

SMALL INDEPENDENT SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARIES: "B" SERVICE

During the year, 555 of these libraries were linked to this Service, compared with the previous year's figure of 504. Of these libraries, 301 are in the North Island and 254 in the South Island. Altogether, 43,025 books were on loan to these "B" libraries, an average of approximately 77 books. Figures showing the growth of this section of the Country Library Service are now given:—

Date of Annual Report (H.-32A).	Number of "B" Libraries participating.
31st March, 1939	179
31st March, 1940	265
31st March, 1941	302
31st March, 1942	348
31st March, 1943	368
31st March, 1944	391
31st March, 1945	423
31st March, 1946	504
31st March, 1947	555

Nearly all these smaller libraries are in counties. As stated above, a considerable task lies ahead in organizing a service to them which will compare favourably with that given in the best free borough libraries. There are, however, signs of increasing interest among County Councils in library development.

"C" OR HAMPER SERVICE

In places where no library exists and where it is not possible for one to be formed and visited by the book-van, the service to properly established groups by means of travelling hampers has been continued.

During the year, 59 groups received service and 9 groups were converted to "B" service and are now receiving visits from the book-van.

POSTAL OR "D" SERVICE

This service to people in really isolated places out of reach of an established library has increased greatly. There are now 803 active members, as compared with 674 at the same period last year. The augmented Christchurch office of this Service has now been in operation for the first complete year and figures can be given separately: North Island, 569; South Island, 234; total, 803. These numbers include field cadets attached to Lincoln Agricultural College, but working in country districts, who are supplied with general reading on farming and agriculture.

The service to lighthouse keepers and assistant keepers and their families has increased. Twenty lighthouses with a total of 101 borrowers are supplied, as compared with 19 lighthouses and 81 borrowers last year. A total of 1,216 books were sent out.

REQUEST SERVICE

All libraries, groups, lighthouses, and individuals who receive library service from the Country Library Service can ask for special short-term loans of books of an informational type from the headquarters stock of this