

1911.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR 1910-11.

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 herewith the following report for the year 1910-11.

RECESS LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

This Committee, under the Chairmanship of W. Fraser, Esq., M.P., held four meetings during the recess. Lists of books suggested for order were brought forward by the Chief Librarian and duly considered. Detailed reference to the books added during the year is made below, under the heading "Additions to the Library."

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

In no previous "Library year" has the number of recess-privilege holders been so great. The total number for the year was 799, and the number of books issued to non-members was no less than 10,429. I desire to emphasize the fact that the additional amount of work entailed upon the Library staff by such an extensive application of the recess-privilege system prevents, to a large extent, that care and attention which should be given to the real Library work during the recess. The expression "real Library work" may seem to call for explanation. The Library is primarily and essentially a Library for the use of and benefit of Parliament, and it is of the highest possible importance that every other consideration should be subordinated to the above fact.

Amongst the several matters which should receive attention during the recess are the detailed indexing of Bills and pamphlets; the systematic and careful revision of certain classes of books most in use during the session, with a view to the replacement of missing copies or numbers of periodicals; the keeping up to date of the supplementary catalogue cards, by the employment of which reference to the books upon every phase of any particular subject is rendered rapid and easy; the preparation of short but useful bibliographies on subjects likely to be of special interest to members during the session; the periodical overhauling of each section, so as to insure the mending and rebinding of volumes which have fallen into disrepair; the transference of volumes not in common use to the stack-rooms, and thence, in turn, to the basement. The list of things which ought to be done could be extended to some length. Few members have, I fear, any adequate idea of the amount of time involved in the correct performance of the merely technical, the "hack" work of a Library such as this. Comparison with the work done at the ordinary free public libraries is useless—the circumstances are completely different. I feel it my duty to point out that the abnormal proportions to which the recess-privilege list has now attained are such as to seriously interfere with and militate against the conduct of the Library as a parliamentary Library. The existing system, unless amended, threatens to seriously affect the value of the institution to those for whose use it is primarily intended—namely, Parliament itself. A careful analysis of the classes of books issued shows that 15 to 20 per cent. of the volumes are fiction. No current fiction is issued, no new novels, but only such classic fiction as the works of Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, Dumas, Balzac, Lever, Trollope, George Eliot, Marryat, the Brontës, and a few other writers. It is, I think, an open question whether any fiction at all should be issued to recess-privilege holders. The works of all the authors named can be obtained from other libraries in Wellington, and were fiction of any kind tabooed to the recess-privilege holders the result would be a sensible diminution of the clerical work involved in the registering, ledgering, "carding," and other work connected with its circulation. Quite a number of persons to whom the recess privilege has been granted have never taken out a single book in any other than the

fiction class. As showing how the privilege system interferes with the work the staff ought to do, but under present circumstances cannot adequately cope with, I might say that the services of two members of the staff are taken up every morning during the recess in writing up the ledgers, marking-off, and in other work rendered necessary by the privilege system. If this system continues on its present basis, it will be absolutely necessary in the interests of the Library—as a parliamentary Library—to ask for the appointment of some moderately well educated young man who could devote his time in the mornings to writing-up the ledgers and issuing of cards, and in the afternoons assisting generally in Library work. Bringing my remarks under this head to a conclusion, I would point out that, as far as I am aware, in no other Legislative Library in the world are books of any kind lent out to non-members. In certain Parliament Libraries, and under very restrictive conditions, books may be consulted by the public, but that is all. I have no serious complaint to make as to the condition in which the books borrowed by the recess-privilege holders are returned, but I deem it only right to point out that the wear-and-tear on the volumes circulated is necessarily very great, and that every year a larger number of volumes call urgently for rebinding than would otherwise be the case were the Library a purely reference Library, and the circulation privilege less extensive in its application.

USEFULNESS OF THE LIBRARY.

Members have been supplied promptly with all special works asked for, and the usual number of volumes for ordinary reading have been despatched to the houses of members desiring them. Many applications have been received from the public for advice or information on various subjects. The possession of a recess permit is not insisted upon in the case of persons desirous of consulting the books and newspapers in the Library at short notice. The volumes of bound newspapers continue to prove a most valuable source of information for students of local history, and every possible facility has been readily and cheerfully granted to persons wishing to prosecute inquiries.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

I am gratified to be able to state that the total number of catalogued accessions to the Library during the year was 3,340, the largest number yet received for a similar period. The total number of volumes in the Library is now about 80,000. An Accession List has been prepared as usual, and copies of the same should be in the possession of members by the time the present report is circulated. Included in the additions to the Library are many exceptionally interesting works. A set of the Cambridge University Press edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in twenty-five volumes, has been added to the reference section. Another important accession is the new and complete Library Edition of Ruskin's works, in thirty-seven volumes, a set of which, in new condition, I was able to secure at a considerable reduction on the published price. Members will find that special attention has been paid to technology, the additions in this section being of exceptional interest and importance. Such subjects as electric-power generation and distribution; irrigation; disposal of sewage; town-planning; ferro-concrete construction; gas-engineering; bridge-construction; motor transit; inspection of meat and milk; and many others are all well represented. To the New Zealand and Polynesian section some notable accessions have to be recorded. Amongst others I may mention copies of the first books printed in New Zealand—translations into Maori of the *Epistles to the Philippians* and to the *Ephesians*, the *Gospel of St. Luke* (1835), and the *Book of Job* (1838). Other additions are the *Complete Maori New Testament of 1837*; the edition of the same work published in 1844; the *Book of Jonah* and the first six chapters of *Daniel* (1840). In the same class I may also mention the *Book of Common Prayer*, in Maori, of 1851; *Maunsell's Sermons in Maori* (1846); *Whakaa Turanga, He I te Tikanga a Ihu Karaiti* (1847); and a rare pamphlet by the Rev. W. Colenso, *Ko te Tuarua* . . . (Errors of the Church of Rome), issued in 1840. In the New Zealand section may be noted the following works, some of which are extremely scarce: *Canterbury Papers*; *Heaphy's Narrative of a Residence in Parts of New Zealand* (1842); *Despard's Narrative of an Expedition into the Interior of New Zealand* (1845); *New Zealand Affairs—a Collection of Rare Pamphlets* (1866); *The New Zealand Rebellion* . . . Letter (1864); *Taylor's Te Ika a Maui* (1855); and the Rev. J. Whiteley's *He Rongomau Ka pai* (1847). Under the heading "*Voyages and Travels*" will also be found several interesting titles, such as *Claret de Fleurien's Decouvertes des François dans la Pacifique en 1768-69* (1790); *The Emigrant's Manual*; *Australia, New Zealand* (1851); *De Freville's Histoire des Nouvelles Decouvertes dans la Mer du Sud, 1767-70* (1774); *Journal of a Voyage round the World, 1768-71* (1771); *Narratives d'Omai* (1790); *Morgan's Life and Adventures of William Buckley* (1852); *Pigarett's First Voyage round the World, 1519-22* (1801); *J. Rochfort's Adventures of a Surveyor in New Zealand, &c.* (1853); *Shoberl's World in Miniature (Australia and New Zealand)* (1827); *Sparrmann's Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope* (1786); *Particulars of the Second Voyage of the Missionary Ship "The Duff"* (1809); *Rochon's Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes Orientales, &c.* (1807); *Montremont's Voyages autour du Monde* . . . Cook, &c. (1853); and others. Under the heading of "*Sociology*" will be found practically every new work of any serious value bearing upon social and political questions of the day. In "*History*" a specially valuable addition is a set of the *Naval Chronicle* (1799-1818), in forty volumes. This is a work which covers one of the most interesting and important periods in British naval history, and has always been recognized as one of the most valuable sources open to those engaged in historical research, especially on naval matters. I need not attempt even the briefest analysis of the remaining classes, in all of which many exceptionally valuable works will be found. The total number of accessions catalogued during the Library year was over 3,340, a larger number than I have had the pleasure of reporting for some years past. When it is remembered that for many of the books as many as from five to ten separate catalogue cards have to be written, it will be recognized that the amount of mere technical work involved by so large an influx of new publications makes a serious demand upon the time of the staff.

THE SPACE QUESTION.

Long before the projected new Parliament Buildings are erected the space problem, if I may use the term, will come up for and demand serious consideration. I understand that provision is made in the specification for the Library in a portion of the new buildings for the accommodation of 100,000 volumes. I would point out, however, that the number of volumes already in the Library is about 80,000, and that a yearly accretion of not less—probably much more as years go by—of 3,000 volumes may be counted upon. Allowing for such an annual increase, the provision for future accommodation for 100,000 volumes would appear to be most lamentably inadequate. Already the lack of sufficient space is a matter which calls for very careful attention. I have been obliged to transfer to the basement over 1,000 volumes from the stack-room building in order to make room for the steadily increasing overflow from the classes in the main reading-room, the sociology-room, the staff-room. It had been my intention to transfer to the basement the whole of the present contents of what is known as the American room, No. 2 stack-room, but owing to the enforced delay in getting additional shelving erected in the basement, the work of transference could not include this particular. An additional obstacle to carrying out my general plan of rearrangement was the pressure of work entailed by the abnormal amount of work thrown upon the staff by the unusually wide extension of the recess-privilege system to which I have alluded above. Space must be found for what I may call the "live books"—that is, volumes commonly, almost daily, consulted by members; and to cope with this requirement a regular and systematic scheme of transference must be carried out. Before next session I hope to have the whole of the American official section transferred to the basement—that is, if the necessary additional shelving be put in hand and erected early enough in the year to allow of the transference being effected. To do this, however, and to carry out in its entirety a well-planned scheme of rearrangement, a period of, at least four to six weeks should be set apart during which the staff should not be called upon to have to attend to the demands of the recess-privilege holders.

THE STAFF.

The staff remains the same as last year. A few weeks before the session I was obliged to obtain the assistance of a young man to assist in transferring books, dusting, &c. To the probable necessity of increasing the strength of the staff I have alluded under the heading of "Recess Privileges." The work since last session, which has been very onerous and exacting, has been zealously performed by the members of the regular staff, with whose efforts I have to here express complete satisfaction.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The radiators do their work very well, but would be greatly improved by little open cisterns of water being placed along the top of them. At present the complaint is frequently expressed that the radiators make the air too dry, and that headache is often the result. The water would, I believe, remove this trouble.

The Library has been presented by the Government with three most interesting miniature portraits, one of Colonel Grey, Sir George Grey's father; one of Sir George Grey's mother; and one of Sir George himself when quite a young man. These are being suitably reframed, and will be placed in a lined case now being made for their reception.

I have to tender my thanks to the members of the Recess Library Committee, and particularly to the Chairman, W. Fraser, Esq., M.P., who has, as in former years, been untiring in personal interest in and attention to the general control of the Library; and to Mr. Mackay, the Government Printer, and his staff. I desire also to place on record my satisfaction with the way in which our London agents, Messrs. Sotheman and Co., execute the orders sent to them.

LIBRARY ACCOUNTS.

In an appendix will be found the Library balance-sheet for the year ended the 31st March, 1911, with a copy of the Auditor's certificate.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

APPENDIX.

BALANCE-SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1911.

1910.		<i>Receipts.</i>		£	s.	d.	<i>Expenditure.</i>		£	s.	d.
Mar. 31.	Balance from 1909-10	..		362	6	4	High Commissioner's accounts for books,				
April 21.	Stamp imprest refund	..		5	0	0	periodicals, packing, freight, and insurance	338	19	2	
Aug. 3.	Treasury—Private Bill fees	..		145	0	0	Books and periodicals purchased locally	265	0	3	
1911	"	..		125	0	0	American periodicals	12	8	4	
Jan. 24.	" Annual grant	..		600	0	0	Fire insurance	18	0	0	
	Stamp imprest refund	..		5	0	0	Extra newspapers, advertising, &c.	19	2	10	
							Sundry small accounts	7	14	9	
							Cash in hand	5	0	0	
							Balance in bank on 31st March, 1911	576	1	0	
				£1,242	6	4			£1,242	6	4

Copy of Auditor's Certificate.

Account to the 31st March, 1911, has been examined and found correct, and the balance as shown is found to coincide with the bank pass-book.

R. J. COLLINS,
Controller and Auditor-General.

NOTE.—The balance shown at end of financial year (£576 1s.) will be exhausted (in meeting current accounts) before the receipt of this year's grant.

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given: printing (1,500 copies), £2 15s.

By Authority : JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1911.

Price 3d.