

Lack of accommodation and shortage of staff have prevented the transfer of A.E.W.S. stock and library service in Northern and Central Military Districts from being carried out. It is expected, however, that this will be possible later. Consideration is being given to the needs of library service to the Armed Forces on a peacetime basis, including a service of technical books and periodicals to Army libraries.

It is appropriate at this point to note the development of the library service to the Armed Forces of New Zealand during the war years.

In the first three years the service was staffed by voluntary and part-time help and supplied with books and periodicals given by the people of New Zealand, together with books bought through the National Patriotic Fund Board. Librarians and local authorities thus combined with the National Patriotic Fund Board and the Country Library Service to make possible the War Library Service. It is estimated that half a million books and a million periodicals were collected through the various book drives since 1939. Distribution was made to Armed Forces at all points in New Zealand, overseas, and on transports. The War Library Service lacked full-time professional staff, a technique of circulating subject material, books, and periodicals themselves in many subject fields, and an officially recognized part in the education and welfare of the Armed Forces.

The A.E.W.S. Library supplied these lacks and has given an enlightening and energetic demonstration of mobile library service. Figures of losses are not available, but it is known that they are heavy. When the conditions of service are considered, as well as the fact that the greater part of the books purchased for A.E.W.S. will ultimately become available for civilian use, the cost of the library service to the Armed Forces has been reasonable. Compared with other items of war expenditure and considering the benefits gained, its cost has been low.

### HOSPITAL LIBRARY SERVICE

The need for an adequate hospital library service has been clearly seen for some time. Much voluntary work of an excellent kind has been, and is being done, while one city authority, Dunedin, operates a service to the public hospital in its area.

An important step was taken in August, 1945, when the Red Cross Society of New Zealand made it possible for a New Zealand graduate librarian to go to the United States for hospital library training at the University of Minnesota. It is expected that a co-ordinated scheme for hospital and institutional library service will be started when this librarian returns. It will be useful to give the report of the Hospital Libraries Committee of the New Zealand Library Association, convened (August, 1945), Mr. A. G. W. Dunningham—

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON HOSPITAL LIBRARIES, AUGUST, 1945

(1) *Survey*.—On behalf of the Committee, the Secretary, N.Z.L.A., wrote to 44 Hospital Boards and received replies from 27; of these, only 2 had arranged regular staffing and finance for hospital library service, and 12 others report some service on a voluntary basis.

(2) *Statistics*.<sup>\*</sup>—The average number of beds occupied per day in public hospitals is 9,378. There are 143 hospitals:—

Beds available—							
General .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,940
Children's cots .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,329
Maternity .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	868
Tuberculosis .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,321
Infectious .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,153
Total beds available .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	11,611

(3) *Supply of Books*.—Local authorities cannot be expected to provide wholly for the needs of local hospital libraries since many of the patients may well come from outside the rating area, and the only fair way of drawing money from local bodies would be through the Hospital Boards, which are financed on a *pro rata* basis by local authorities. This would vest ownership of the books in Hospital Boards and add to the present confusion of authorities administering library service. The alternative and simpler way out would appear to be to vest ownership of stock in the National Library Service and for the finance to be provided through the National Library Service and administered on a regional basis.

<sup>\*</sup> Latest figures available from the 1944 "New Zealand Official Year-Book" for the year 1941-42.