

## CHIEF LIBRARIAN'S TOUR.

For the greater part of the year I was abroad in pursuance of an invitation from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to visit Europe and the United States. During this time I visited parliamentary and national libraries in Australia, South Africa, Great Britain and several European countries, Canada and the United States, and had exceptional opportunities, largely by the introductions and assistance of the Carnegie Corporation, of observing the working of both parliamentary and national libraries. I attended the conferences of the International Federation of Library Associations in Spain and the English Library Association at Manchester. At the request of the Government I made a special report on a rural-library system which might be applicable to New Zealand, and separate reports on the development of the General Assembly Library as a national library, and upon the archives. I hope in the next few years to be able to put into effect for the benefit of the Library many improvements observed abroad.

## THE ARCHIVES.

In view of the centenary of New Zealand in 1940, it is to be expected that this branch of the Library will be very much used during the next few years; and I hope it will soon be possible to have at least one appointment made to the staff entirely for this duty. In view of the Government building scheme, it is desirable that provision should be made for receiving and properly handling the large quantity of past records for which various Departments have no further use, and which are in imminent danger of being destroyed or lost during the move to new quarters.

## LIBRARY ACCOMMODATION.

During the past year we have again had to resort to undesirable expedients to make room for the growing book stock. My hope of being able to relieve the congestion on the lower floors by assembling most of the official documents of various countries in a new stack-room on the top floor (previously occupied by the Valuation Department) was disappointed, owing to the decision of the Public Works Department that part of the floor was not sufficiently strong to bear the load. We were consequently compelled to content ourselves with shelving round this floor, accommodating much less than the 20,000 books that it was expected would go into this room.

We have now come quite to the end of avenues of expansion within the doors of the Library. There are rooms in the Library wing occupied by the Health Department which would afford some relief merely from the point of view of space; but this would only increase the difficulties of administration, which are already considerable owing to the plan of the building and the weak numerical strength of the staff. The possibility of extending the existing stack-rooms has been considered, but with discouraging results. The design of the library is so antiquated that this would only accentuate our difficulties. In view of the duties we have at present to carry out, and the wider functions which we must soon assume, it would be a grave mistake to persevere with the present building, and I would respectfully suggest that the time has arrived when we must consider the erection of a new library of modern type and adequate capacity.

## RECESS PRIVILEGES.

Owing to the early meeting of Parliament the number of persons who used the recess privilege is considerably less than usual—i.e., 590 compared with more than 1,000 during the previous two normal recesses. Following are the vocations of the privilege holders: Accountant, 23; advertising agent, 1; agents, 4; artists, 4; auditor, 1; bank clerk, 1; barristers, 5; business managers, 3; caretaker, 1; carrier, 1; chemist, 1; civil engineers, 3; civil servants, 118; clergymen, 12; clerks, 73; commercial travellers, 2; company managers, 8; composers, 5; dietist, 1; dentist, 1; domestic duties, 51; draughtsmen, 3; drivers, 2; editor, 1; electricians, 4; engine-driver, 1; engineers, 7; fitter, 1; grocer, 1; hairdresser, 1; hotel employee, 1; indent agent, 1; inspectors of schools, 3; insurance managers, 2; journalists, 18; laboratory assistant, 1; labourers, 4; law clerks, 3; library assistants, 3; manufacturer, 1; mechanic, 1; medical practitioners, 8; meteorologist, 1; monotype operator, 1; municipal employee, 1; musicians, 2; music-teachers, 2; no occupation, 12; nurses, 9; photographer, 1; postal officials, 3; printers, 4; radio-service man, 1; railway officers, 2; retired, 54; salesmen, 8; secretaries, 9; school-teachers, 26; shipping-managers, 2; social worker, 1; soldier, 1; solicitors, 11; stenographers, 7; storeman, 1; students, 22; surgeons, 2; surveyor, 1; tramway employees, 7; typistes, 8; valuer, 1; warehouseman, 1; waterside workers, 2; wireless operator, 1.

## STAFF WORK.

Again I wish to express my indebtedness to the staff for the cordial and efficient manner in which they have carried out their duties, especially to Mr. W. S. Wauchop, who very capably controlled the Library during my absence. The work of the International Exchange, for which the Library is now the agent, has added considerably to the duties of a staff which is numerically short of the minimum necessary for the work involved.

During the year Mr. B. R. Turner, B.A., B.Com., accepted an appointment on the staff of the Minister of Finance. His place has been taken by Mr. R. S. Odell, B.A. (transferred from the Lands and Survey Department).