

1947
NEW ZEALAND

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1947

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave

To the CHAIRMAN, JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report on the operations of the General Assembly Library for the year 1946–47.

THE BOOK STOCK

The number of accessions during the financial year was 4,694, compared with 3,301 in the previous year and an average of 3,259 for the past sixteen years. The total number of volumes now accessioned is 179,409. The book collection falls short of that number, however, by some thousands of books withdrawn or lost.

The accessions for the year were classed as follows (the figures for the previous year being shown in brackets): Bibliography, 167 (106); newspapers, 148 (73); philosophy, 69 (49); religion, 165 (51); sociology, 1,023 (714); parliamentary, 229 (162); philology, 61 (24); natural science, 141 (81); useful arts, 462 (288); fine arts, 312 (184); literature, 509 (392); travel and history, 649 (589); biography, 328 (249); fiction, 347 (306); New Zealand, 64 (36).

The great increase in the number of books received, amounting to about 50 per cent. over the previous year, is due to the revival of publishing since the war, particularly in England. For some years past we received only a proportion of the number of books ordered. Orders are now being fulfilled in their entirety, and many books ordered some time ago are also arriving. The price of books having increased considerably, we have not only liquidated the credit balance which was shown for some years past, but have had to appeal to the Government for an increased book-buying vote. As a consequence we are now receiving £2,000 per annum instead of £1,250.

THE YEAR'S WORK

The fillip in accessions has thrown a considerable extra load upon the staff, particularly the cataloguing division and the bindery, both of which have been working at high pressure all through the year.

We have again been compelled to carry out a considerable reorganization of the book stock owing to the pressing need for more stack-room accommodation. Built at a time when the collection numbered only 40,000 books, the library is now quite inadequate for a stock of almost five times that number. The top floor was never fully shelved. Portions have been fitted with wood shelving from time to time, and we are now faced with the necessity of