

1887.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

(REPORT ON).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Sir R. Stout, with the Leave of the House.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT.

General Assembly Library, 21st April, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to submit the annual report on the Parliamentary Library.

The session was a period of much activity on the part of the Joint Library Committee. The plans for the projected Library buildings were threshed out; principles of the selection of books were discussed, and a very large number of books selected; and many matters of business, major and minor, were settled. Finally, a Committee of thirteen (subsequently increased by the Assembly to fifteen) members was appointed for the management of the Library during the recess. The Recess Library Committee elected the Hon. G. Randall Johnson its chairman, and nominated a working sub-committee of six members—the Chairman, the Hon. Dr. Grace, the Hon. Mr. Hart, the Hon. Mr. Mantell, Mr. Fisher, and Dr. Newman. By this sub-committee, as during last recess, the Library was governed.

Far the most important part of the work of the recess was connected with the accessions to the Library. These have doubtless exceeded in number and importance those of any previous year, not excepting those of 1866, when Mr. Mantell's generosity endowed the Library with a hundred volumes, some of them rare and valuable. The Library has been enriched by a complete series of the Transactions of the Social Science Association in 29 volumes, and by a copy of the reprint of *Punch* from 1841 to 1867. Though original editions of Mr. Ruskin's earlier works have long been on the shelves, many of his later books were wanting, and these have been procured. Victor Hugo's *Œuvres*, in 33 volumes, and those of Châteaubriand, now strengthen the department of French literature. The English works of Hobbes fill a gap, and the 147 parts as yet published of the British Museum Catalogue constitute by themselves a library of bibliographical reference, which has already proved serviceable. Another catalogue, annotated with a wealth of learning, is that of the unique library presented by Sir George Grey to Capetown. Hogg's large and costly *Pomona* will gratify and, it is to be hoped, prove useful to Members interested in Horticulture. Incomplete series not a few have been completed; missing volumes have been replaced; and continuations hitherto neglected have been procured. At the instance of two classical scholars on the Committee, Sir Maurice O'Rorke and Mr. Rolleston, large additions have been made to the departments of Classical Literature and Philology, which have been thoroughly modernized, and to a great extent brought down to the present time. Some Members complained that, while the Library contained scientific treatises for the use of experts, popular expositions of science were wanting. That deficiency has been supplied, and there are few branches of science the results of which will not be found stated in books, often by masters of their craft, now in the Library. It was also complained that the Library collection on the Industrial Arts was antiquated: on the recommendation of Mr. Lake a number of books have been added to this section; while Agriculture and Horticulture have received their share of accessions. The indispensable Debretts and Burkes have been renewed, at some cost. A considerable number of publications relating to New Zealand, including some old books now difficult to be procured, have been got by purchase in various quarters, donation, and exchange; others are on order; the numerous essays on the same theme which are scattered through the periodical literature of the last fifty years have been sent for; and in course of time, it is expected, this particular department, the most interesting and certain to become the most valuable of all, will be made approximately complete. Those which ought to be the two strongest departments in the Library—Government and Political Economy—have been greatly augmented: a separately printed Appendix to the Annual Supplement to the Catalogue will show that one section, that of the literature of Free-trade and Protection, has attained a completeness little short of exhaustive. Altogether the accessions amount to 1,880 volumes, exclusive of official publications.

So extensive a series of additions to the Library has of course not been made without making a corresponding draught upon the funds—the appended analytical balance-sheet shows precisely to what extent. A balance of £59 9s. 4d. is disclosed, and that amount actually stood to the credit of the Library at the end of the financial year. But a Treasury voucher for £66 has been