perceptible lacunæ. The first shipment of these books may be expected to arrive from London A large order for the latest current literature—biography, voyages and travels, history, and general literature—was also sent to the Agent-General early in May. These books should be here some time in December. Altogether some five or six hundred more books may be expected to be placed on the Library shelves before the close of the present session.

Books purchased locally.—By resolution of the Recess Library Committee the Chairman was empowered to authorise the purchase locally by the Librarian of new books as they arrived by each mail-steamer, such purchases not to exceed £10 in value in each month. The arrangement has

worked very well, and I respectfully request that it may be permanently continued.

Purchases by the Agent-General.—After carefully going into the question of the purchase of books in London by the Agent-General, I have decided to recommend to the Committee that the present arrangement be terminated, and that in future all new books be ordered from this end. I am in a position to state that the Hon. Mr. Reeves would prefer to be relieved of the duty of selecting books for the Library. I am satisfied that by ordering direct both time and money would be saved. I would respectfully suggest the appointment of a sub-committee to go into the details of this question, and I have no doubt I shall be able to prove the advisableness of the course I advocate being adopted.

Recess Privileges.—During the recess the usual boxes of books were sent to members non-resident in Wellington. In addition to those whose names appear in the sessional list and the heads of departments, several persons were admitted to the Library for the purpose of consulting books of Some few others were accorded the right of taking books out of the Library for the purpose of study, the Chairman granting the necessary permission as per resolution passed by the Recess Library Committee. It will be remembered that during the period of reclassification last year the usual recess privileges were suspended. I would now propose that the old system of granting these privileges—viz., upon the recommendation of a member of the Parliament or of the Chair-

man of the Committee—be resumed next recess.

Stock-taking.—From what I have been able to ascertain from the Assistant Librarian, Mr. James, and from such records as I have examined, there has been no stock-taking in the Lbrary for many years. With the approval of your Committee, I propose to close the Library for one month during the recess, and carry out a thoroughly complete stock-taking. With the experience gained during the late recess, added to that which will result from the stock-taking, I shall

then be better able than at present to say whether the regulations at present in force, as to the taking-out and return of books, provide that full degree of security against loss which is desirable.

Library Staff.—In addition to the regular Library staff there have also been employed three extra assistants (during the removal of books there were four), and owing to the number and arrangement of the rooms in the new Library I fail to see how, during any session, fewer than three extra hands will be required. One at least of the extra assistants at present employed should, I consider, become a permanent addition to the staff. For this session I have divided the staff into two sections, taking alternately day- and night-duty. The system appears to be working well, and possesses the advantages of not over-fatiguing the assistants with late hours, and also enabling them to get an all-round knowledge of their work. The old system of specialisation of work often proved inconvenient in the temporary absence of any officer from unforeseen causes. I am pleased to bear testimony to the consistent industry displayed by the staff since I took charge. During the absence through illness of Mr. James, the Assistant Librarian, for the first two months after I assumed charge, I received specially valuable assistance from Messrs. Costall and Thomson. The latter officer was exceptionally painstaking and helpful.

Library Accounts.—In an appendix to this report will be found a balance-sheet for the last financial year. The Library accounts were, I may add, audited in January last (to the 31st December, 1900), the last previous audit having been made so far back as the 1st April, 1893. I

would suggest that a yearly audit is desirable.

I have, &c., CHARLES WILSON, Librarian.

The Hon. the Chairman, Joint Library Committee.

APPENDIX.

Balance-sheet for the year ending the 31st March, 1901.

	Receipts.			Expenditure.			
1900.		£ s.	d.		£	8.	d.
April 2	Balance brought forward	111 3	0	Purchase of books in London	196	8	9
Oct. 4	Fees private Bills	75 0	0	Purchase of books locally	123	14	10
, 30	Annual appropriation	600 0	0	Purchase of periodicals in London, locally,			
" 30	Special vote	500 0	0	and in America	155	0	$10\frac{1}{3}$
Nov. 7	Refund stamp imprest	30 0	0	Freight and marine insurance	13	6	9
Dec. 17	Refund cheque (lost)	3 15	2	Petty cash	6	0	0
, 21	Refund balance petty cash	1 1	11	Fire insurance	40	0	. 0
				Cleaning	38	5	0
				Extra clerical assistance (April to June,			
				1900)	14	3	6
				Payment of English accounts due previous			
				to 1st April, 1900	37	2	9
.*				Typewriting	2	1	8
				Sundry small accounts	3	2	: 1
	,		`	Stamp imprests	30	0	0
				New Zealand newspapers (purchase of)	8	9	3
			}	Balance	653	4	$7\frac{1}{2}$
		61.8010		-			_
		£1,321 0		#1	,321	0	Ţ

Approximate Cost of Paver.—Preparation, nil: printing (1,375 copies), £1 6s. 6d.