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Opening of Halifax Memorial Library  
November 12, 1951.

Address by Hon. Vincent C. MacDonald of  
the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

Your Honour; Mr. Prime Minister; Your  
Worship; Mr. Chairman; Ladies and  
Gentlemen:-

We are met here to celebrate  
a most significant event in our civic annals.  
In a few moments the Mayor of this ancient  
city will declare this building open.  
Thereupon the people - who constitute the  
City - will become possessed of a modern  
and attractive Library wherein they will  
find new sources and guides to information,  
literature and recreation, and new seeds of  
nourishment for the mind and soul.

Let us rejoice that we now  
have this great institution in our midst.  
Let us rejoice also that our Library is  
housed in such a magnificent structure, and

in such a beautiful setting.

This structure, in its purposes, its contents and its design, is a further and welcome token of the emergence of a civic consciousness which takes an active pride in our City as being one which has a future commensurate with its historic past.

This Library is an organized collection of thought and information, with provision for its administration, and skilled guidance in its use. If it be true (as Carlyle said) that "all that mankind has done, thought, gained or been is lying in the pages of books," and (as Emerson said) that "our knowledge is the amassed thought and experience of innumerable minds" - it is no less true that the creation and management of a library to the best advantage require trained and adequate personnel, who in turn will develop the public appetite which will lead to the maximum use of the Library.

This Library is a reservoir from which may be drawn factual information; general knowledge and culture, freighted with the wisdom and wit of the ages; stimulation from the records of scientists, explorers, historians and biographers, excitement and pleasure from intercourse with the great writers of romance, imagination and poetry, and a developing appreciation of art in all its forms.

This Library provides opportunity and encouragement for that self-education which must continue long after the school door has closed behind one. Above all, it provides a pasture of the mind wherein the people may roam and browse and eat at their leisure and as their need or interest or fancy may dictate. An auxiliary to education, an aid to practical need, a spur to self-improvement, an inspiration to imagination, a stimulus to learning and culture, an invitation to intellectual



and sensuous delights - this Library will beckon us all, asking only that its treasures be explored, its facilities be used, and its books be read.

It is my hope that these values will be seen to transcend all considerations of cost; and that the Library will be subjected to such enthusiastic and popular use as to require, and to receive, progressive growth of its facilities. If so conceived and developed, it will at once justify the vision of its sponsors and enhance the reputation of Halifax as a City of Culture.

It is a happy circumstance also that, standing as it does in a City which has known the tragedies of so many Wars, this Library should be dedicated as a Memorial to those who exemplified in fullest measure the virtue of civic piety in two World Wars.

"To live in hearts we leave behind,  
Is not to die!" the poet says; and we

can but hope that they who made the mortal sacrifice may find, in this Memorial and in its daily use, an enduring symbol that the lamp of memory still burns in the hearts of our citizens. At all events we have reared here a most appropriate testimonial to our hallowed dead, to remind us unceasingly that the Present is not the whole of Time, and that gratitude is not the least permanent of human sentiments.