

1919.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR 1918-19.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

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

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year 1918-19 :—

RECESS LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

The Recess Library Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Sir William Hall-Jones, K.C.M.G., M.L.C., held five meetings during the recess. Lists of books suggested for order were brought before the Committee by the Chief Librarian, and duly considered.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

The Accessions Register for the year 1918-19 shows that during the period 25th June, 1918, to 20th June, 1919, the number of catalogued accessions was 2,326. This compares favourably with the record of accessions for the immediately preceding Library year, the number for that period being 2,057. As was the case in the previous year, the number of accessions was affected by the suspension of supplies of British Imperial and American Government exchanges, but, on the other hand, the number of new books—outside official publications—is considerably higher. Between 20th June and 18th August, 1919, 426 additional volumes were catalogued, making a grand total of 2,752 entries, which must, under the circumstances, be considered very satisfactory. The number of books on the Library registers now stands at 97,483, so that the hope expressed in last year's report—namely, that the total will stand in 1920 at 100,000—is in a fair way of being realized. In 1901, when the present Chief Librarian took charge, the total was 36,803.

Members will recognize, I hope, that due attention has been paid, in the ordering of new books for the Library during the year, to literature dealing with post-war problems of various kinds. Special attention has also been given to technology, in which class, as under the head of sociology, many important and valuable publications have been acquired.

THE STAFF.

In February last Mr. Johannes C. Andersen, who had been a member of the Library staff for some two years, resigned his position in the Library, having been appointed Librarian of the Turnbull Library. Mr. Andersen's cultured literary taste, unremitting zeal and industry, had made him a most valuable member of the staff.

In December last Mr. P. H. McColl, who had spent two years in the service of his country and its Empire on the western front, where he was twice wounded, returned to his old position on the staff of the Library.

Mr. P. B. Forrest, another returned and wounded soldier, has joined the staff as messenger, in place of Mr. W. F. Johnson, who has been promoted to assistant rank.

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

The number of permits issued to privilege-holders was 481, being a decrease of 167 as compared with the total for the previous year—namely, 647. The 1917-18 recess was, however, of exceptional

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.

THE LIBRARY ANNEXE, ETC.

The rooms previously occupied by the Valuation Department were allotted to the Library for extension purposes some two years ago. For some time permission was granted to the Defence Department to use the larger room for office purposes, but the whole floor is now available. The additional shelving erected during the recess has enabled me to carry out, in part, the scheme of reclassification outlined in the Library report two years ago. In all, the rearrangement of the classes dealt with involved the handling of over 34,000 volumes.

The electrification of the book-lift in the stack building enabled the work of removal to be carried out with expedition. It is clear that the new lift will be of great value to the Library in saving time.

The total number of volumes stored in the Library Annexe is 8,456. The whole of the American Government publications formerly housed in what was known as the American stack-room have been transferred to the annexe, together with a number of Imperial British and British Dominions official publications of minor importance.

The result of the "breathing-space" afforded by the annexe is, roughly summarized, as follows:—

The Sociology room now contains one class only (Class 300), which includes works on politics, law, economics, education, labour, finance, and, generally speaking, the literature most intimately connected with legislative work.

The Art Section—hitherto stored in the gallery of the Sociology room—has been transferred to the main reading-room, where the exceptionally fine collection of works on artistic subjects which the Library possesses, a collection second to none in any public library in Australasia, will in future be more conveniently accessible for reference.

Bibliography (Class 000) has been removed from the downstairs lobby, thus giving more space for official literature in every-day demand.

The History class has been transferred *en bloc* from the main reading-room to the stack-room on the same floor. This "shift" has enabled all the other classes in the main reading-room to be rearranged in proper sequence.

Further transfers are contemplated during the next recess. At the commencement of next session I hope to be able to supply members with a handy little guide to the Library classification, which will show the exact location of each class of books, and be of great practical value to those who use the Library.

I have to express my thanks to Mr. Louch, District Engineer of the Public Works Department, for his attention to the structural and other work done under his control for the Library in connection with the Library Annexe, the lift, and other matters.

FURNITURE, ETC.

Last session, at the request of the Minister of Public Works, two large settees, formerly placed in the main reading-room, were removed to the lobby of the new House of Representatives. These settees should, I think, be replaced by new ones to be procured for the Library.

Most of the furniture in the Library is very old, and some of it is very shabby. The time has arrived, I think, when the whole of the Library furniture should be overhauled, and new chairs of some uniform style supplied for the use of members.

The walls of the Library lobbies need either repainting or to be subjected to some cleaning process.

A new case for New Zealand books is urgently required; also a new case for the larger art books. Requisitions for these cases are being made.

THE BINDERY.

Excellent work has been done during the year at the Library bindery, a large number of volumes having been rebacked or otherwise repaired. A small guillotine is badly needed in the Library. The cost would be small, but the provision of such a machine would obviate the binder having to make frequent visits to the Government Printing Office to get papers and binding-boards cut.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Copies of the Library Rules, with lists of persons on the full-privilege list, were circulated on the first day of the present session.

The issue of monthly lists of new accessions to the Library has been continued, and has proved of great convenience to members to whom books are sent during the recess.

The Library orders for books and periodicals purchased in London have, as usual, received due attention from Messrs. Sotheran and Co. and Messrs. Street and Co.

I have to tender my thanks to the Chairman of the Joint Library Committee, G. J. Anderson, Esq., M.P., and to the Chairman of the Recess Library Committee, the Hon. Sir William Hall-Jones, M.L.C., for the attention each of these gentlemen has paid to Library matters during the year; also to the High Commissioner and his staff for the promptitude and care displayed in connection with Library business in London.

LIBRARY ACCOUNTS.

In an appendix will be found the Library balance-sheet for the year ended 31st March, 1919, with a copy of the Auditor's certificate.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

APPENDIX.

BALANCE-SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1919.

<i>Receipts.</i>			<i>Expenditure.</i>		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
31st March, 1918, balance brought forward	833	4 9	Books and periodicals purchased in Great Britain	395	18 3
Treasury, annual grant	600	0 0	Books, &c., purchased in New Zealand ..	363	19 4
Refund of freight charges	2	7 0	American periodicals	11	8 6
			Portraits, &c.	5	5 0
			Extra newspapers and advertising ..	20	19 8
			Fire insurance	18	0 0
			Bindery requisites	2	15 0
			Freight, cartage, &c.	2	15 7
			Sundry accounts	13	5 9
			Petty cash	0	6 0
			Balance at Bank of New Zealand, 31st March, 1919	600	18 8
	<u>£1,435</u>	<u>11 9</u>		<u>£1,435</u>	<u>11 9</u>

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE.

Account to 31st March, 1919, examined and found correct, and the balance stated is found to agree with the bank pass-book.

H. A. LAMB,
Deputy Controller and Auditor-General.

27th September, 1919.

NOTE.—The balance to credit shown on 31st March, 1919, will probably be expended in meeting current commitments by the time this year's annual grant is received.

CHARLES WILSON, Chief Librarian.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (750 copies), £4 5s.

By Authority : MARCUS F. MARKS, Government Printer, Wellington.—1919.

Price 3d.]