

of such a discrepancy points to three very definite conclusions:

1. There is a real need for additional facilities in technical and vocational training in order that the non-academically inclined may be able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the skilled and the semi-skilled trades.
2. That our young people may be able best to

avail themselves of this training, vocational advice and guidance should be made increasingly available,—guidance which has particular reference to Maritime business and industry.

3. In view of the increasing demands made by employers for a minimum scholastic attainment, it is essential that vocational education be paralleled by at least a rudimentary course of academic instruction.

Prince Edward Island's Library

By NORA BATESON

FROM 1933 to 1936 the Carnegie Corporation of New York granted funds for a library demonstration in Prince Edward Island to show what can be done today to provide a rural population with a good library service. Since July 1936 the library has been financed by the Prince Edward Island government.

Within the last generation there has been a great development in the conception of what constitutes good library service for a rural community. The status of the public library today may be judged from a recent statement by an English authority: "The public library is no longer regarded as a means of providing casual recreation of an innocent but somewhat unimportant character: it is recognized as an engine of great potentialities for national welfare and as the essential foundation of that progress in education and culture without which no people can hold its own in the struggle for existence." It is the logical continuation of the public school: public schools for the awakening and training of the faculties and public libraries for the further use of them. This implies that the library will have, besides a

wide range of literature of a 'recreational' character, books and printed information on every subject likely to be of interest to its users. It is the aim of the modern public library to put at the disposal of its readers all the resources of the printed word which they need for information, amusement and that enrichment of mind and spirit which art, literature and philosophy can bring.

The last twenty years has witnessed a great change not only in the conception of the public library but also in the extension of its service to rural communities. The day of the small independent village or small town library is over. A revolution started in English library history about twenty years ago when a committee, investigating the reasons for the stagnation of small libraries, made the pronouncement that, "For a public composed of general readers with a variety of wants, no small library can provide an adequate service. A community of 5,000 may include readers with as great a variety of tastes as a community of 500,000 and will therefore require to have access to as wide a range of books." It was recognized that the only way to give country dwellers access to this wider range of books was through the establishment of a larger unit of library administration and support. Within ten years county

EDITOR'S NOTE: Miss Nora Bateson, a distinguished librarian from Baltimore, has helped to organize Prince Edward Island's library system which she describes in this article. A few months ago she made a survey of conditions in Nova Scotia that may lead to the establishment of a similar system in this Province.

libraries had become practically universal throughout the country.

In the United States there are today 256 county libraries. These however serve only a small fraction of its rural population, most of which is still without library service. Before satisfactory progress can be made towards meeting this need two things are felt to be necessary: an enlarged unit of service (the county in many cases being too small), and financial aid from the state. During the last year the need for state aid has been recognized and granted in several States.

In Canada the Fraser Valley Union Library covers an agglomeration of some twenty local units combined into a library district and serves a population of 40,000. The success of this library is leading to the establishment of similar regional libraries on the same pattern in the Okanagan Valley and Vancouver Island.

Prince Edward Island is the one province in the Dominion with a population small enough to serve as a library unit. The Prince Edward Island Library, therefore is a provincial concern serving a population of 88,000. The headquarters of the system is at Charlottetown and the book collection of approximately 45,000 volumes is distributed through the twenty-four branches of the library. These branches were established in obvious local centres, where people go to do their business, and are open from eight to eleven hours a week at times most convenient to the district and always on Saturday afternoon and evening. Each branch contains a collection of 1,000 books upward, with several thousands in Charlottetown and Summerside. About one third of the collection consists of children's books and more than half of the adult collection is non-fiction. In addition to the books at least ten current magazines are received at each branch. In charge of each branch is a custodian selected by the Director and paid at the rate of twenty-five cents an hour.

All the professional work of selecting books and preparing them for circulation, as well as the supervision of branches is in the hands of headquarters staff,

consisting of three trained librarians and three clerical workers.

For library accommodation which is the responsibility of the localities, the essentials are a room centrally situated if possible, with simple equipment for the shelving and charging of books, a stove for the winter and proper lighting. Cream walls and brown stained woodwork make the branches attractive, friendly places.

Emphasis was put from the beginning on the fact that not only the small collections in the branches but all the books in the Prince Edward Island Library were at the disposal of every reader. As a result great use is made of the "request" system by which any book, other than the lightest fiction, or reading material on any subject can be obtained. The requests are sent to the headquarters in Charlottetown and every week new books are bought and about a hundred and fifty books are sent out to branches in answer to requests.

Every summer the book stock in each branch is completely changed, which means that even small villages will, in the course of ten years, have 10,000 books put before them.

As a further means of making the full resources of the library available, mimeographed lists of books have been issued on subjects of special interest. These are annotated and copies available for circulation.

In every branch there are several hundred children's books. To accommodate children who live too far away to use the branches, books are distributed through the rural schools. Teachers may take out a collection of books up to one per pupil for a period of two months. At the end of that time, or before, the collection may be changed. In this way even the smallest school has a variety of literature at its disposal. Teachers wishing for special books for use in connection with their classes are encouraged to ask for them. In the provision of children's books, however, there is a preponderance of the sort of book that is read for pleasure, "supplementary" reading being the responsibility of the schools.

Probably ninety per cent of the population of the Island is within reach of the branches but for districts too isolated to use the branches a service was contrived through boxes of books. A book-mobile service, such as is used in the Fraser Valley, bringing not only books but advice and suggestion is not feasible in Prince Edward Island where during the winter, which is the reading season, the roads are closed. About seventy boxes of thirty books are sent out and distributed through the Women's Institute which is easily the most representative, responsible organization in the province. Great care was taken in the selection of these books, as it was felt that where only thirty books are sent to a community it is desirable that each of the thirty should count. The boxes are portable book cases and are sent by express, the library paying the outgoing and the Institute the return charges.

The establishment of a public library in a community which has been without one always uncovers a wealth of unsuspected reading interests. During the short term of the library demonstration in Prince Edward Island over twenty-five per cent of the population became registered readers and this did not take account of the thousands who used the collections sent out to Women's Institutes and schools. The books were selected with the special interests of the people in mind and very few were allowed to remain unread on the shelves. Fiction, biography, adventure, history, psychology, economics, science, books on all these subjects written in a popular style were in great demand. Attention was directed from the beginning to the practical books giving a range of information on a great variety of subjects, covering every agricultural and fishing activity in which Islanders were engaged, from fertilizers to oyster culture, meeting the needs of women who wanted new designs for their hooked rugs or carpenters looking for information on new ideas.

As an information bureau, the library received requests as varied as that of a farmer who wrote in for information on the building of a well-lighted, well-

ventilated barn and the request from a man who had read a variety of books on social reconstruction from the socialist point of view and wanted suggestions of books dealing with the same subject by writers who believed in "a spiritual basis of human society." Then there was the clerk in a store who read with eagerness everything published on the reign of Queen Anne, spotting the books in magazines as soon as the publishers announced them and sending in a request at that early date. There was the fox-farmer who had never gone beyond grade five who practically taught himself to read after the library came and dipped into many subjects with the delight of one discovering new worlds. Certainly the library demonstration in Prince Edward Island converted many sceptics there and proved once again that people will read, given books they are interested in and easy access to them. The majority read largely for recreation or amusement, others to get information or satisfy an elementary curiosity and some impelled by interests very vital to them.

To continue the library as it was administered during the Demonstration and allow for necessary developments would cost thirty-five cents per capita. This is a very modest sum as compared with the minimum of \$1 per capita set by the American Library Association. The appropriation made this year by the Prince Edward Island government is about twenty cents per capita. The impetus given to the library during the Demonstration period will still be evident for a year or two and the well-wishers of the library are hopeful that by that time it will receive more adequate support.

That Nova Scotia is aware of the need for libraries is clear from the fact that almost every socially-minded organization in the province has in some way tried to meet the need. The library as a necessary, publicly-supported institution, staffed by people specially trained for the purpose, has not yet however received recognition. According to a recent report published by the Canadian government on libraries in Canada and the United States, Nova Scotia appears at

the bottom of the list, with Mississippi and Arkansas, in its per capita expenditure on public libraries and its per capita book circulation. The Prince Edward Island demonstration attracted the attention of many people in Nova Scotia and there is now considerable interest in the possibility of establishing similar systems in Nova Scotia.

This could be effected through a system of county libraries, each conducted on lines similar to the Prince Edward Island

Library. Where the population of the county is less than 40,000 the unit could be enlarged to include two or three counties. According to library authorities the minimum population for effective library service is 40,000 to 50,000 and the minimum budget \$25,000, or fifty cents per capita. The cost would be the joint concern of the cities, towns and rural municipalities with possibly, some assistance from the government.

Cape Breton Highlands National Park

By R. J. C. STEAD

CANADA'S great chain of national playgrounds has recently been augmented by the addition of a remarkable sea-shore area—the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. Situated in the northern part of Cape Breton Island, one of the most picturesque of all the interesting sections of Nova Scotia, the Park contains an area of approximately 458 square miles. It includes sections of the counties of Inverness and Victoria, and lies between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

One of the great attractions of Cape Breton Island is the diversified nature of its scenery, and the new Park exemplifies its wild and rugged coastline and its beautiful rolling interior. Along the western coast steep well-timbered hills rise sharply from the sea to a height of from 1,200 to 1,700 feet and bold headlands jut out to form delightful bays and sandy coves. In the interior of the park are beautiful green valleys, snuggling between rolling blue-green hills, that resemble greatly the Highlands of Scotland. On the great plateau which forms the central portion of the Park are numerous little lakes, which feed streams that flow both to the Atlantic and to the Gulf

of St. Lawrence. Along its eastern coast are the picturesque fishing ports and villages, out of which ply the sturdy individuals that gain their livelihood from the sea.

Another distinctive feature of the region is the retention of old customs and handicrafts by the inhabitants of the vicinity, many of whom are of Scotch descent. Their native songs and dances have also been handed down through generations and make public celebrations and festivals most interesting.

Access to the Park is provided by a motor highway called the Cabot Trail, which connects with the main provincial highway system. Entrance to the Park may be made over an eastern route leading through the famous Bras D'Or Lake region to Sydney and Ingonish, or by way of a western route via the well-known Margaree Valley to Cheticamp. The Cabot Trail practically girdles the Park on three sides in the form of a vast horseshoe, and traverses many delightful scenic regions.

One of the most popular approaches to the Park from the mainland of Nova Scotia is made via highway No. 5 from Port Hawkesbury to the Margaree Valley, connecting there with the Cabot Trail. From Margaree Forks the route is follow-

EDITOR'S NOTE: R. J. C. Stead is Superintendent of Publicity and Information in the Department of Mines and Resources at Ottawa.