

THE ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY WINDOW DISPLAYS

THE idea of "selling" a library to the public has only been generally accepted comparatively recently overseas, but public relations have become of increasing importance. For many years now the Alexander Turnbull Library has presented internal displays and exhibitions, as the General Assembly Library has. The Wellington Public Library goes a step further in arranging displays in showcases at the entrance. The National Library Service has long shown recent accessions in the windows of the shops used as depots in several towns. But the Alexander Turnbull Library broke new ground when, two years ago, the Librarian arranged for continuous displays in two shop windows on the corner of Lambton Quay and Bowen Street, close to the Library.

By courtesy of the Electricity Department of the Wellington City Council, the Library was granted an occupancy of these windows in an empty shop, free of charge. The arrangement lasted just on two years, and proved so successful that though they have been suspended during the library's removal for renovation, they will be recommenced upon our return.

Originally it was intended to show one item only, changing it daily. However, the space available lent itself to building up larger displays, one in each window. These were initially for half a week at a time, and then were extended to a week each, partly on account of the amount of work involved, and partly by public demand, as many people complained that three or four days did not give sufficient opportunity to get to see the current display. Finally, a schedule was worked out, changing one window on Mondays, the other on Wednesdays, as a general rule.

As the window-displays were in the nature of an experiment of uncertain duration, it was not felt that any large expenditure was justified, and the methods employed were