

" THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY ACT, 1903."

The Act passed last session is now in active operation. During the recess we have received some forty publications in accordance with the provisions of this Act. The number of books received will, I think, be greatly increased as the provisions of the Act become more widely known. I write to every publisher who neglects to forward publications when such omission comes under my notice.

NEWSPAPER EXCHANGES.

During the recess some difficulty was experienced with regard to the "exchange files" of a southern newspaper which is bound regularly by the Library. It was pointed out to the proprietor of the journal in question that unless he sends copies of his paper to this Library with regularity, the supply (gratis) of *Hansards*, Bills, Acts, and all Government publications would be stopped. I refer to this matter in order to give extended publicity to the fact that the proprietors of newspapers receive these Government publications on the distinct understanding that copies of their journals are forwarded regularly to this Library.

REFERENCE WORKS.

In accordance with the approval given last year by the Joint Library Committee, the work of marking a certain number of volumes as "reference" books has been carried out. This was a long and tedious task, but now that it has been accomplished I trust there will be none of the inconvenience caused in previous sessions by members of the Library staff having it cast upon them to decide which were and which were not to be considered "reference" books—that is to say, books which can be consulted in the Library, but which are not available for circulation. The books were marked in accordance with the list prepared last session and approved, after amendment, by the Joint Library Committee.

THE LIBRARY STAFF.

During the absence of the Chief Librarian Mr. James performed the duties of Acting-Librarian. He informs me that the various members of the staff worked well throughout. Mr. James himself attended to the duties usually performed by me, prepared lists of "suggestions" for the Selection Committee, superintended the marking of the "reference" section, and did the main entries for the catalogue. Mr. Thomson had charge of the minor catalogue cards and the Accession Register, and prepared the "copy" for the printed accession list, shortly to be circulated. The other members of the staff did good work, Mr. Costall having charge of all legislative publications and magazine and review files, and Mr. Sampson, in addition to his usual newspaper-filing, rearranged the large stock of bound newspapers in the basement. Mr. McColl fulfilled his duties as junior assistant satisfactorily.

VISITORS.

The Library visitors' book was signed during the recess by over two thousand persons, and as many visitors do not sign, it is safe to say that close upon two thousand five hundred persons were shown round the Library.

LIBRARY ACCOUNTS.

In an appendix will be found the Library balance-sheet for the year ending March. The accuracy of the balance-sheet has been vouched for by an officer of the Audit Department. As will be seen, there is a substantial balance to credit at the close of the financial year. This balance will, however, be almost entirely exhausted by the time the next annual grant is due from the Treasury.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

The Hon. J. Rigg, M.L.C., Chairman of the Library Committee.

APPENDIX.

BALANCE-SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1904.

1903.	Receipts.	£	s.	d.	1903-4.	Expenditure.	£	s.	d.
31 March.	Balance in hand ..	346	12	6	"	Freights and insurances ..	12	10	2
12 Nov.	Cash, Fines, <i>New Zealand Times</i> ..	40	0	0	"	Periodicals from America ..	24	10	9
5 Dec.	Treasury annual grant ..	600	0	0	"	Books and periodicals (England) ..	360	8	10
15 "	Cash proceeds of private Bills..	50	0	0	"	Books and periodicals (locally) ..	65	2	3
1904.					"	Newspapers, colonial, for session, &c. ..	14	5	0
2 Feb.	Stamp imprest refund ..	15	0	0	"	Photograph of Sir M. O'Rorke..	6	6	0
					"	Fire insurance ..	20	0	0
					"	Stamp imprest ..	15	0	0
					"	Sundry advertising and small accounts ..	9	13	2
					"	Balance in bank, 31st March, 1904 ..	523	16	4
		<u>£1,051</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>			<u>£1,051</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>