

mildew. Only by unremitting vigilance have we been able to preserve them from sustaining serious injury. Fires have had to be kept going in every room almost since midsummer to keep up a proper temperature, and the books had to be overhauled from week to week to save them from deterioration either in appearance or in value.

I come now to speak of the additions made to the library since my last report was presented. For reasons to be given immediately, these have not been so large this year as last. There are three ways in which additions are made to the library: 1. By purchase; 2. By way of international exchange; 3. By donations. From the first and main source we have this year as yet been able to add only 400 volumes. Of these, about 360 have come from London, and the remainder have been procured in the colony. This number is a long way short of our usual accessions from this source. This is owing to the fact that, for some reason or other which we do not yet clearly know, the execution of our orders seems to have been practically suspended by our agent in England. Month by month orders have been forwarded, amounting in the aggregate to about £500; month by month letters have been received promising regular monthly consignments; and yet the result is that we have only received a single case, and that arrived immediately before the close of last session. Since then not a volume has been received from London. At last a letter was received from Mr. Parsons intimating that he was hampered for want of funds in the execution of our orders. Immediately on receipt of this letter, remembering that the session was rapidly approaching, an emergency meeting of the Committee was summoned, and was largely attended. At this meeting it was unanimously resolved that a telegram be sent at once to the Agent-General, requesting him to see Mr. Parsons, and arrange that all our orders should be despatched from London by the Suez mail that was to leave on the 4th May. By this means we hope that an additional 600 volumes at least, comprising most of the very best books of the season, will be ready for the use of members, if not before, at any rate a very few days after the session opens. When these come to hand they will bring the number of books added to the Library by purchase during the year up to over 1,000 volumes. I need hardly add that not an hour shall be lost in placing the new works in the hand of honourable members after their arrival. 2. By way of international exchange our accessions this year have been somewhat in excess of last year's receipts from the same source. They consist in the main of Parliamentary papers and reports—Imperial, Colonial, and American. They amount in all to 225 bound volumes and 125 unbound books and pamphlets. Adding to these the publications of our own Government, of each of which we receive two copies, the total number from this second source runs up to 450 volumes and pamphlets. 3. I am pleased to be able to report that our receipts from the third source—*i.e.*, from donations—manifest a very gratifying increase this year. A large number of works (*vide* Appendix A), some of them rare and valuable, was presented by the Hon. John Sheehan, member of the House of Representatives for the Thames.

Prior to his departure from Wellington, John Knowles, Esq., of the Public Works Department, presented us with several books and pamphlets bearing on the early history of New Zealand (*vide* Appendix B). Alfred Domett, Esq., to whom this Library owes so much in the past, has not yet forgotten or lost his interest in it. He has recently published a new and enlarged edition of his well-known work "Ranolph and Amohia," in two volumes, and sent three presentation copies to this Library. From the Trustees of the British Museum we have received three important catalogues published by them during the year. Edwin Stowe, Esq., of Buckingham, has added to our collection a work in two volumes, of much interest and value to us, inasmuch as it completes a set of works on the same subject we already happen to possess—I mean an English version of the "Voyage in Search of La Perouse." Conrad Hoos, Esq., has sent us a copy of his work "The New Zealand Agriculturist." We were also presented by the author, Mr. Blackmore, Clerk of Parliament in Adelaide, with copies of "The Decisions of Denison and Brande in the House of Commons." "The Law List for Australia for 1882" was added to our shelves by the Hon. J. N. Wilson; and a little work on the "Defence and Attack of Positions and Localities," by Colonel Schaw, Assistant Inspector-General of Fortifications in England. It is hardly necessary to add that these donations were gratefully accepted, the names of the donors inserted in the books, and the cordial thanks of the Committee tendered to each of them. The books thus received by donation amounted to fifty volumes.

Summing up, then, the receipts from all sources, we find that no less than 1,500 volumes of all kinds have this year been added to our accumulated stores, bringing the total number of volumes now in the library up to 22,500.

In spite of all the vigilance that can be exercised, one or two volumes get astray every year. As an illustration of how our books are lost, I may mention that within the last year two books taken away without being entered in the Register were left in the Union Company's steamers, but, through the courtesy of the manager, have been recovered. There is but one thing more that I think deserving of passing notice, and that is that, besides those entitled to the *entrée* by standing resolution of the Library Committee, over 120 persons applied for and obtained the privilege of using the Library during the recess.

I have, &c.,

A. MACGREGOR.

The Hon. Sir W. Fitzherbert, K.C.M.G.,
Chairman of the Recess Library Committee.