

On November 12 at 2 P. M. the Halifax Memorial Library will be opened officially to the public. The Hon. Mr. Justice Vincent C. MacDonald will give the address upon this occasion. The building itself will be declared open by His Worship Mayor Gordon S. Kinley. Since the building has been erected as a war memorial, the Canadian Legion, the Silver Cross Women of Canada, and the I. O. D. E. will participate in the ceremony.

During the remainder of the week from November 13 to 17, the library will be open daily for inspection and registration. The following Monday, November 19, circulation of books will begin.

Some 20,000 volumes will be available for the use of the public. The great majority of these are for home borrowing by adults and children. A small but good collection of books is for reference use within the library itself. The library will be open from 9 A. M. to 9 P. M., 9 A. M. until 1 P. M. on Saturday. A staff of qualified and experienced librarians will be on duty to look after the needs of the public, whether for assistance in choosing a book to provide an evening's reading at home, or for the location of specific information. A special effort will be made to provide information requested by business men and firms. It is planned to develop this important phase of the work as more books and reference materials can be acquired.

The staff realizes all too well that the number of books which will be available is glaringly below standard for a city the size of Halifax. No apology is made for the quality of the collection, but some explanation of the quantity is in order. It takes decades to develop a public library collection, years of judicious buying and careful book selection, constant discrimination in choosing books and a never ending process of cataloguing.

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When it is recalled that the present collection of the Halifax Memorial Library was born only about a year and a half ago, the wonder is that 20,000 volumes are available in so short a time. The collection will grow as rapidly as funds and staff assistance permit.

Questions have been asked at various times about the cost of library membership. The Halifax Memorial Library is a public library, owned and operated by the municipal authority, and as such provides free library service to the residents and taxpayers of the City. A nominal charge of ten cents is made for each registration card. Registration cards must be renewed at three year intervals. Other charges of the library are for fines on overdue books at the rate of two cents per day, replacement costs on damaged or lost books, and a five cent charge for reserving a book.

The Halifax Memorial Library building itself is an addition to a busy section of the city. It is of contemporary architecture strongly influenced by classic design. There are three floors, two of which are for public use, containing the circulation, reference and children's libraries, the art display room and a small assembly room. The ground or basement floor is largely devoted to the administration offices and maintenance. In addition, there are two tiers of book stacks providing for a limited future expansion. The woodwork throughout is mahogany used in conjunction with shades of green. The main hall which is impressive in its grandeur will contain the memorials erected to the citizens of Halifax who gave their lives in World Wars I and II.

An even greater memorial to those heroes of our wars is the ideal on which the whole building is erected -- the faith of the citizens of Halifax in the democratic ideal of making freely available knowledge to each and every resident of the city.