

V. *Address of Governor Charles H. Martin at the laying of the cornerstone of the Oregon State Library building in Salem, Tuesday, June 21, 1938, at 10:30 A. M.*

My Friends:

As Governor of Oregon it was my privilege to participate in the laying of the cornerstone of our beautiful new Capitol here in Salem on June 17, 1937. This spacious building is now almost completed and we are here today to lay the cornerstone of a second state building to be erected during my administration, chiefly for our State Library. I regret that on this occasion our Librarian, Miss Harriet C. Long, whose enthusiasm, intelligence and perseverance were so largely responsible for this building, cannot be with us today. I understand she is ably representing our state at the convention of the American Library Association in Kansas City. She is represented here today by Miss Mirpah G. Blair, Assistant State Librarian.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Trustees of the Oregon State Library for their fine unselfish public service. To them belongs a great deal of the credit for our library and for the new home we are building for it on this site.

From the very beginning Oregon has been library-minded. The minutes of the public meeting of the inhabitants of the Oregon Territory held on July 5, 1843, disclose a motion made and carried for the purchase of law books "to be the property of this community." In the Enabling Act of August 4, 1848, Congress appropriated \$5,000.00 for a library to be maintained at the seat of government. During Christmas week of 1855 the territorial capitol building, in which the library was housed, was burned, and all of the books destroyed except a few in circulation. In the fall of 1856 the Legislature passed a joint memorial asking Congress for an appropriation of \$20,000 for the library. Congress granted only \$500. For the next half-century the library was chiefly a law library. In 1905, however, the Oregon Library Commission was created and Miss Cornelia Marvin came to Oregon as first secretary. In 1913 the law library division was separated and became the Supreme Court Library, and the Oregon State Library was designated to maintain general library service. Since then both of these organizations have had a splendid growth and development. Today the Oregon State Library owns 385,408 volumes. Between July 1, 1937, and May 31, 1938, a total of 209,836 volumes have been circulated, of which 131,419 were in the general loan service, 28,689 in traveling libraries and 49,728 in little libraries maintained in some of the smaller communities of the state. During this same period a total of 44,722 packages of books were mailed out by the Oregon State Library. From July 1, 1934, to May 31, 1938, reading courses have been prepared on 842 subjects for 5,437 students.

The library, of course, is essentially a mail order library and its service to the people of Oregon has been truly remarkable. It is estimated that there are approximately 284,000 persons in Oregon dependent on the state library alone for book service. This need is being met in a very satisfactory way by the facilities of our State Library. How pleased those who have been so well served by this great Oregon institution must be to learn that the Oregon State Library is to have such a beautiful and well planned home.

I thank you.