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THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE LIBRARY OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN.

AN APPEAL FOR FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.

BY THE EDITOR.

**N**OW that Belgium has been freed from the hateful presence of the barbarian invaders, whose brutal tyranny has received the answer it richly deserved, the Belgian people are returning from exile, having their hearts filled with a new-found but aching pride in the immortal glory which their country has acquired, as a result of their noble and heroic sovereign's lofty conception of his duty to remain true to his pledges of neutrality, and by so doing to vindicate his country's honour.

The first care of these brave people will be the rebuilding of their country, once so fair and prosperous, but during four years ravaged by the savage hordes of despoiling marauders, who swept down upon it like a mighty devastating torrent, obliterating many of its ancient landmarks, and laying it waste and desolate.

It is evident that no time is to be lost, for already preparations have been commenced for the work of replenishment and for the resumption of business. Never, indeed, for one moment, did our noble Allies abandon hope. They faced the future with a courage and a determination coupled with self-sacrifice, which have been not only abundantly justified, but have evoked our admiration and our envy.

The spirit which sustained them throughout their four years of captivity and exile is revealed in a moving editorial, with its confident note of faith in the justice of their cause, and in the ultimate success of their arms, which appeared more than four years ago in the first London issue of the exiled "Indépendance Belge". Here is one of its most striking paragraphs: "So shall we return—let us doubt it not—

to our liberated country. We shall raise anew our towns, set our factories afresh in motion, repair our railways and our harbours, resume our rank among productive nations, and make a new and industrious Belgium great by her works, and high in the whole world's esteem."

But it is not the industrial reconstruction with which we are immediately concerned, much as we appreciate the need for organizing the country's resources to meet the entirely new set of conditions which are emerging from this dreadful conflict. It is with the replacement and restitution of the treasures of art and literature, for which the galleries, museums, and libraries of Belgium were admittedly famous, many of which have been either wantonly destroyed, as was the case at Louvain, or looted and carried off to Germany, by the train load, by the more discriminating of the vandals.

Not only should the Germans be made to disgorge these stolen treasures, but they should be compelled to provide an equivalent, either in money or in kind, from their own well-stocked galleries, museums, and libraries, for every picture, manuscript, printed book, and other "objet d'art" which they so senselessly destroyed during their occupation of the country. Only in this way can they be made to realize the futility and heinousness of their crimes; and we are glad to learn that active steps have already been taken in this direction by Monsieur Paul de Zambotti, the Director of the Art Galleries of Belgium, whose avowed intention it is to reclaim all the pictures and other art treasures carried off by the Germans.

Monsieur de Zambotti has ample precedent for his action in that taken by the Allies after the battle of Waterloo, in September, 1815, when the Allied Powers ordered the formal restitution of all the pictures illegitimately removed during the Napoleonic conquests, and commissioners from fourteen states were appointed to inspect the collection at the Louvre, with the result that no fewer than 2065 pictures were reclaimed and carried off, leaving only 270 in the gallery.

It is not too much to ask, surely, that a similar course of procedure may be adopted by the Peace Conference, and that commissioners may be appointed with powers not only to secure the return of the stolen treasures, but also to exact from the various national collections in the enemy countries an equivalent for every picture, manuscript, and other treasure destroyed by enemy action in the ravaged territories. It must

be borne in mind, however, that the object of such a toll is to make amends, and that on no account must it be allowed to develop into actions for reprisal.

It has been said, and said truly, that history will pay homage for all time to the nation which sacrificed all but honour to preserve her own independence, and at the same time safeguard the liberties of Europe. But it must not be left to history alone to compensate Belgium for having at such tremendous cost retarded the march of the barbarian invaders and frustrated their plans. It is a present help she needs, and it is fitting that we, who owe more to her than we can ever repay, who feel sympathy with her in the hour of her affliction, and who rejoice with her in the hour of her triumph, should seize every opportunity of repaying at least a portion of our debts, by enforcing expiation, as far as in us lies, of some of the many crimes against humanity, of which the Germans have been guilty.

One of the earliest of the senseless acts of vandalism perpetrated by the self-constituted apostles of culture, whose motives have now been so manifestly exposed, was the destruction of the historic Library of the University of Louvain, and the University Halls; and the object of this article is to renew the appeal which has been made from time to time in these pages in support of the scheme, inaugurated as long ago as December, 1914, to assist in the replacement of the famous collection of books involved in that act.

It may possibly be argued by some of our readers that if the Germans are to be required to make good the damage which they have wrought, what need is there to proceed further with any such independent schemes of reconstruction as the one we propose. To such we would point out that considerable time must elapse before the damage can be assessed, and the work of restitution entered upon. In the meantime the authorities of the University will be anxious to return to the devastated scene of their former activities and triumph, there to reassemble their scattered students, to resume their accustomed work, and to take a prominently active part in the immediate business of effecting a transition to a peace footing, as well as in the educational and other schemes of reconstruction which are already taking shape.

One of the first essentials in the organization and equipment of any university is a library, for as one of the old writers has said: "A monastery [university] without a library is like a castle without an

armoury," or, as Thomas à Kempis has expressed it : " C'est comme une table sans mets, un jardin sans fleurs, une bourse sans argent ". The methods of modern education have undergone so complete a revolution in recent years, that an ever-increasing part of its energies is now devoted to the encouragement of investigation and research, with the result that the library has acquired a much more important place in the organization than heretofore. It is now the centre of activity, and has been appropriately described as " the laboratory of the humanistic departments ".

There was a time when the university library was innocent of anything so mundane as the literature of trade and industry, but such have been the developments of the modern up-to-date institution that it is no longer limited to things academic. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the term " academic," under modern conditions, has acquired a new and broader significance. In any case, under the broadening conception of the scope of education, and to meet the public demand for vocational training, the modern university has developed into a place where everything useful may be studied, and as a consequence the demand has sprung up for the literature of technology and the useful arts, surrounded by a whole new literature relating to various crafts. Nothing is now alien to the university library, which, in consequence, is called upon to give shelter to universal literature.

It is with this liberal view of the scope of the modern university before us that we are aiming to assist the authorities of the repatriated University of Louvain in their heavy task of making good the ruin wrought by the war, by providing them as early as possible with, at least, the nucleus of a new library, in the form of a live, up-to-date collection of books, designed to meet the immediate requirements of a progressive general university, in which provision is made for the study of everything useful in the development of mind and matter. In order that this collection of books shall be available for immediate use the contributions are being catalogued as they are received, so that they may be ready to be placed upon the shelves of their new home as soon as it is ready.

It will be perfectly clear from the foregoing remarks that it is no part of our intention to relieve Germany of her obligation to make reparation for her misdeeds. The proposed gift library, which is already in a state of preparation, will be independent of, and precedent

to, any compensation which may be exacted from Germany ; and is intended to serve as a tangible proof to the people of Belgium of the high and affectionate regard in which we hold them and honour them for their incomparable bravery. We are naturally anxious, therefore, that it should be in every sense a worthy expression of our grateful appreciation.

We have been living amidst such tremendous happenings during the four years that have elapsed since the burning of Louvain, that our memories, which at best are short, have become a little dulled, and it will not be out of place to recall the circumstances of that savage act of barbarism.

It was on the 25th August, 1914, that the Germans set fire to the library of the University of Louvain, and totally destroyed not only the printed books numbering from 250,000 to 300,000 volumes and nearly 1000 manuscripts which the library contained, but also the famous University Halls, thus destroying in three days that which had taken five centuries of faith and intellectual effort to build up. Only once before in history has such a disaster been inflicted upon the world, when, in A.D. 643, the Caliph Omar, with blasphemy only equalled by that of the Kaiser, destroyed the library of Alexandria in the name of God, and even that instance is of very doubtful authority.

There have been those who have persistently sought to condone this insensate crime by suggesting that the burning of the library of Louvain was an unfortunate accident, whilst others with equal persistence have contended that the contents of the library were only partially destroyed, and that portions have been removed to a place of safety. Unfortunately, these views are not shared by such trustworthy eye-witnesses as Monsieur Delannoy, the Librarian of the University, who himself witnessed the deliberate destruction of the library by German soldiers provided with special apparatus, without any attempt being made to spare the contents. Indeed, so complete was the destruction that within a few days of the disaster not a single entire leaf could be recovered from amongst the débris. Several charred volumes, we are told, which had retained their shape were found, but they crumbled to powder as soon as they were handled. Other evidence of the crime was furnished by Monsieur Henri Davignon, Secretary of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, in a communication to the Editor of "The Times," which appeared in the columns of that journal on the 19th

October, 1916, where, in the interest of truth, we had placed before us many facts which had been established by Belgian and neutral witnesses, and even by Germans themselves, in a manner which would prove satisfactory to any court of inquiry.

Monsieur Lamy, Secretary of the Académie Française, whose death we regret to see recorded, writing in the "Revue des deux Mondes" in September last, made a most telling indictment of those who were responsible for that savage act of barbarism. He pointed out that the reason why the destruction of manuscripts remains in the memory when the destruction of cities is no longer remembered, is because for man during his brief life here the essential thing is to live not merely in the present but also in the future. It is the duty of the present, which is constantly passing, to bequeath to the future a heritage in the form of a record of its knowledge; its achievements, and its visions. Each age has its own seers and interpreters, who are able with the aid of the most fragile materials to give permanence to their records; and transmitting by means of a little paper and a little ink the course of their destiny, the recital of their achievements and their struggles, with a confession of their failures, they become the instructors of successive generations.

To destroy these witnesses is to revoke the gift of the dead, to impoverish the inheritance of the living, to rob those who are no longer with us. This robbery of that which belongs to the past and to the future, by those to whom the custody of it has been entrusted for the fleeting moments of the present, is like a violation of the tomb, which is a profanation and a sacrilege.

It will enable readers the better to understand the enormity of this crime against civilization, if we sketch for them in the barest outline the history of the University, and its library, with incidental references to some of the vicissitudes through which it has passed.

The University of Louvain was founded under the authority of a Bull issued by Pope Martin V, bearing date of the 9th December, 1425, which provided for the foundation of a "Studium generale" at Louvain; and in 1432 the city authorities placed at the disposal of the University the "Halle aux draps," dating from 1317, to provide them with the necessary accommodation for the teaching of theology, an addition to the "Studium" sanctioned by Pope Eugenius IV, which raised the number of the faculties to five, namely: Arts,

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Medicine, Canon Law, Civil Law, and Theology. Thenceforward the "Halle aux draps" became the seat of academic authority in the Low Countries, and an international centre of science and learning attended by students of all nations.

It may be of interest to explain that the commerce in cloth was, in the middle ages, a source of great prosperity for the city of Louvain. From the end of the twelfth century the city possessed a cloth hall, which was located in the old market place, but at the commencement of the fourteenth century trade had increased to such an extent as to necessitate the construction of a building which should be capable of accommodating the great crowds which thronged the city during the great fairs, which were held each year in the month of September, and at the same time be more imposing. To meet this need a new "Halle aux draps" was erected in 1317. During the latter half of that century a bitter and sanguinary struggle broke out between the patricians and the plebeians, which caused a rapid decline in the prosperity of the city, since many of the merchants and cloth workers were driven out and found a refuge in Holland and England, where they set up their looms to the great advantage of the countries in which they settled. With this decline of trade the "Halle aux draps" lost the animation of earlier days, and the city authorities, as already stated, had the happy inspiration of offering it to the University.

But for more than two centuries the University could not boast of a central general library, so that the professors and the students had of necessity to make use of the rich libraries attached to the numerous colleges and religious houses in the city. It is clear, however, that the various constituent colleges and faculties had their own departmental libraries, since, in the Acts of the University, reference is made to the regulations relating to the Faculty of Arts, dating from 1466, in which the use of lights and the removal of books are strictly forbidden. Added to this, according to the humanist Puteanus, the professors themselves were live libraries, and the books which they had written were alone worth all the riches of a library. Indeed, it was not until the seventeenth century that the taste for public libraries grew up in Belgium.

The University library proper owes its origin to a former student, Laurent Beyerlinck, Canon of Antwerp, who, in 1627, bequeathed to the University his library, which was rich in history and theology.

This bequest constituted the foundation of the library whose loss we deplore.

In 1635 the Professor of Medicine, Jacques' Romanus, son of the celebrated mathematician, transferred to the library the rich mathematical collection of his father, in addition to his own medical books.

At that time the Rector of the University was the famous Cornelius Jansenius, to whom belongs the honour of having organized this first nucleus of the library, which was duly installed in the University halls, in the theatre of the Faculty of Medicine, and Jacques Boonen, Archbishop of Malines, assigned to it an annual sum for its upkeep and development. The custody of the books was entrusted to Professor Valère André, the eminent historian and bibliographer, who presided at the public opening of the library on the 22nd August, 1636, and who, on the occasion of his nomination, delivered an oration extolling the priceless advantages of a library, which he described as : " Temple de Minerve et des muses, arsenal de toutes les sciences ". Before the close of the year André had published a catalogue of the 1762 volumes bequeathed by the two first benefactors, Beyerlinck and Romanus.

Unfortunately, after the death of André the library was allowed to fall into neglect until 1719, when attention was directed to it by the gift of Dominique Snellaerts, Canon of Antwerp, who bequeathed to it the 3500 volumes composing his own library, which was extremely rich in Jansenist literature. When Snellaerts, during his lifetime, was invited to give his library to the University, he replied that he did not like to encounter books bearing his name at the doors and in the windows of the second-hand dealers. He had often, he said, seen in Louvain and elsewhere books lying about bearing the names of celebrated men, which had been left by them to the University.

The bequest of Snellaerts necessitated the construction of a new building, an enterprise which was undertaken by the Rector Réga, a man of great initiative, who was the founder of the Anatomical Museum, and who also was instrumental in obtaining a fixed revenue for the library. Consequently, a new wing was added to the old " Halle," the construction of which was completed in 1730, the entire upper story of which was allotted to the library.

A new element of progress was introduced during the administration of C. F. de Nélis, who became librarian in 1752. His first act was to ask the Government to impose on the Belgian printers the

obligation of depositing in the library at least one copy of their publications, a request which was acceded to, with the result that the effects of the concession were soon apparent. It was also during the régime of De Nélis that a printing press and a publishing department were established in connection with the library.

Paquot succeeded De Nélis in the office of librarian, so that the library was administered successively by two scholars, who may be described as the best known littérateurs of that period in the Low Countries.

It was on the initiative of De Nélis that the representatives of the Austrian Government, in 1769, created in Brussels a literary society, of which five of the foundation members belonged to the University of Louvain. In 1772 this society was installed in the Bibliothèque de Bourgogne, under the title : " Académie impériale des sciences et belles lettres," and ultimately blossomed into the " Académie royale de Belgique ".

Under the administration of Jean François Van de Velde (1771-1797) 16,573 volumes were added to the shelves of the library, 12,000 of which were acquired by purchase at the sale of the libraries of the Jesuits after their suppression. At that time the library contained about 50,000 volumes.

Then came the Austrian régime with all its vexation and torment. In those tragic days Van de Velde, who incarnated the soul of the University, was deprived of his charge and banished from the Low Countries. In 1788 the Austrian Government removed to Brussels 108 waggons full of furniture and scientific instruments, and eighteen cases of precious volumes, which were deposited in the " Eglise des Lorraines, at Grand Sablon ". Two years later Van de Velde was reinstated, and was able to secure the return of the books which had been removed.

In 1795, at the time of the entry of the French into Belgium, the commissioners of the French Republic, Le Blond and De Wailly, appropriated some 5000 volumes, amongst which were the most precious of the manuscripts of the Louvain Library ; the manuscripts and the most precious of the printed books belonging to the Bibliothèque de Bourgogne at Brussels were also transported to Paris, deposited provisionally in the Bibliothèque des Cordeliers, and afterwards transferred to the Bibliothèque Nationale. The manuscripts belonging to the

Bibliothèque de Bourgogne were restored after the battle of Waterloo, but there is no evidence that the 5000 volumes removed from Louvain were ever returned. In 1797 the University was suppressed, the library was placed in charge of a commission, and the librarian of the Bibliothèque Royale de Bruxelles, De la Serna Santander, obtained authority to make a selection of all the works, which, in his estimation, would be of service to the library in Brussels. The result was a further appropriation of 718 volumes, none of which were ever restored. Writing with reference to this appropriation De la Serna Santander expressed surprise at the richness of the collection which he found at Louvain in the following terms: "Ce que j'ai trouvé . . . dans les dépôts des livres existant dans le bâtiment de la ci-devant université, dit les Halles, a surpassé mes espérances".

In 1805, by an imperial decree of Napoléon, the library of the University became the property of the municipality, and in the following year it was placed under the control of a commission, and opened to the public, but in consequence of irregularities in the administration it was closed in 1807 by order of the Prefect.

In 1816 the library was placed at the disposition of the State University, founded at Louvain by the Government of the Low Countries, and in the report of the commission entrusted with the transfer it was said to contain the works most essential in nearly every department of literature for a public library. In 1835 the State University was suppressed, and upon the re-establishment of the present independent University in the following year, the city authorities placed at the disposal of the *Alma Mater* the "Halle aux draps" and the precious library, of which it remained in undisturbed possession until August, 1914.

It is computed that at the time of the disaster the library contained, as already stated, between 250,000 and 300,000 volumes of printed books, and about 1000 manuscripts, of which unfortunately there is no satisfactory record. Professor Delannoy, it is true, was at the time actually engaged upon a revision of the catalogue, but the result of his labours perished in the conflagration. In the course of the rearrangement of the books which this work involved, scarcely a day passed without there being brought to light from the obscurity of some corner important volumes which had lain there for a couple of centuries unrecorded, and consequently unknown.

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The collection of manuscripts included many priceless and irreplaceable treasures. Notably : the autograph volume of sermons of Thomas à Kempis said to contain the life of Sainte Lidwige, of Schiedam ; a fifteenth century copy of "De viris illustribus" of Cornelius Nepos, which was regarded as the most important text then extant of that author ; two autograph manuscripts of Dionysius Carthusiensis ; an eleventh century copy of Prudentius ; several very fine examples of the beautiful post-Caroline writing of the twelfth century ; a large number of manuscripts relating to the history of Belgium and Brabant, many of which dealt with the history of the various religious houses ; and a considerable number of liturgical and other illuminated manuscripts of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. The most interesting of these manuscripts provided M. le Chanoine Reusens with the material for his studies, which resulted in his "Eléments de paléographie," where may be found descriptions accompanied by reproductions of a number of the most representative of them.

But the loss most to be deplored is the total destruction of the Archives of the University, including that most precious of all muni-ments, the foundation Bull issued by Pope Martin V, in 1425, which renders for ever impossible the complete and documentary history of the *Alma Mater* of the new foundation, which was in contemplation at the outbreak of war.

It was not only in manuscripts that the library was rich. Its printed books included a remarkable collection of Incunabula, numbering upwards of 800 examples, a large proportion of which were printed in the Low Countries, comprising many specimens of the work of John of Westphalia, the first printer in Louvain, including the first dated work printed by him in 1474, and the "Vocabularius" of 1483, of which apparently only one other copy is known. The collections of mathematical and medical works were equally notable, containing the vellum copy of "De corporis humani fabrica" of Vesalius, which was presented to the University by the Emperor Charles V. The splendid collections of "Jesuitica," comprising publications by or relating to the Jesuits not only in the Low Countries but in every part of Europe ; and of "Jansenistica," which is sufficiently explained by the part the University played in the history of Jansenism, are said to have been quite unequalled, and were amongst the possessions of which the University was justly proud.

Then, too, the University took a very active part in the religious struggles for reform in the Low Countries, and piously preserved the records of these struggles, together with the polemical literature surrounding the conflicts of opinion to which they gave rise. In that way there was built up at Louvain a very complete and valuable collection of material, said to contain many unique sources for the history of theological doctrine.

The collection of Bibles which the library possessed is said, by Monsieur Delannoy, to have been quite unique. There were also many bibliographical rarities, and early bindings of great interest, in addition to rich collections of oriental, philological, theological, and historical literature, the destruction of which is a serious loss to scholarship.

These are but a few of the outstanding features of the library, but sufficient has been said to enable readers to form some idea of its contents, the destruction of which has evoked the indignation of the civilized world, and at the same time to afford them some guidance as to the character of the works required for its rehabilitation on lines similar to those along which it has been consistently developed since its original foundation.

The scheme of reconstruction to which this appeal refers originated with the desire of the Governors of The John Rylands Library to give some practical expression to their deep feelings of sympathy with the authorities of the University of Louvain in their irreparable loss, which found expression at the meeting of the Council of the Library held in the early part of December, 1914, of which Sir Alfred Hopkinson was, at that time, Chairman. It was forthwith decided that this expression of sympathy should take the form of a gift of books to be selected by the librarian from the stock of duplicates in their possession, which had gradually accumulated through the purchase from time to time of large and special collections, which invariably contained a number of works of which copies were already to be found upon the library shelves; together with a set of the printed catalogues and other publications which had been issued under their auspices.

A list of works forming the first instalment of the proposed gift, numbering upwards of 200 volumes, was drawn up to accompany the offer, when it was made to the Louvain authorities through the medium of Dr. Carnoy, Professor of Zend in the University

of Louvain, at that time resident in Cambridge. The offer, it is needless to say, was gratefully accepted, and Professor Carnoy in acknowledging the gift described it as : " Actually the first which had been effectually given to the future library of Louvain . . . one of the very first acts which tend to the preparation of our revival ".

As the exiled University was for the time dismembered and homeless, we undertook, at the request of the Louvain authorities, to house the volumes until such time as the new buildings were ready to receive them. It was then that it occurred to us that there must be many other libraries and similar institutions, as well as private individuals, who would welcome the opportunity of sharing in this expression of practical sympathy ; and in the subsequent issue of this BULLETIN we announced our willingness to be responsible for the custody of any suitable works which might be entrusted to us for the purpose. We also announced that it was our intention to prepare a register of the names and addresses of the various contributors, together with an exact record of their gifts, for presentation with the library at the appropriate time, to serve as a permanent record of this united effort to repair some of the damage which has been wrought.

Our appeal met with a ready and generous response, the most gratifying feature of which was that all classes of the community, not only in this country but in many parts of the English-speaking world, and also in several of the allied and neutral countries participated in it, evidence of which will be found in the accompanying list of donors, containing, as it does, the names of institutions which have made liberal contributions of eminently suitable works from their stock of duplicates ; the names of individual collectors, who have given, with equal liberality from their own shelves, volumes of great interest and often of great rarity ; and also of struggling students, whose gifts partake of the sanctity of a sacrifice, since, in many cases, they consist of treasured possessions which have been acquired through the exercise of strict economy and self-denial.

When the encouraging nature of our report of the first-fruits of our appeal came to the knowledge of Dr. Léon Van der Essen, Professor of History in the University of Louvain, and writer of the article which appeared in the BULLETIN for April, 1915, he wrote in the following terms of grateful appreciation : " Writing as a professor of the University of Louvain, let me thank you for all that you have done

for us since the crime of Louvain. It is such a wonderful thing in this time of horror to see how the scholars of all countries—the central empires excepted, alas—have manifested their friendship, and proved to us by so many deeds and words, that scientific international solidarity is still alive, and among that work I rank your . . . initiative as one of the most—if not the most—effective. I had indeed opportunity in America to see what your appeal was bringing forth, and how by your kind intermediary practical help was being prepared. It is noble work you are doing, work that will have a fine result, and I can assure you that never will the University of Louvain forget that the appeal went out from Manchester. . . . I hope to have the pleasure to come . . . and to witness the rebirth of our poor library, on the very soil of your splendid and glorious country. Kultur has destroyed the treasures of Louvain : it is a fact full of consequence that what has been destroyed, will have been restored by the kind intermediary of . . . English culture.”

In one of the earliest reports of the progress of our scheme we expressed the hope that the new library, which was rising phoenix-like out of the ashes of the old one, would be far richer and more glorious than its predecessor, and that the agencies through which that was to be accomplished would be as widely representative as possible. It was a source of great encouragement, therefore, to learn with what promptitude a number of societies and learned institutions had resolved to participate in this scheme of reconstruction.

In December, 1914, the Classical Association made an appeal to its members to assist in the reconstruction of the classical side of the library, and about the same time the Victoria University of Manchester forwarded to the authorities of the University of Louvain an address of sympathy, and resolved to set aside a set of the publications of the University Press, together with a considerable number of duplicates from the Christie Library. Similar resolutions have since been passed by the Trustees of the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, the Signet Library, the National Library of Wales, the Universities of Aberdeen, Cambridge, and Durham, University College, Oxford, and many other institutions, the ultimate results of which will be a considerable accession of strength to the new library.

In the early part of 1916 the British Academy initiated a further movement, fraught with great possibilities, by calling together repre-

representatives of the principal libraries and learned societies of the United Kingdom under the presidency of Viscount Bryce, to consider the advisability of co-operating with the Institut de France in the formation of an International Committee, whose aim should be the restoration of the University of Louvain and its library. The meeting was held at Burlington House and resulted in the formation of a small executive committee consisting of the following members : Lord Muir Mackenzie, G.C.B., K.C., Sir J. P. Mahaffy, G.B.E., C.V.O., Sir F. G. Kenyon, K.C.B., Sir A. T. Davies, K.B.E., C.B., Sir A. Hopkinson, K.C., Edmund Gosse, Esq., C.B., Hugh Butler, Esq., Dr. I. Gollancz, Henry Guppy, Esq., Dr. M. R. James, Provost of Eton, C. G. Kekewich, Esq., Dr. J. W. Mackail, F. Madan, Esq., Dr. Norman Moore, Dr. A. E. Shipley, F.R.S., Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, H. R. Tedder, Esq., Dr. C. T. Hagberg Wright, with Lord Muir Mackenzie as Chairman, and the Librarian of the House of Lords as Honorary Secretary, to consider the best way of organizing the movement effectively, and to take whatever steps were considered necessary.

At the first meeting of the Executive, which was held in the Library of the House of Lords, it was decided to co-operate with the Governors of the John Rylands Library in the development of the scheme which they had already inaugurated. Several appeals have since been made on behalf of the Committee by Lord Muir Mackenzie, the result of which has been to give a new impulse to the movement.

As soon as our first appeal reached America, in the early months of 1915, it was welcomed with enthusiasm, and we were much encouraged to receive from Miss Green, Librarian to Mr. Pierpont Morgan, a cablegram in which the offer was made to provide a centre in New York to which contributions from that side of the Atlantic might be sent—an offer, it is needless to add, which was promptly and gratefully accepted. Miss Green followed up her cablegram by a written communication in which she generously offered to do everything in her power to further the objects of our scheme, and at the same time informed us that Mr. Pierpont Morgan with great cordiality had set aside a number of duplicates of *Incunabula*, and other works of great interest from his own library, together with a set of such of his own printed catalogues and other publications as were still available. A committee was subsequently formed, but after careful consideration, it

was decided that so long as the United States maintained her position of neutrality it was obviously unwise to take any outwardly active part in the movement. It is now quite evident that whilst outwardly active participation in the scheme was, for the time, suspended, our friends were quietly organizing their resources in readiness for the time when active co-operation would be possible.

To that end a strong and influential National Committee representing the best interests of that great country was formed, under the Chairmanship of the President of Columbia University, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, to co-operate with the International Committee, in the restoration of the Library of the University of Louvain.

On the eleventh of November, the day on which the Armistice was signed, an appeal was issued, and one of the first active steps to be taken was to commission the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Clifford N. Carver, to wait upon the Rector of the University of Louvain, with an offer to rebuild the library. It is needless to say that the offer was gratefully accepted, and steps have already been taken for the designing of an up-to-date building by one of America's leading architects, whose plans will be submitted to the authorities of the University for their approval.

At the same time a sub-committee was formed under the chairmanship of Dr. Herbert Putnam, the Librarian of the Congressional Library, to co-operate with the other national committees in the matter of providing the literary equipment of the projected new building. Dr. Putnam, who is at present in Europe, has been in communication with the writer, with a view to making arrangements between the two committees, so that duplication and overlapping may be obviated.

When we inaugurated the scheme described in the preceding pages, our aim, as we have explained already, was to replace the contents of the library, and we had little doubt of the success of our project, but we did not dare to anticipate any result so completely satisfactory as that which has been obtained through the enlightened generosity of our friends in America.

But for their timely intervention it is unlikely that the library building as well as its equipment could have been restored with anything approaching the same thoroughness and dispatch, for although the Peace Commissioners have announced their intention of exacting from the Germans full compensation for the damage which they inflicted

## RECONSTRUCTION OF LOUVAIN LIBRARY 17

upon Belgium, considerable time is likely to elapse before such compensation will be forthcoming.

In the meantime the work of reconstruction and replacement will, in all probability, have been accomplished, but it must not be assumed, for that reason, that the Germans are to be relieved of their obligation to make reparation for their misdeeds at Louvain. On the contrary, full compensation will be exacted from them, and it is hoped that the funds so obtained will be devoted to the strengthening of the endowments of the University, so that the authorities may be relieved from financial anxiety in the laying of their plans for the future.

Singularly appropriate, and even prophetic, were the words which stood inscribed over the principal entrance to the University Halls :

*Sapientia œdificavit sibi domum*

and it is to be hoped that the same words, embodying as they do a confession of the faith which has sustained our friends throughout the years of their exile, will be given a prominent place over the main portal of the new library.

The chief purpose of this article is to invite further contributions either of books or money, in order that the gift library which the English Executive Committee, in co-operation with the Governors of the John Rylands Library, have in contemplation, may, in every sense, be worthy of the building which the United States National Committee have so generously undertaken to provide.

Hitherto the response to our appeals has been most encouraging, evidence of which is to be found in the accompanying list of contributors, which includes the names of 280 individuals and institutions, who have made gifts ranging from single volumes to substantial collections of some hundreds of volumes. The value of the gift cannot always be estimated from the number of volumes of which it consists, since many of the single volumes represent works of great importance and value. The volumes which we have actually received and registered number approximately 14,000, but each day brings fresh promises of help, and these are likely to increase rather than to diminish now that the fate of Louvain has been decided. If, therefore, we take also into account the definite offers of help which have been made and accepted, we may say that we are within reach of not less than 20,000 volumes.

That is a very substantial beginning for a new library, and we are

most grateful to those who have assisted us in the formation of such a collection ; but when it is compared with the library which we are anxious to replace, comprising as it did at least a quarter of a million of volumes, it can only be described as the nucleus, and it is obvious that very much more remains to be done if it is to approach anything like the equivalent of its predecessor.

In renewing our appeal we should like to explain that whilst keeping in view the general character of the library which we have in contemplation, we are at the same time anxious that it should be thoroughly representative of English scholarship, in other words, that its equipment should include the necessary material for research in the history, language, and literature of this country, together with the contributions which British scholars have made to other departments of learning. In the attainment of that object the learned societies of the Empire could render very material aid, by contributing sets of their transactions and publications. A number of these societies have already responded to our former appeal, notably : the Dilettanti Society, the Egypt Exploration Fund, the Henry Bradshaw Society, the Polynesian Society of New Zealand, the Malone Society, the Society of Franciscan Studies, the Royal Society of Literature, and the Society of Psychical Research, whilst Professor Gollancz, on behalf of the Early English Text Society, has promised a set of their publications ; but there are still many others whose co-operation we should welcome, and we feel sure that this appeal needs only to be brought to the notice of the responsible authorities to ensure a prompt and sympathetic response. We should be grateful, therefore, to our readers for any assistance they can render in that direction.

Amongst the societies whose help we should appreciate are the following : The Bibliographical Society, the Catholic Record Society, the Chetham Society, the Cymmrodorion Society, the Folk-Lore Society, the Hakluyt Society, the Harleian Society, the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, the Royal Asiatic Society, the Royal Historical Society, the Huguenot Society, the Irish Texts Society, the Scottish Texts Society, the Scottish History Society, the Society of Antiquaries, the British Academy, and the many scientific and local historical and archæological societies.

We are anxious also to enlist the sympathy and help of the Publishers, who have it in their power, more than any other section of the

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community, to assist us in the building up of the collection on its modern side. If the library is to serve its purpose it must be a "live," up-to-date collection of books, in other words, it must be equipped with the latest authorities in every department of knowledge. Messrs. King & Co., the Parliamentary Publishers, of Westminster, very generously invited us to make an unrestricted selection of the works announced in their current catalogue, and as a result the collection was enriched by the addition of 175 volumes, which in themselves constitute a library of sociological literature of considerable interest and importance. Mr. Fisher Utwin has also offered a selection from the list of his own publications, and we should welcome similar offers from other publishers.

The University Presses of Manchester and Liverpool have already contributed sets of their publications, and we venture to express the hope that the presses of Oxford and of Cambridge may see their way to follow the enlightened example of those younger foundations.

The Trustees of the British Museum have made a most liberal and valuable contribution of the catalogues and other publications relating to the Departments at Bloomsbury, numbering 257 volumes; and have promised to make a further contribution of similar publications relating to the Natural History Museum.

There are many other Government Departments whose assistance would tend greatly to the enrichment of the collection, and it is our intention to appeal to the India Office, the Board of Education, and the Master of the Rolls, for sets of the publications issued under their authority, such as: the "Calendars of State Papers," the series of "Chronicles and Memorials," the "Historical Manuscript Commission's Reports," to mention only a few of the most important of these desiderata.

Another interesting feature in the accompanying list, which should not be overlooked, is the number of contributions which have been made in memory of deceased friends. In this way the names of several prominent scholars, recently deceased, have been commemorated, such as: Dean Church, Canon Scott Holland, Professor James Hope Moulton, Dr. Swete, and Professor Emmott; and we venture to suggest that there could be no more appropriate way of perpetuating the name of a relation or friend than by dedicating a gift, in this way, to their memory, in the interest of scholarship.

We appeal also for contributions of money to meet the many

expenses incidental to the organization of such a library. For example, there are a large number of the books already contributed which require binding, rebinding, or repairs at the hands of a binder, before they can be regarded as ready to be placed upon the shelves of the new building. Then, too, it often happens, in the course of our daily perusal of booksellers' catalogues, that sets of very important authorities, which are indispensable to the efficiency of any University library, come under our notice, and might be purchased with great advantage to the collection, had we the funds at our disposal for such a purpose. We venture, therefore, to appeal for contributions towards a fund to meet these and other contingencies.

In order to obviate any needless duplication of gifts, would-be contributors are requested to send lists of the books they are willing to offer to : THE LIBRARIAN OF THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER ; or, to : THE LIBRARIAN OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W., who will collate the lists with the register of books already presented, write as to the acceptance of the volumes, and ask for them to be forwarded to : THE LIBRARIAN OF THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER, where the new library is in process of formation.

We welcome the news, which reaches us just as we are going to press, that the University of Louvain was re-opened on the 21st of January, under the presidency of Monsieur P. Ladeuze, Recteur Magnifique de l'Université, and it is confidently anticipated that, by the end of the year, the whole of the departments will be in full working, with their usual complement of about 3000 students.

Few further words are needed to emphasize the urgency of the need for the library which we have in contemplation, for without it both the staff and the students will be seriously handicapped in their work. We plead therefore for a prompt and liberal response to our appeal.

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