

1926.

NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN, FOR THE YEAR 1925-26.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

The CHIEF LIBRARIAN to the CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year 1925-26. In doing so I would point out that the late Chief Librarian (Mr. C. Wilson) retired at the end of the year, and as I was not appointed until a few weeks later the report refers to a period of which I have no personal knowledge.

During the year the following meetings of the various Library Committees were held: Recess, 3; House of Representatives, 1; Legislative Council, 1; Joint, 4; Joint Selection, 1. The revision of the Library rules by the Joint Committee was the most important work of the Committees during the year. The new rules have since been printed and circulated to members.

ADDITIONS.

The number of new books added to the Library during the financial year 1925-26 was 1,501, as compared with 2,089 during the preceding year. The limited number of accessions is reflected in the considerable credit balance with which the year ended.

The total number of volumes catalogued in the Library to the 1st August, 1926, is 111,448, but it is necessary to remember that very many books which have been worn out, or lost, or otherwise disposed of are no longer in the Library. The number of books in the Library at present is probably, therefore, a few thousands less than the total number of accessions.

The arrangement hitherto existing with the Alexander Turnbull Library to obviate the dissipation of money by overlapping in the purchase of books has been continued. The Turnbull Library devotes itself more especially to the acquisition of rare and expensive books dealing with the early history of New Zealand, Australia, and the Pacific, while the General Assembly Library directs its attention rather towards recent and current literature, with special reference to economics, political science, and other branches of sociology, history, and biography.

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

Recess privileges were granted during the late recess to 817 persons, an increase of more than 20 per cent. over the number in the preceding recess. The following shows the numbers for several years past: 1918-19, 289; 1919-20, 526; 1920-21, 757; 1921-22, 549; 1922-23, 611; 1923-24, 740; 1924-25, 670; 1925-26, 817.

The number of books lent to recess privilege-holders during the last recess was 9,391, as compared with 6,137 in the previous recess, an increase of 53 per cent. As the recess privilege-holders are not entitled to take out books of fiction, these numbers are eloquent testimony to their appreciation of serious literature. I am glad to say that most of the privileged readers show their appreciation of the privilege also by a strict observance of the rules. At present eleven volumes borrowed during the recess are still outstanding, but it is hoped they will all be recovered.

The occupations of the privilege-holders were given as follows: Accountants, 13; analyst, 1; architects, 4; artists, 6; auctioneer, 1; barker, 11; builders, 2; chemists, 6; civil servants, 138; clergymen, 15; clerks, 86; conchologist, 1; dairy worker, 1; dentists, 3; domestic duties, 86; draper, 1; draughtsmen, 10; electrical engineers, 5; civil engineers, 7; mechanical engineers, 3; gardener, 1; geologist, 1; inspectors of schools, 2; insurance agents, 4; interpreter, 1; journalists, 23; labourers, 2; land agents, 2; law clerks, 10; mechanics, 2; medical practitioners, 11; merchants, 20; messengers, 7; meteorologist, 1; military officer, 1; municipal employees, 4; musicians, 3; naval officers, 2; no occupation, 90; nurses, 4; optician, 1; palæontologist, 1; piano-tuner, 1; retired civil servants, 37; salesmen, 12; seamen, 2; settler, 1; shipping managers, 2; shop-assistant, 1; solicitors, 29; students, 26; surveyors, 3; teachers, 57; timber merchants, 2; trade union secretaries, 3; typists, 21.

STOCK-TAKING.

The stock-taking was proceeded with during the recess by Mr. W. F. Johnson, who, with the assistance of Mr. Dighton, checked three important classes, one of which had not been overhauled

since 1917. Mr. Johnson has devised a new system under which, without any loss of efficiency, it is possible to carry out this tedious and exacting work in about half the time it has hitherto occupied. This will enable the whole library contents to be checked at shorter intervals, and thus, it is hoped, minimize the losses of books.

In his report on this year's stock-taking Mr. Johnson says:—

“Class 100 (Philosophy, Psychology, &c.): This class was last taken stock of in the year 1921, when every volume was accounted for. The total number of volumes checked in this class was 998, and all but three volumes were found in their places on the shelves, or accounted for in the ledgers. Since the last stock-taking fifty-six volumes have been added to this class, so that the result of the stock-taking may be regarded as satisfactory. A list of the volumes which could not be traced in this and the other classes is appended, but it must not be assumed that these volumes are lost to the Library, as of twenty volumes reported missing in Class 600 at last stock-taking, all but three were accounted for this year.

“Class 600 (Useful Arts, &c.): This class was last taken in the year 1917, when twenty volumes were reported missing, seventeen of which were found to be in the Library at this stock-taking. The total number of volumes checked in this class was 4,506, which does not include the bound volumes of technical journals in this class, all of which were found in their places on the shelves. Since last stock-taking, 1,134 additions have been made to this class, and although the number stated appears to be abnormally large, it includes a large proportion of American technical works, and medical works having reference to the war. The volumes unaccounted for in this class number fourteen.

“Class 900 (History, including the Great War): This class was last taken in the year 1919, when twenty volumes were reported missing, the greater number of which were recovered at this stock-taking. The number of volumes checked in this class was 7,735, including 1,017 in the war section. The accessions in this class since last stock-taking numbered 188, while the works which could not be traced numbered twenty-four, many of which are comparatively recent accessions to the Library, and will doubtless therefore find their way back to the shelves in time, while others are cheap editions of ephemeral interest relating to the war.”

BINDING.

There is very considerable leeway to be made up in the matter of binding. Although the binding list was curtailed a few years ago, there is still much routine work undone, and it will be necessary to consider asking the House for a considerably larger vote under this head. The staff binder (Mr. C. Johnston) is kept fully employed with repairs to volumes which have suffered in circulation, and with the stamping and numbering of accessions.

THE STAFF.

In addition to the retirement of the late Chief Librarian (Mr. C. Wilson) after twenty-five years of service in that position, the staff has been weakened by the transfer, at his own request, of Mr. W. N. Wood, who has been a very capable and courteous member of the staff for some years past. The vacancy was filled by the appointment of Mr. A. D. McIntosh, who has had useful experience in the Library of the Labour Department.

During the interregnum following the retirement of Mr. Wilson, the First Assistant, Mr. W. S. Wauchop, M.A., satisfactorily carried out the duties of Acting Chief Librarian.

The balance-sheet of the Library Fund Account, with the certificate of the Auditor-General, is attached.

I have, &c.,
G. H. SCHOLEFIELD,
Chief Librarian.

BALANCE-SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1926.

<i>Receipts.</i>			£	s.	d.	<i>Payments.</i>			£	s.	d.
Balance, 1st April, 1925			594	4	3	Purchase of books and periodicals—					
Annual grant			700	0	0	Great Britain .. ..	..	..	326	15	8
Private Bill fees			75	0	0	New Zealand .. ..	..	..	389	15	11
						Purchase of periodicals in United States of					
						America .. ..	..	..	12	0	8
						Insurance .. ..	..	..	8	8	0
						Repairs, freight, and office requisites ..	..	..	4	7	8
						Cheque-book .. ..	..	..	0	4	0
						Credit balance—					
						At Bank of New Zealand	624	12	11		
						Cash in hand	2	19	5		
									627	12	4
									£1,369	4	3
									£1,369	4	3

31st March, 1926.

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

Examined and found correct.—G. F. C. CAMPBELL, Controller and Auditor-General.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (540 copies), £2 15s.

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Price 3d.]