

## The Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford

### Shevchenkiana in our Museum and Library

by Lubow Wolynetz, Curator

Ukrainians in Ukraine and in the Diaspora have already begun making preparations, on a wide and majestic scale to commemorate in the year 2014, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko. Such commemorative anniversaries of Shevchenko's birth or death have been constantly observed all over the world during both favorable and adverse circumstances.

The first large-scale observance commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of Taras Shevchenko took place in the year 1911. Ukrainians all over the world were preparing to honor their national poet and hero. Naturally, all eyes were focused on Kyiv. Sad to say, the capital of Ukraine, at this time was so strongly russified, and the members of the Kyiv City Parliament (Duma) were so antagonistic to most Ukrainian activities that they did their utmost to destroy any attempts for a lofty and dignified observance honoring Taras Shevchenko. The Kyiv police reduced the program and concert to such a degree that it had to be abandoned. It also prohibited Ukrainians from Halychyna to journey to Kyiv by not issuing them visas. Ukrainians, at this time began a fund-raising campaign to build a Shevchenko monument in Kyiv which would be placed in



the St. Michael of the Golden Dome Square. Again, the Kyiv City

Shevchenko Observance in Moscow which began its preparatory work at the end of the year 1910. In their program the members

Observance. It went so far that during the formal conference honoring Shevchenko the Moscow City Parliament (Duma)



even placed a wreath at the foot of Shevchenko's bust. A wreath from the actors of the Imperial Moscow Theatre was also placed there.

This Committee also decided to publish a commemorative book which was issued in Moscow in the year 1912. It is this very publication that our Museum and Library is proud to possess and to share its contents with you. The book includes scholarly papers and speeches made at

Parliament did its shameful deed and took away the promised location.

Yet other cities in Eastern Ukraine and in Halychyna did manage to carry out their commemorative observances, each according to their means and possibilities.

Actually, one of the finest observances of the 50th anniversary of Shevchenko's death took place, not in Ukraine, but in Russia in the city of Moscow. The large Ukrainian community in Moscow formed a special Committee for the Organization of



planned a formal conference with readings of scholarly papers, concerts for which they invited the most renowned artists, exhibits of Shevchenko's art and manuscripts, and the staging of Shevchenko's play Nazar Stodolia.

During its preparatory work the Committee informed the Moscow city ordinances of its activities, and on the whole tried to make the Russian populace cognizant of this special Ukrainian National Observance

by sending information to various Russian newspapers. On the whole, the Russian populace of Moscow was favorably disposed to this

the commemorative conference, photographs of Shevchenko, his family and friends, his works of art, etc. It has a bibliographical list of all the Russian newspapers and journals that printed commemorative articles and illustrations honoring Taras Shevchenko. The book also contains greetings and telegrams from various Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian organizations, newspapers, and individuals. These include for example, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, Ivan Krypivakevych from Lviv and many from Kyivans who could not observe such an important anniversary because of political antagonism. An accurate financial report is also inserted.

This is a fascinating publication with unique and informative material for the study of Taras Shevchenko and the political atmosphere of his day.

Explore and Experience Our Past

SOWER

MARCH 25, 2012