the beneficiary would respond in kind when the opportunity arose. It might even be feasible to arrange, through some such national institution as the Library of Congress in the United States, or the Dominion Archives in Canada, for the establishment of a clearing house for such documentary material, which might there be classified and listed, and eventually find its way to the institution where it would be of the most direct benefit to research workers. The success of such a movement would, of course, depend largely upon the extent to which state and provincial institutions and learned societies agreed to the principle of exchange. National institutions such as the Library of Congress and the Dominion Archives could not be expected to transfer original documents to other depositories, as their field of interest is at least national in scope, but they could unquestionably supply copies of documents in their possession relating to any particular state or province. The chief benefit of such an exchange of original material would be to state or provincial depositories, historical societies whose interests are confined to a particular area, and public or university libraries. So far as these are concerned, one can hardly overestimate the mutual benefit that the general adoption of a system of reciprocity in the exchange of historical material of local value would be to all concerned. And there does not seem to be any good reason to suppose that, given time to appreciate the advantages of the idea, any fair-minded custodian of historical material would refuse his support to such an arrangement.

With this idea of getting each document into the repository where it will be of the widest service, one may well consider the question of institutions supplying facsimile or other copies of their manuscripts to sister institutions. One rarely finds an archivist or librarian who openly declines to accept the principle that one depository should be prepared to assist another in rounding out its collections of documentary material, but in practice most of us know of institutions, north, south, east or west, where the policy may not unfairly be described as that of the dog-in-the-manger. The question is, of course, a broad one, and there may be

some legitimate reservations to the application of the principle. For instance, the Chief of the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress mentions an instance where an institution asked for several copies of a rare manuscript, with the avowed object of using the extra copies for purposes of exchange with other depositories. Then there is the case of an institution reserving material either in course of publication, or which it proposes to publish in the near future. Other points will occur to anyone having practical experience of the subject.

There is also the question of conditions. It is open to any institution to offer other institutions copies of any of its documents, without restrictions as to their use, and without cost; but it is not usual, nor frankly is it desirable. It is a fair stipulation, for instance, that any institution receiving a copy of a document from another should credit the original depository in its own records, and also see that students using the manuscript in any publication should also give due credit to the original source. It is equally reasonable that an institution should pay the actual cost of any copy, whether photographic or by hand, or give copies of its own documents in exchange. There can be no question, however, that apart from the advantages to the recipient institution and to those who use it of such a system of exchange, the whole world of scholarship is vitally interested in the widespread adoption of a policy of reciprocity in historical material. One has only to think for a moment of the irreparable losses of original manuscripts, by fire, or through carelessness or neglect, or the mere influence of time, to realize the tremendous importance of placing copies, particularly photographic copies, of at least the more important of those that remain, in one or more other institutions, and thus reducing the chances of the total loss of some vital link in the history of a nation or some part of it.