

POSTAL OR "D" SERVICE

This service to people living in really isolated places, out of reach of an established library, has increased very much, and 709 persons were registered with the service, as compared with 468 at the same period last year. The figure of 709 includes 20 field cadets attached to Lincoln Agricultural College but working in country districts. These cadets are supplied with general reading on farming and agriculture. The service to lighthouse keepers and assistant keepers and their families, which was commenced last year, is maintained. Fifteen lighthouses round the coast of New Zealand, with a total of 66 borrowers, are sent books in special canvas containers supplied by the Marine Department.

REQUEST SERVICE

All the libraries, groups, and individuals receiving library service from the Country Library Service can ask for special short-term loans of books of an educational and informational type from the headquarters stock of this Service, and during the year 11,935 requests were received, of which 11,617 were filled, the great majority from our own stock; 318 (2.6 per cent.) were not filled, either because the requested book was unobtainable or because the request was not within the scope of the service—i.e., it was fiction or non-fiction of an ephemeral kind.

SUBJECT LOAN COLLECTIONS

Ninety-seven collections, consisting of 3,508 books and 468 periodicals and pamphlets, were issued for periods of two months to libraries. The previous year 27 such collections, totalling 898 books, had been issued. The most popular subject was again, gardening, and 16 collections on this subject were sent out during the year. Other subjects in demand were hobbies and crafts; education; "other countries"; art appreciation and art reproductions; child care and management; home furnishings, designs, &c. Loan collections were issued to 23 libraries linked with this Service, and also to the Frankton, Hamilton, Nelson, Timaru, and Wanganui Public Libraries and the Dunedin and Wellington Teachers' Training Colleges.

INTER-LIBRARY LOAN

The figures for the first complete year in which this scheme was operating are as follows:—

Number of inter-loan cards received by the Country Library Service	..	1,735
Number of items located before the issue of <i>Book Resources</i> —		
(a) From Country Library Service stock	860
(b) From Union Catalogue records	103
(c) From other Wellington libraries	295
Number of items which had appeared previously on <i>Book Resources</i> and were on order	14
Number rejected (outside scope or having insufficient data)	37
Number of items remaining not supplied from Wellington	426
Number of items requested by Country Library Service	286
Total number of items appearing on <i>Book Resources</i>	712
Number located through <i>Book Resources</i>	288

The total number of inter-loan cards received in the five and a half months of last year during which this scheme was operating was 410; for the corresponding period this year, 883 were received.

PERIODICALS SERVICE

A total of 320 periodicals is now taken by this service weekly, monthly, and quarterly. One hundred and twelve different periodicals have been sent regularly to 43 free public libraries participating in this Service. Each library received up to 40 periodicals chosen from the list, in lots of some 6 to 8, sending the periodicals on to another library after one month.

ARMY EDUCATION AND WELFARE SERVICE LIBRARY

A.E.W.S. Library in New Zealand and the Pacific and E.R.S. Library in Great Britain and the Middle East have been provided with books bought through the Country Library Service. It was necessary in June of last year to arrange for an officer of this Service to be sent overseas to assist in the buying of books in London, and it is clear now that but for her efforts the supply to Middle East would not have been made in time. By establishing a buying agent in London it was possible also to see that books needed by men to satisfy specific interests were bought on request. Continuous buying has been needed to keep the service in New Zealand and overseas up to date and to replace the normal casualties in books during the last two years.

In New Zealand arrangements were made for the taking over by the Country Library Service of the staffing of one A.E.W.S. Library depot, and it is anticipated that this will be done in the case of other depots as staffing becomes available and as the Service demands decrease. In taking over A.E.W.S. Library depots it is desirable to consider whether the mobile service which has proved successful in meeting Service requirements should not now be made available to civilians.

In small townships at present a limited deposit made twice a year does not allow the local borrower to see many books, and if the deposit were made every month the range of books seen in twelve months would be relatively small. Local librarians, furthermore, generally work voluntarily and would be in some cases unwilling or unable to cope with the work involved in monthly exchanges. In these circumstances it might be that the method used by the Army would be workable. Once a month a van carrying about 1,000 books would visit the township and remain for an afternoon or for an afternoon and an evening while local borrowers select books from the van shelves. This monthly visit with possibly a less frequent deposit of books of general interest would give fuller service.

Even in larger townships the present conservative system of exchanges of books tends to restrict borrowing to books of general interest. The town librarian or library committee is asked to select from the van twice a year enough books to last for six months. The librarian or the library committee is reluctant to borrow for lengthy deposit books in which only two or three borrowers are likely to be interested; but in most townships only one or two will be interested in such subjects as watchmaking, plumbing, rhododendrons, electronics, plastics, and indeed most interests are represented in a small community by only one or two borrowers. The longer the period between exchanges, the less well