The Osler Library serves as an excellent introduction to a Canadian collection of international renown. One could quibble that a published supplement to the *Bibliotheca Osleriana* would have better served the community of scholars who are the Osler's potential clients. This would indeed be a quibble, for the publication at hand does not preclude the future appearance of such a catalogue. Moreover, it embodies in careful text and photographs and transmits remarkably well Osler's own love for books as the physical containers of the products of the mind.

TOM FLEMMING

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National Library Saga

The National Library of Canada: Twenty-five Years After: A Retrospective Overview. By Ian Wees. Ottawa: National Library of Canada / Bibliothèque nationale du Canada, 1978. viii, 60 p., paper, \$3.00 ISBN 0-660-01784-9 (Issued also in French under title: *La Bibliothèque nationale du Canada*)

The Foreword by Guy Sylvestre, National Librarian, clearly explains that the emphasis in this book 'is on the evolution, problems, shortcomings, and achievements of the National Library and the major changes that have taken place during its first twenty-five years.' The narrative also gives a comprehensive account of the considerations which hindered and finally brought about the establishment of the National Library.

The work is handsome, with its 21cm x 21cm pages divided almost evenly between illustrations and narrative. The fifty-seven illustrations include portraits of individuals, pictures of buildings and street scenes, pages of books and sheets of music, and news pictures of events significant in the history of the Library. Two illustrations are in colour.

Dr. Kaye Lamb, the Dominion Archivist, to whom in 1948 was given the task 'of preparing the way for the creation of a national library', stressed bibliography from the first. In 1950 he set up the Canadian Bibliographic Centre, the foundation on which the National Library was built. The first person appointed to the project was Miss Martha Shepard. She later became the first Director of the Reference Branch of the National Library. Dr. Jean Lunn, later Director of the Cataloguing Branch of the National Library, also joined the project.

In 1950 the Centre published a *Check List of Canadian Imprints, 1900-1925*, by Dorothea Tod and Audrey Cordingley, and took over the publishing of the *Canadian Catalogue of Books*, previously produced by the Toronto Public Library. The name was changed in January 1951 to *Canadiana*.

The National Library continued the policy of stressing the importance of bibliographies. In 1954 it published *Stephen Leacock: A Check-List and Index of his Writings*, compiled by Dr. G.R. Lomer. Many similar works followed.

The Bibliographical Society of Canada also played a part by publishing, in 1960, a *Bibliography of Canadian Bibliographies*, edited by Raymond Tanghe, first Assistant National Librarian.

The book concludes with a selected bibliography of twenty-eight titles. Its fourth

entry: Burpee, Lawrence J., 'A Plea for a national library,' *University Magazine*, v. 10, February 1911, p. 152-163, tells something of how long Canadians had to wait for a national library after the need was publicized.

Any librarian who entered the profession after 1950 should make a point of reading this work. Not only will he or she learn a great deal about the origins and accomplishments of a relatively young institution, which we now can take for granted, but will also realize how desperately poor Canada was in library service as recently as that date.

J.J. TALMAN

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National Library of Canada: A Bibliography / Bibliothèque nationale du Canada : une bibliographie. Compiled by / Compilée par Irma Larouche. Ottawa: National Library of Canada / Bibliothèque nationale du Canada, 1979. xxiii, 179 p., paper, \$9.95 (Canada), \$11.95 (other countries) ISBN 0-660-50210-0

One's eye is immediately caught by the bright burnt-orange cover, on which is reproduced a mural by Canadian artist Alfred Pellán. The original, which hangs in the Reference Room of the National Library, represents the many subject fields to be found in books. The mural does not, however, have a symbol to locate the footdragging and unbelievable procrastination committed by elected officials which effectively thwarted, for seventy years, the establishment of a National Library of Canada.

It was in 1882 that Sir John A. Macdonald rose in the House of Commons to make a strong plea for the necessity for Canada to establish a National Library. In 1953, the National Library of Canada was established. W. Kaye Lamb was appointed to the post of National Librarian, and legal deposit began.

This cautious aspect of Canadian cultural history has been the source of many articles, briefs, presentations, and at least seventeen bibliographies, all of which are cited in Larouche's work. Larouche's publication, however, is a most ambitious and praiseworthy effort to collate and annotate most of the literature concerning the establishment of the National Library of Canada from 1882 to 1953 and its subsequent development and expansion from 1953 to 1978. This compilation, which includes a chronological résumé, is destined to become a well-thumbed reference-tool in libraries, library schools, and political science classes; and in the offices of librarians' associations, cultural organizations, and community groups. To assist in locating materials quickly the work includes a table of contents, a list of abbreviations, and an integrated index of authors, titles, and subjects, in addition to the previously mentioned bibliography of sources consulted.

The text is well set out in an attractive typeface, making it a work easy to consult and to read. In the copy I received the roman-numeral pagination began with 'x', thus making it awkward to locate the foreword by Dr. Guy Sylvestre (in English, page vii; in French, page viii) or the introduction, which in English begins on page ix, and in French on page xii.

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