

SESSION II.

1912.

NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR 1911-12.

Laid on the Table by leave of the House.

The CHIEF LIBRARIAN to the CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith the following report for the year 1911-12.

RECESS LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

The Recess Library Committee, under the chairmanship of W. Fraser, Esq., M.P., held several meetings during the recess. Lists of books suggested for order were brought forward and duly considered.

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

The number of permits issued to non-members during the recess was 462, a substantial decrease on the number for last year—799. This rather striking decrease is probably accounted for by two reasons: first, the fact that the short session came during what is the usual recess period; and, second, the decision of the Recess Library Committee, acting in accordance with the resolution passed by the House on the 31st August, 1911, that no works of fiction should be issued to other than members.

Of the 462 holders of recess privileges, 430 actually borrowed books. The number of volumes issued to these borrowers was 3,646, giving an average of 8.46 per borrower. Besides those volumes lent to recess-privilege holders, books were, as usual, issued to those placed under the full-privilege list by the Committee, such as the Judges, naval officers, the officers of the House, and others, and books issued to these are not included in the above figures. The books lent to recess-privilege holders have all been returned, save in three or four instances where they are in use by officers of the State Departments, who are consulting them in connection with official work. Such books are, however, "on call" at any time if required by members. There was no notable case of damage being done to the books lent. As I remarked on previous occasions, the system of lending books naturally necessitates a certain amount of additional wear-and-tear. In this connection I may say that steady work is done all the year round by the library binder, and also by the Government Printing Office, in repairing and rebinding volumes which stand in need of renovation. Quite a large number of books have been rebound during the year.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

The last Accession List issued included additions made to the Library up to the 5th July, 1911; but in order to have this year's list available for the use of members on the first day of the session I deemed it desirable to close the present list on the 24th May, 1912, thus making the period covered by this year's list about ten months. From the 5th July, 1911, to the 24th May, 1912, the number of volumes acquired by purchase, exchanges, and donations, and under the provisions of the Copyright Act (Consolidated Statutes, 1908, No. 29) was 2,445. Since the closing of the Accession List 285 additional volumes have been received in the Library, making the whole number for the year 2,730.

Special attention was again paid to the all-important subject of sociology, many interesting and valuable works on eugenics, on crime and its causes and treatment, town-planning, proportional representation, education, and other subjects of special interest to legislators having been added. Under the heading of "Useful Arts," which covers technology in general, many interesting additions have been made to the Library. The ever-increasing interest taken in art has prompted the purchase of not a few works of notable value. Biography does not bulk so largely amongst the purchases as last year, a fact accounted for by the paucity of new biographies of any notable interest during the last two publishing seasons; but under the heading of "Voyages and Travels" quite a number of most interesting works have been catalogued. A complete set of that good old classic in British topography, "Grose's Antiquities" (twelve volumes) was secured at a very reasonable price. Under the heading of "General Literature" there are some interesting items.