

OTHER WAYS IN WHICH SERVICE HAS BEEN GIVEN.

Hamper Service.

In places where no library exists and where it is not possible for one to be formed, the service to properly established groups by means of travelling hampers has been given. All groups are more than ten miles from any public library. Each collection of books is regarded as a unit, and is moved from one group to another at intervals of two to four months, no group being without a collection at any time. The number of groups rose during the year from twenty-four to thirty-seven, twenty of which are in the South Island and seventeen in the North.

Postal or Reference Service.

With the growth of the stock available at headquarters, more persons are using the service to individual borrowers. Sixty-three were registered at 31st March, 1940, compared with twenty-six at 31st December, 1938. The variety of subjects on which material has been made available has continued to widen.

Request Service.

The use of this service has been encouraged. Request slips, on which details of books required are entered, have been issued to each of the three hundred libraries participating in the Service. In the period from 1st August, 1939, to 31st March, 1940, during which statistics were kept, 439 requests for books were received and satisfied by the Service. The facilities of the New Zealand Library Association for inter-library co-operation were fully used. Borrowings from other libraries, notably the General Assembly Library, totalled 167 volumes, while 18 volumes were lent to other libraries.

Periodical Service.

To enable users of smaller libraries to have access to a considerably wider range of periodicals than such libraries can afford to buy regularly, some sixty periodicals have been lent to the free public libraries participating in the Service. Each library receives up to thirty of the periodicals listed, in lots of some six to eight, sending its initial lot to another library by post after one month and receiving another in the same way. The effect of this service is that many country people now have access to a range of periodical literature hitherto available only in city libraries.

Advice to Libraries.

An integral part of the year's work has been the great amount of help and advice made available to controlling authorities and librarians of small libraries. The field officers in charge of the book-vans give assistance daily during their visits to libraries, but in addition the headquarter's staff is able to help by means of correspondence and occasional visits.

BOOK STOCK.

As will be seen from the table below, the number of books in stock has been almost doubled in the year under review. The ordering, processing, cataloguing, and issuing of this number of books has fully taxed the time of the staff of the Service.

Table showing Disposition of Book Stock, 31st March, 1940, with Figures for Preceding Year in Parentheses.

—	Fiction.	Non-fiction.	Total.
On issue to libraries or in book-vans—			
North Island	7,252 (3,726)	5,874 (3,297)	13,126 (7,023)
South Island	7,143 (4,135)	5,731 (3,348)	12,874 (7,483)
In book hampers—			
North Island	660 (390)	440 (260)	1,100 (650)
South Island	630 (360)	420 (240)	1,050 (600)
In headquarters collection, postal service	385 ..	2,531 (777)	2,916 (777)
 Total, all stock	 16,070 (8,611)	 14,996 (7,922)	 31,066 (16,533)

Percentages of Various Types of Books in Stock.

General works	0·87
Philosophy and psychology	2·12
Religion	1·35
Social sciences	5·86
Philology and language	0·21
Natural or pure sciences	2·61
Applied science and useful arts	3·41
Fine arts and recreations	6·17
Literature, excluding fiction	3·51
History, travel, and biography	22·14
Fiction	51·72

100·00