

length. The number of volumes issued to privilege-holders was 8,721, as compared with 11,668 in the immediately preceding recess. It is specially gratifying to note that each year there appears to be an increasing demand for really high-class literature. During the last recess, history, voyages and travels, and English essays and poetry have been most favoured, but scientific and technological literature has also been in great demand.

No fiction is issued to non-members, save to those persons whose names are on the full-privilege list—the members of the Governor-General's staff, the Judges, and the officers of the House.

It is with great pleasure that I can testify to the good treatment the books lent have received from the borrowers. At the close of the recess only three books were out to privilege-holders, and in each instance under special permission. So far as I can ascertain, this is the only Legislative Library in the British Empire which lends out books to non-members during the recess, and it is good to know that this very valuable privilege is duly esteemed by those who avail themselves of it.

All classes of the public are represented in the list (a copy of which members can see at any time in the Chief Librarian's office) of those to whom privilege permits have been granted. The artisan class is specially well represented.

STOCKTAKING.

As a rule, stock is taken in two classes only each recess. During the recent recess, however, stock was taken (by Messrs. Millan and W. F. Johnson) in five classes—to wit, Class 100 (Philosophy, Psychology, &c.); Class 200 (Religion and Mythology); Class 900-999 (History in General and by Countries, including the Great War), and Class Z (New Zealand and Polynesian Section, History only). The following is the result in each class:—

Class 100 (Philosophy, &c.): Missing at stocktaking—1916, nil; 1919, 1.

Class 200 (Religion and Mythology): Missing at stocktaking—1916, 1; 1919, 9.

In Class 100 the accessions numbered 64 volumes, and in Class 200 they numbered 88 volumes.

Class 900-999 (History in General and by Countries): Missing at stocktaking—1913, 65; 1919, 20.

The accessions in this class numbered 592. This fact taken into consideration, the result of the present stocktaking must be regarded as highly satisfactory. Several of the books recorded as missing are recent accessions, and will doubtless find their way back to the Library within a short period.

Class Z (New Zealand and Polynesian Section, History only): Missing at stocktaking, 1919, 3.

There is no means of comparing the losses in this class, as at the previous stocktaking the New Zealand section was taken as a whole, without reference to the subclasses.

THE NON-ENTERING OF BOOKS.

In connection with the stocktaking, and the figures given as to loss of books, I would again draw attention to the rule that all books taken from the Library must be entered in the registers or day-books provided for that purpose. As one register is kept in the main reading-room and another on the ground floor (the staff-room counter) there can be no excuse for books not being entered.

Unfortunately, some of those who use the Library occasionally disregard the rule as to all books and periodicals being entered before being removed from the Library. I may point out that non-entering of the books is productive of untold inconvenience to those who use the Library, and is most unfair to the Library staff. A member asks for a book which is on the catalogue: search is made, but the volume can neither be found on the shelves, nor does it appear on the circulation cards. The result is that the member goes away disappointed, and is naturally inclined to blame the Library staff. In the meantime the book has been taken out by some one who has not entered it. There is consequently no record of the volume, and it may not be until the next stocktaking of the class to which the book belongs that it is missed, and even then the Library staff would have no idea of its whereabouts.

It is therefore of the highest importance that the rule as to careful entering of books borrowed from the Library be most scrupulously observed. If certain members take out books without entering them, and retain them for several months, it is quite impossible for the staff to meet the rightful requirements and requests of other members; whilst the management is apt to be severely criticized for an apparent laxness for which it cannot fairly be held responsible so long as members neglect to observe the rules.

I trust that after this protest I shall not have to complain of this trouble in any future report, but in justice to myself and my staff I have deemed it necessary to draw attention to the matter.

PORTRAIT SHIELDS.

Through the kindness of Mr. G. J. Anderson, M.P., and the Mayor and Borough Council of Gore, I have been able to procure the loan of a duplicate of the Parliamentary Portrait Shield for 1899-1902, one of the two shields destroyed at the time of the fire in the Old Parliamentary Buildings. An enlarged copy of the duplicate has been made and placed on the Library walls. The portraits in the shield of one of the earliest Parliaments having become so faded as to render them almost undistinguishable they are now being recopied by a process which will give a greatly improved appearance to the shield.