

of the Library's right to a share of the endowment, in the event of control being transferred, - but, at that stage, the City Council made no attempt to promote the Library by financial assistance, being content to let it deteriorate, because of the College's financial difficulties. The burning point, in the next generation, was the amount of the Library's share of the endowment, and, until this question was decided, no settlement was possible. Because of the difficulty of the problem, and the concern of the whole country with the fighting of the War, the two bodies entered into negotiations in a spirit of compromise with the result that a satisfactory working agreement was reached, until such time as it was possible to transfer the Library to the City. This spirit of compromise, unfortunately so often absent in past negotiations, lends to the scene a touch of cheerful optimism. After almost a century of financial difficulties, the Library could at last look forward to a future of ever improving service to the public, without fear of probable retrenchment every few years.

Meanwhile, there occurred a number of internal changes and events that cannot be omitted. In May 1942, a fire occurred in the Reading Room and many files of newspapers were burned. However, had it not been for a brilliant save by men of the Emergency Fire Service, who were billeted across the street in the Y.M.C.A., much more damage would have been done.<sup>(46)</sup> As it was, the fire was confined to the one room which was reopened in August. A music section, started with thirty eight volumes in 1905,<sup>(47)</sup> did not meet with much support but, in the

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46. "Press", May 4, 1942.

47. *ibid* August 28, 1934.