

1901.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY:

SESSIONAL REPORT FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDING 31st OCTOBER, 1901.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

SESSIONAL REPORT by the CHIEF LIBRARIAN, presented to the Joint Library Committee at its Meeting held on the 6th November, 1901.

SIR,—

Wellington, 4th November, 1901.

At the close of the session of Parliament, 1901, I deem it desirable to present to you a report embracing the more important particulars of the working of the Library during the last four months.

Shelving.—The iron shelving mentioned in my last report, dated the 1st July, has now been ordered from America, and when received will complete the shelving accommodation required for the proper housing and classification of the large and ever-increasing stock of books.

Furnishings.—Several tables, which were urgently required, have now been supplied to the main reading-room. These have been of great service, and many members of both Houses now use this room for the purpose of conducting their correspondence and doing other clerical work, the quiet found in this room being much appreciated. A handsome bust of the late Sir Harry Atkinson has been placed in a small recess at the top of the main staircase, outside the reading-room. I hope during the recess to obtain a pedestal of New Zealand woods on which to mount the bust, and to arrange for stands of flowers to run along the back wall. The question of carpeting the reading-room has, as you are aware, been postponed for the present, but I trust that the work will be finally authorised and completed before next session. The hanging electric lights, erected as a result of the recommendations of the Lighting Committee, have proved an unqualified success; but I would suggest that I be authorised to arrange with the Public Works Department for the lowering, during the recess, of the chandeliers in the reading-room, and also in the rooms on the ground floor, as at present, owing to the height at which these chandeliers are placed, the light given by the lamps is not so effective as it might be.

Bindery.—The continued usefulness of the bindery proves that its establishment on the premises was necessary, not only on the score of efficiency, but of economy. It gives me great pleasure to testify to the industry and good taste displayed by the binder, Mr. Roberts, in the discharge of his duties. He has rebacked and otherwise repaired several hundreds of volumes during the last few months, in addition to doing a great deal of work in the way of numbering, and so forth.

New Books.—Since the writing of my last report, on the 1st July, eight hundred volumes have been added to the Library by purchase, in addition to the large number regularly received from other countries as exchanges. The question of largely adding to the number of works on New Zealand and Polynesian subjects has been duly considered by the Joint Selection Committee, which has voted the sum of £50 to be spent specially on this class of literature during the current year. The system of purchasing locally a certain proportion of new works as they arrive by the mail-steamers has had a fair trial, and has proved, I would respectfully urge, a complete success.

Stock-taking.—I am at present perfecting arrangements for the stock-taking mentioned in my last report, and trust to carry out this onerous but highly necessary undertaking during the first few months of the recess.

Library Staff.—I am pleased to say that the various members of the Library staff have worked well during the session, and have done their utmost to study the comfort and convenience of members. The late hours, when they have occurred, have been cheerfully put up with, and, so far as I know, there has been no discontent or wrangling, all the assistants working well together. The system of working the staff on alternate weeks of day and night duty has proved very successful, and will, with your approval, again be resorted to next session.

Thanks.—I cannot close this brief report without thanking you, sir, and the members of the Joint Committee and Selection Committee individually, for the kind, ready, and valuable assistance received by me from you and them in the carrying-out of my duties. I am also indebted to Mr. Mackay, the Government Printer, for the ready and prompt execution of the many orders for printing, which he has had to execute often at very short notice, for the Library.

I have, &c.,

C. WILSON,

Hon. J. Rigg, M.L.C., Chairman, Joint Library Committee.

Chief Librarian.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,200 copies), 17s.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1901.

Price 3d.]