

In those libraries where the librarian has been active in the district and has, as far as possible, supplied the requirements of local readers by building up the library's own stock and by borrowing extensively from this Service, the appreciation of local people has been so marked that the local authority has felt justified in making liberal financial provision from public funds.

It has been noted that in many districts there are proposals to build new libraries and community centres as war memorials. Local authorities planning new buildings are encouraged to seek advice from this Service or from the New Zealand Library Association. It should be emphasized that it is neither necessary nor desirable to have small library buildings modelled on designs intended for larger cities. In the smaller centres the foremost requirements are informality, effective display of books, and a cheerful atmosphere. The type of library that is best suited for the smaller centres is the one-room library on the main street, with wall shelving at a convenient height, and with chairs and tables for comfortable browsing. Newspapers should not command a whole room, but can be quite well accommodated, if they are considered necessary, on small racks within the main room. The library in the smaller centre is the natural meeting-place for the community, and can often be used for discussion groups and other educational activities.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE

Of the 106 cities and boroughs (excluding boroughs within the metropolitan areas) with populations over 500, 60, including Auckland, Dunedin, Palmerston North, and Timaru, were giving free service at 31st March, 1947. One county, the MacKenzie County, attempts to cover the whole of its area; two other counties, Eltham and Rotorua, each make a grant to borough libraries to enable some county people to receive service from them.

Help from this Service is available to those counties which make satisfactory financial provision for free library purposes in the following way: a grant, in proportion to the population to be served, should be paid to the Borough Council by the County Councils through District Library Committees, which will provide representation from both Borough and County Councils and readers living at a distance from the borough. The District Library Committees may be called upon to meet the charges of maintaining at a satisfactory standard the various smaller libraries which were previously independent, and should recommend to the Borough Councils accordingly.

The existing libraries which receive regular visits from the National Library Service book-van under the present B scheme would have the option of continuing to do so, or of having service from the nearby borough library. The present charge made to these libraries will be immediately abolished.

Other centres within the county may expect to receive and administer deposit collections of books which will be regularly changed.

If satisfactory free service to the county is given, this Service will make available to the borough libraries additional loans of books according to the population served.

It is felt that in the development of this Service first priority should be given to encouraging local authorities to give free service in counties, boroughs, and town districts.

Because of the shortage of trained staff and suitable buildings, it is difficult to see how immediate effect can be given to the proposals, submitted in 1944 and 1945, to develop the Service on a regional basis, linking city and country services in one unit. It is thought that in the circumstances it will be necessary in the meantime to continue the present policy of close liaison between the smaller libraries and the distributing headquarters of this Service.