

The New Library

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THERE is something fascinating and even exciting about newness whether it be a car, a book or a baby. It is therefore pardonable if the rapidity of growth, the state of nutrition, and the nutrient elements of a new library should have been a cause of considerable interest to all members of the Faculty during the past six months. For many years past it has been generally realized that the library has been in a difficult and dangerous position. The Forrest Building is not a fire-proof structure. If a fire should occur in this building the destruction of the library would entail many years of search before replacement of our valuable fyles of medical journals would be possible, even if the loss were fully covered financially. The hiatus in the teaching efficiency and in the sequence of original investigation would be calamitous.

Apart from the danger of fire however, a second and equally important reason for the new structure is patent to all frequent readers. The Dalhousie library, like all well nourished libraries, has been growing at an embarrassing rate. Seventeen thousand volumes, with an annual increment of five hundred, can only be visualized by the experienced librarian. Nevertheless the location of these books as at present in five different rooms on three floors of the Forrest Building, one room in the Medical Science Building, one in the Pathological Institute and in the stacks of the MacDonald Library at Studley is evidence of the great difficulty of administering the library as at present.

These two reasons have led to the construction of our fine new building at the corner of Carleton and College Streets on the site of the old tennis courts. The fabric consists of tapestry brick with trimmings in Wallace sandstone to match the adjoining buildings. S. P. Dumaresq of Halifax was the architect and the Brookfield Construction Company have been the contractors. The cost of construction with complete furnishings has been estimated at about \$100,000. Excavation began late in June and the corner stone was laid officially by the Honourable Dr. F. R. Davis, Nova Scotia Minister of Health, on the occasion of the Dalhousie Reunion, August 18th, 1938.

There are two storeys to the building. The basement includes a spacious stack room with two small reading rooms for temporary private work, six study carrels, a student cloak room and a work room for general library purposes. The main floor consists of a large reading room, 44 by 55 feet with a capacity of about 80 readers. At the south-west corner of this room the librarian has her office with a small work room adjoining.

These are a unit with individual ceilings and walls partly of glass. The system of open stacks will be used and shelves for the more popular textbooks will be placed around the room. A number of stacks containing our files of journals, will occupy the southern end.

You will enter the library through a teak wood door with heavy plate glass and dull chromium plated fixtures. In front of you is a short stairway built of Italian travertine with wainscoting of black silver-streaked marble. As you ascend you look into the main reading room with its vaulted ceiling covered in ivory, acousto-celotex board possessing special sound proof qualities. The graceful windows in gray steel sashes fit into walls of natural sand finish plaster. A neat cornice design in white plaster encircles the room. From the ceiling hang thirteen lamps furnishing an indirect light and each one with a capacity of 1000 watts. The tables, chairs and general woodwork are all in a dark quartered oak contrasting well with the green battleship linoleum on the floor and its black border. The bookcases and the special magazine racks are all in steel in the conventional olive green colour. On the right of the entrance to the room is a semi-circular charging desk with the inevitable card index system beside it. As you approach the centre of the room a small mezzanine floor is apparent over the entrance lobby closed off by a neat iron grill with an electric clock. This will be used as a reading room for current periodicals of which the library receives over one hundred and fifty.

One of the most fascinating parts of the whole building is the heating and ventilating system which embodies distinctly new features in construction. The building will be heated by steam coming from the adjoining power house and passing through modern "finned" radiators concealed in the walls in most rooms and thermostatically controlled. In the basement there are no radiators but three electrical heaters have been installed in the ceiling from which warm air is blown by a compressor in the power house and also under thermostatic regulation.

The air conditioning system is indicated in the main reading room by two curious aluminum cones high up in the ceiling. Through these is blown warm, filtered and moistened air, drawn from outside and passed through a set of chambers by motors placed in a room above the mezzanine. There is a small control room off the entrance hall with switches for operating the conditioning system. The air is sucked out of the room again through ducts that are not visible except for small grills situated near the floor. In the basement the system is more obvious as the ducts make a maze of sheet metal work with special cones serving for both entrance and exit lines. This elaborate system should greatly improve the comfort of the working conditions in the library as well as removing the dust of ages that has heretofore been inseparable from a venerable, proud institution.

The advantages of this new building which will be officially opened next term can well be imagined. For the first time in many, many years

the whole library will be immediately and readily available. The additional reading space has been sorely needed and the removal of the disturbing element of over-crowding should allow of much better concentration. A library must be peaceful, comfortable and cheerful to attain its greatest possibilities of service. The new Dalhousie library seems well on the road to provide this ideal by virtue of the generosity of its benefactors, the Honourable J. C. Tory, A. H. Buckley, Dr. John Cameron, the Honourable W. H. Dennis, W. Inglis Morse, J. McG. Stewart and A. B. Wiswell. May the Dalhousie motto over the entrance, "Ora et Labora", be truly fulfilled!

HELLO, DOC!

A doctor spends his hours of ease
 Perusing magazines and tracts;
 On every kind of rare disease
 He must obtain the latest facts.
 When we're a-slumber in our cots
 He thus burns midnight kilowatts.

A doctor must, without a pause,
 Attend to every single call;
 To every charitable cause
 He must devote his wherewithal.
 And—like ourselves—his funds are spent
 On food and income tax and rent.

But when a patient comes his way
 Afflicted with some simple ill
 (Who really can afford to pay)
 He sends along his modest bill.
 Whereat the patient lifts his jowl
 And sets up a stupendous howl!

— *H. G. S. in Portland (Ore.) Journal.*

—Quoted in *The Journal of A. M. A.*, April 30, 1938.