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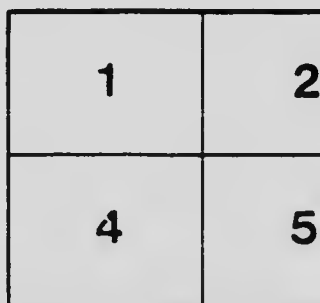
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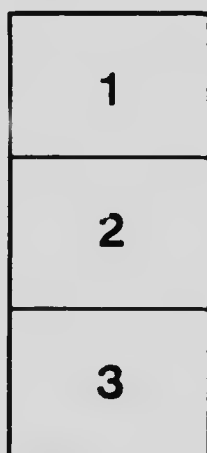
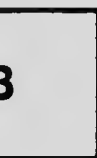
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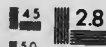
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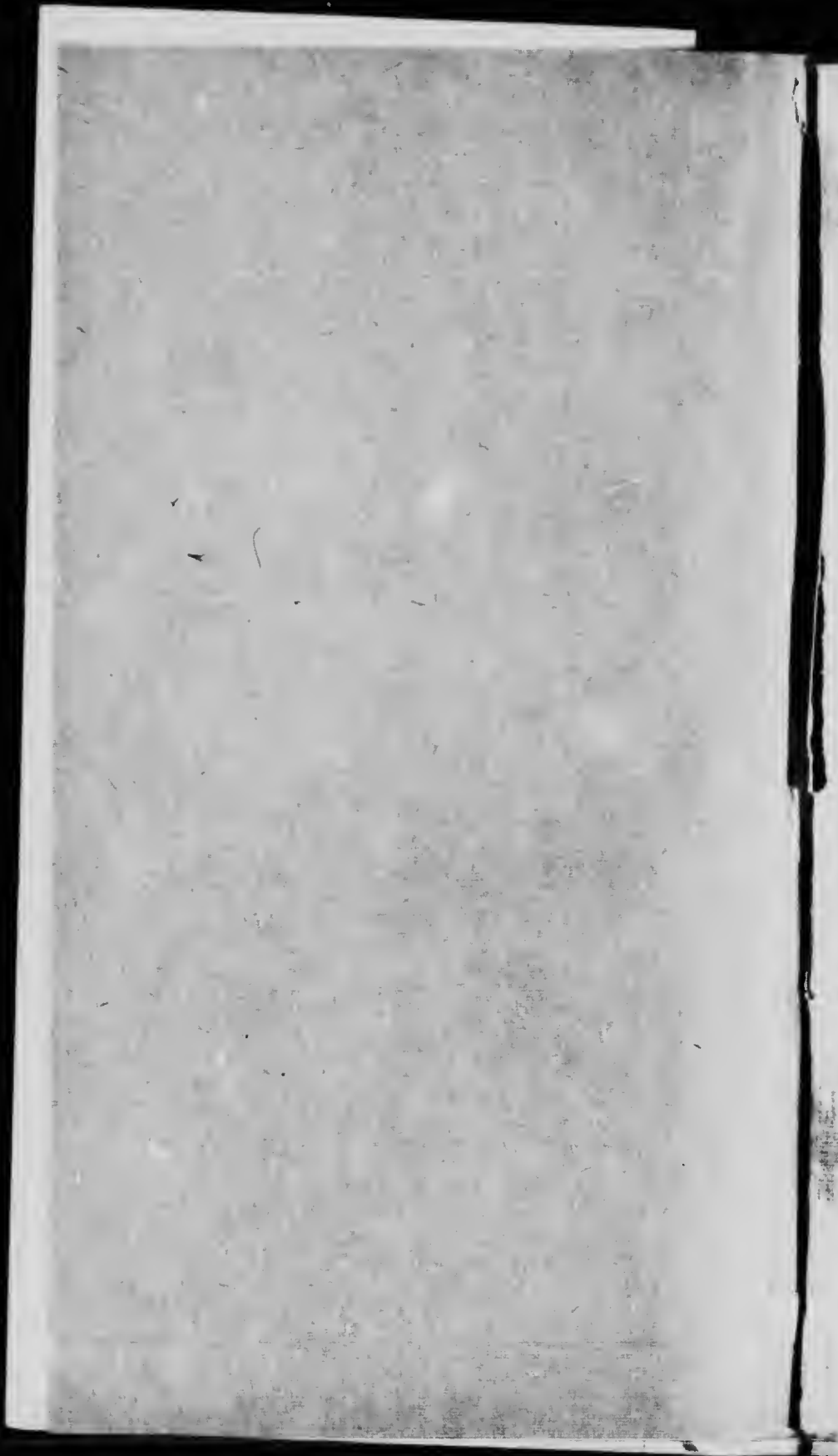
**Opening of the Winter Course of Lectures,**

**Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society,**

**November 23rd, 1906**

by

**Otto Klotz, President**



It gives me much pleasure to greet you to this, the opening meeting of our winter course of lectures.

The history of our Society has been presented to you in former years, especially by our veteran ex-president, Dr. W. D. LeSueur—to whom the Society owes so much—that I will not dilate thereon now.

However, I may say that our membership is nearly 300 and that our finances are in so far satisfactory that we have no debts and have a substantial figure to our credit in the bank.

The past year in Ottawa has been marked by an event that cannot but be fraught with great good to the people of Ottawa and which will also, it is hoped, prove a benefit to the Literary and Scientific Society. I refer of course to the opening of the Carnegie Library. It is but a few months since this took place, and already some ten thousand have availed themselves of the privileges thus made available. This in itself is ample justification for the existence of the institution, the usefulness of which is, however, but in its infant stage; let us hope that as time passes there will not be a home in Ottawa which shall not be directly or indirectly benefited by its humanizing and elevating influences.

That the library may occupy the position it should as an educational factor in the community, it must receive adequate support from the City Treasury for the purchase of books and magazines, and ultimately for the technical instruction of our artisans, not to mention the maintenance of a staff commensurate with its requirements. The present supply of books falls visibly short of the immediate needs.

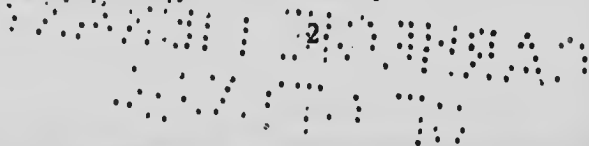
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When the library building was designed, a small hall was set apart for the purpose of meetings of a literary and scientific character, meetings that should be free and open to the public, and at which subjects more or less popular in character should be discussed, for it was considered eminently fitting, that addresses and lectures having "the diffusion of knowledge" in view should be offered to the public, in connection with a library supported by the whole people, and in which every citizen has a personal and direct interest.

The Council of our Society some years ago recognizing the fact that its annual course of lectures should be available for a larger circle than that of its members, abolished the fees for the course and made the lectures absolutely free and open to the public, and this to some degree has been appreciated, although not to the extent desired. It must be admitted that the great mass of the people is not hungering for intellectual development, but is rather in search of amusement, entertainment, such forms of diversion as involve little or no mental exertion and stimulate only the more primitive faculties of the mind. The wheels of progress of the world are, it cannot be denied, kept in motion by the few. And so it is that all public meetings and addresses that have an educational object are patronized by a very much smaller number than is to be found at a football match.

The rooms of the Society being somewhat limited for public meetings, it was decided to avail ourselves of the hall in the library, which has been kindly placed at our disposal, an accommodation for which I wish at this first opportunity to express the thanks of the Society.



A word as to the situation created by the opening of the Carnegie Library with reference to our Society.

As until this year there was no public library in the City, the Society felt it its duty to minister as far as its limited means permitted, to the needs of the community and thereby became a quasi public library, at the cost of departing to some extent from the purpose for which it was declared to be founded, "the cultivation of literature and science." It would seem therefore, that the opening of the Carnegie Library should further the interests of the Literary and Scientific Society by relieving it of the task of supplying general reading matter, especially of the more ephemeral kind, and thereby permitting more attention to be bestowed in another direction.

In a society like ours, it seems to me that the most important object to accomplish is to cultivate the living element, rather than to accumulate books; books should only be means to an end. I have for years recognized that we have here in Ottawa more literary and scientific men and women in proportion to population than any other city in Canada, and on the other hand I have deplored for a long time the absence of adequate facilities for these persons to meet, become acquainted with each other, and by attrition of thought and interchange of knowledge and opinion, foster a true literary and scientific spirit. When the Carnegie offer of \$100,000 was received, the opinion was expressed in some quarters that Ottawa's wealthy citizens should have been approached, and that, had this been done, the appeal would have been adequately answered. The public library is built, but we want, Ottawa wants, Ot-

tawa requires, an institution that shall be a home, a meeting place, open daily, for its literary and scientific people; consequently the generosity of our wealthy men need not go in search of an opportunity of bestowing on the city a further very material benefit. I do not like to make comparisons between ourselves and the people living to the south of us, but we must admit that their opulent citizens appear to vie with each other in donating moneys for the public weal directly, as in the case of public libraries, or educational institutions, and indirectly through facilitating the work of such societies as ours.

A building such as I have in view could be erected for \$50,000, and its further maintenance could undoubtedly be borne by those interested in intellectual progress.

Think of the number of literary and scientific men in Ottawa, who now are merely entities, no link, no binding element between them, no gravitating point, no magnetic field surrounding them, but compelled as individual atoms to float through space and off the stage without having discharged their duties and responsibilities to themselves and to their fellow citizens as they ought. Such men as a rule have but slender means, and in any large undertaking must look for assistance to the wealthier men of the community. I am not pleading exclusively for the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society, I am pleading for all our men and women who are devoting much of their time to intellectual work, be it of a literary, historical, economic or scientific character. The day of the recluse is past; co-operation, commingling of thoughts, combination of efforts, are the watchwords for advancement; and let no one for a moment imagine that

the advancement of any part of the community, and particularly of its intellectual class, does not influence and affect beneficially the whole social body, and in ever widening circles permeate the life of the nation.

Our distinguished premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, declared many years ago that Ottawa should become the intellectual centre of the Dominion; and nothing I take it, would sooner bring about that result than the welding together of the material we already have here into one vital whole by giving it a headquarters and a home—I insist upon a home, for personal contact and intercourse are essential conditions of intellectual life and progress.

We want something more than an annual course of lectures, however instructive and interesting; we want something more than mere books. We want the smouldering intellectual fires to be fanned into flame. We want the opportunity for enlarged and fruitful activity. Just as the crude gem receives new value by rubbing against matter of its own substance, so the faculties of man are aroused, brought forth and polished by rubbing against those of others.

The transactions of the Society which were founded some years ago and of which three numbers have been issued, should and must, now that our activities will be devoted more and more to their true purpose be issued regularly. The value of the transactions is two-fold: in the first place, as a medium for putting in a permanent form the work of members who are contributing to the increase of knowledge; and in the second place, as a means of offering a *quid pro quo* for the similar publications of other societies the world over. The

latter means that we are put in direct touch with the whole literary and scientific world, a circumstance of the very highest importance. We have already a fair exchange list, but it can be largely increased. The issuing of transactions will undoubtedly hereafter constitute our main claim upon the annual support and grant from the Ontario Government.

The capital of every nation is, if not its commercial, its intellectual centre, and this Ottawa should be for Canada. It is already the Mecca of many. The development of Canada, of any country, is essentially a matter of brain power.

We hear much these days of the City Beautiful, and of making Ottawa a city beautiful, a desire, I am sure, in which all our citizens most heartily participate. But this, as commonly understood, has reference exclusively to the material adornment and embellishment of the city. A true City Beautiful is one in which material and intellectual improvement go hand in hand.

The time is eminently ripe for a movement leading to the founding of such an institution as I have indicated.

I am uttering these words in the hope that they may reach a responsive ear, and also to discharge a duty that I feel I owe to my fellow-citizens to whom the matter is assuredly one of deep and serious interest.

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