

leading English literary weeklies thirty-seven reviews, of a column or over in length, of new works, and of these works twenty-four were actually on the Library tables when the papers in question arrived. The number of new books given above does not include the 184 volumes which came to hand recently by the s.s. "Delphic," and which are now being classified and placed on the Library tables. Another large shipment is due very shortly, and there will, I expect, be other cases to arrive during the present session. Official publications and exchanges are also excluded from the total given. These increase in number every year. At a rough estimate the yearly growth of the Library may be set down at from 2,000 to 2,500 volumes, which I think the Committee will consider highly satisfactory. The policy of avoiding expensive bindings is being persevered with, and judicious economy is being exercised in other directions, the result being that a much larger number of books is being added to the Library than was formerly the case.

The system under which I am authorised, subject to the approval of the Chairman of Committee, to purchase up to ten pounds' worth of books locally each month, has continued to work well, and now that all books are ordered from this end there is no fear of duplication, whilst many new books are added much more promptly than could be the case under the old system. I recommend that this system be continued.

ACCESSION LISTS.

A collection of accession lists was issued at the commencement of the session, and will, I hope, be found useful. The last list brings this supplementary catalogue up to the 15th June, 1902. In it the various works were all classified under subject-headings. These headings will be still further amplified in future lists, thus rendering reference much simpler.

FURNISHINGS.

Some small alterations and improvements have been made during the year. The tables in the main reading-room have been covered with cloth, and are now in great demand as writing-tables. In the sociology room the large table has been fitted with drawers. Complaints having been made as to the overheating of the rooms, the Public Works Department has supplied the Library with thermometers, which are placed in the rooms, the staff being instructed to see that the temperature does not exceed a moderate degree. The electroliers in the lobby and in the sociology and newspaper rooms have been lowered, and a light has been placed outside the side door on the Hill Street frontage. Screens are being placed over the windows in the sociology room, allowing of better ventilation without draught. Heating-apparatus is to be erected in the basement during the next recess, and will remove all possibility of damp. The strong-rooms, however, in the basement are still very damp, and cannot be used for storage purposes. The drying of these rooms is a matter of urgency. It will be remembered that last session a sub-committee was set up to select a carpet for the main reading-room. Later on, however, I was informed by the Public Works Department that the carpeting of this room was to be left over for the present. Iron shelving for the two unfurnished stack-rooms is on order in America and should arrive shortly, but some delay has been caused by the makers not having in stock shelving of the special sizes ordered. Two valuable artist's-proof etchings of Her late Majesty's Jubilee and of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations have been presented to the Library by the Government through the Hon. Sir Joseph Ward, and I would suggest that these pictures be framed and hung in the main reading-room or in some other suitable position. A copy of the Navy League's map of the Empire has been presented to the Library by Captain Marciel, of Christchurch, through Mr. W. W. Collins, M.H.R., and has been hung in the lobby.

THE BINDERY.

Mr. Roberts, the binder permanently attached to the Library, has again done excellent work. It gives me great pleasure to bear testimony to the industry and good taste displayed by this officer in the discharge of his duties. Last year I asked for £150 less on the vote for work done at the Government Printing Office. This economy has been effected by adopting a cheaper style of binding for the official publications of other colonies. Further saving in this direction can, I believe, be made. I would suggest that application be made for the supply of a stamping-press for Mr. Roberts. At present there is much unnecessary loss of time in sending new books purchased locally, or which come as exchanges, down to the Printing Office to be stamped.

LIBRARY STAFF.

I have to acknowledge the industrious and always ready assistance which I have received from the various members of the staff, and would specially refer to the zeal displayed by Mr. Thomson in connection with the stocktaking. Three extra assistants were employed during the recess. This was rendered necessary by the stocktaking. I do not anticipate that I shall require any extra assistance next recess, the regular staff being ample now that the stocktaking and other extra work is out of the way. I have relieved Mr. James of the work of classifying and cataloguing new books, undertaking this work myself. The subsidiary cards are being written by Messrs. Thomson and Browne. Mr. James is now engaged in the work of compiling a manuscript dictionary-index to the American official publications of which we possess some three thousand volumes. These are in future to be kept together in No. 2 Stack-room. They contain a vast mass of most important and valuable papers, hitherto, owing to the lack of an index, practically inaccessible to members. When this work is completed I shall undertake the task of indexing the pamphlets up to date. This work is several years in arrears.