

1910.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY:

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR 1909-10.

Laid on the Table by Leave of the House.

The CHIEF LIBRARIAN to the CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

Sir,—

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year 1909-10 :—

RECESS LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

At the first meeting of the Committee, W. Fraser, Esq., M.P., was elected Chairman for the recess. Two large orders for books were authorized by the sub-committee of selection. The majority of the volumes are now on the Library tables and shelves. Additional consignments are due to arrive from London very shortly.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY DURING THE YEAR.

During the period 8th June, 1909, to 7th June, 1910, 2,640 publications were added to the Library. This number includes volumes added by purchase, exchanges from other States, bound newspapers, official publications of New Zealand, and books sent to the Library in accordance with the General Assembly Library Act, now incorporated in the Copyright Act. Whilst many of the leading publishers and printers carefully observe the conditions of the Act, there are others who do not do so, especially where small pamphlets are issued. Many of these publications, of the issue of which I can only become aware through reading reviews or advertisements in the newspapers of the Dominion, constitute valuable sources of information for the social or political historian of the future. No publisher has yet been proceeded against for non-compliance with the Act, and I am naturally loth to recommend such action being taken. I would recommend that a special circular be sent—as I would suggest, by the Department of Internal Affairs—to every bookseller, printer, and publisher throughout the Dominion, and after this formal notice such persons as neglect or refuse to comply with the Act should be legally compelled to do so. A single prosecution under the Act would, I believe, result in the provisions of the measure being promptly complied with.

THE NEW ZEALAND AND POLYNESIAN SECTION.

A most interesting and valuable collection of books dealing with the early history of New Zealand and with various voyages and travels in the Pacific was presented by the Government to the Library during the recess. The volumes in question, which include several exceedingly rare works, copies of which the Library did not previously possess, were formerly the property of the late Dr. Meeson, of Christchurch, and were purchased in London from the executors of that gentleman. The volumes have been catalogued, and added to the special New Zealand reference section.

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

The usefulness of the Library has been fully taken advantage of during the recess, both by members—to whom an exceptionally large number of baskets of books were despatched—and by the recess-privilege holders. On the whole, the rules and regulations governing the issue of books to the privilege-holders have been conscientiously observed, but I should like to see in some few cases a stricter observance of the date upon which all books are required to be returned in