say then, without hesitation, that the work done in this direction is invaluable to the rising generation and to our country, and that it is more than equivalent to the valuable time given by the Directors, and the large sums voted by the Legislature for Mechanics' Institutes. I may say, too, that frequently children are dependent upon their Teachers or the Librarians of Mechanics' Institutes for a recommendation of a choice of books; some parents do not supervise their children's reading. A case occurred recently in which a mother complained that her boy read dime novels when they had a complete Encyclopædia in the house, and admitted that she had never taken any interest in explaining to her son the advantages to be derived from reading books on travel, history, etc. But apart from the value of good books for the young they are also of importance to adults. If the ordinary man is induced to read good healthy literature it improves him mentally and intellectually; he has clearer views of duty and higher aims in life, and a fuller appreciation of what is good and true and becomes a more valuable and better citizen."

You see Dr. May states that each member has a right to recommend or object to the purchase of any book, and it would be of the greatest assistance to the Board of Directors if the members would prepare lists of books they would like bought and hand or send them to the Secretary or Librarian. A blank book for the purpose of containing those lists is kept in the library, but, we regret to say is not greatly used.

We hope for your continued help during the coming year, knowing that a small portion of your funds could not be utilized to a more laudible and beneficent purpose than in the support of an institution like this that contributes so largely to the higher education and intellectual enjoyment of those who patronize it.