

1914.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR 1913-14.

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 1913-14 :—

RECESS LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

The Recess Library Committee, under the chairmanship of the Hon. J. Rigg, M.L.C., held four meetings during the recess. Lists of books suggested for order were brought forward by the Chief Librarian and duly considered.

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

The number of privilege permits issued to non-members during the recess was 439, as against 478 in 1912-13 and 462 in 1911-12. The number of volumes lent to ordinary recess-privilege holders was 3,642. This number does not include the volumes issued to persons whose names are on the full-privilege list, such as the Governor's staff, the Judges, and the officers of the House. No fiction was issued save to persons on the full-privilege list. The classes of works mainly favoured by privilege-holders were biography, voyages and travels, history, science, poetry and essays, in the above order.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

The Accessions List for the year 1912-13, copies of which have been issued to members of both Houses, includes all books and other publications added to the Library and catalogued during the period 13th June, 1913, to the 6th June, 1914, the number being 2,652, as against 2,647 for a slightly longer period last year. From the 6th June to the 28th July, the date of the report, 580 additional entries have been made in the Accession Register, making the total number of accessions for the period 13th June, 1913, to 28th July, 1914, 3,232. A glance through the pages of the Accessions List will show that a large number of very important works in all classes of literature have been added to the Library. In the 300 class, which, under the general heading of "Sociology," includes works on education, constitutional history, law, finance, statistics, political economy, and legislative questions generally, it will be seen that the additions were exceptionally interesting. As a result of the Chief Librarian's attendance at an auction sale (held at Auckland last year) a large number of works on the early history of New Zealand generally were added to the Library. Most of these figure in the "New Zealand History" and "New Zealand Descriptive" classes. Others are distributed amongst the classes to which they belong. Amongst the items purchased at the sale in question were several old and rare New Zealand newspapers, publications of the early missionary press, &c.

THE STAFF AND ITS WORK.

The unusual length of last year's session trenched a little upon the time available for the technical work of the Library, which has to be mainly carried out during the recess. The contents of the Library were, however, thoroughly overhauled, and certain slight changes in the disposition of books in some of the classes, rendered necessary by large additions to such classes, were effected. During my annual vacation I visited the Carnegie Free Library at Dunedin, the Free Library at Christchurch, and the Auckland Free Library, and conferred with the librarians of the three institutions, Messrs. McEwen, Bell, and Barr, on various matters pertaining to library management and equipment. As a result of my visit I hope to establish a system of exchange of duplicates which will, I think, prove mutually advantageous and useful. I have to thank the gentlemen above named for their courteous assistance on several points of interest.

I regret that, owing to a severe attack of bronchitis, I was compelled to absent myself from duty for the first time since I took charge of the Library in 1901. The absence was of a little over a fortnight's duration. Mr. James, the Assistant Librarian, has also been temporarily absent through illness on two or three occasions. The new binder, Mr. Vaughan, who replaced the late Mr. Roberts last year, has continued to give every satisfaction, and the staff all round has worked well.

STOCK-TAKING.

In accordance with the system I outlined in last year's report and under which stock-taking will proceed each recess, different classes being dealt with each year, stock was taken of the contents of the sociology-room—*i.e.*, the No. 2 room on the ground floor. In this room are shelved the classes 300 and 700. The 300 class includes works on constitutional law; the statutes of all the British dominions and colonies; parliamentary law and procedure; common law; banking and finance generally; political economy; education; land and labour questions, &c. Class 700 includes works of art, sport, music, and the drama.

The work was carried out by Messrs. P. McColl and W. Baine, who devoted practically two months to the task, which was done with the utmost care and thoroughness. The stock-sheets in their various stages may be inspected by members, to whom Mr. McColl, as the assistant in charge of the work, will, if called upon, explain the system adopted. The results of the stock-taking may be tabulated as follows:—

MISSING SINCE 1913 STOCK-TAKING.						
Class 300	..	..	..	..	..	56
Class 700	..	..	..	..	..	11
Official	..	..	..	..	..	5
Total	..	..	..	..	..	72

Remarks on Stock-taking.—It by no means follows that the books put down as "missing" are to be considered as being definitely and irrevocably lost. Books are still coming in which were noted as "missing" at the time the stock-lists were closed. In not a few instances books have been placed on the tables of the staff-room, in others on the shelves of the sociology-room, and in others yet again deposited on the tables of the main reading-room without any information of such return being given to any member of the Library staff. In every such instance it is found that the books returned *have never been entered* in the day-books. Year after year I have remarked in my reports upon the impropriety of persons enjoying the Library privileges taking out books without having them duly entered in the day-books provided for that purpose. One day-book is placed in the main reading-room, another on the counter of the staff-room on the ground floor. Surely it is not asking too much that persons taking out books should spend a minute or two in properly recording the particulars of the book borrowed. Failure to comply with this very simple and very reasonable requirement involves great inconvenience and annoyance to members who may rightly desire to consult the books which are missing, to say nothing of the extra work which is necessitated when stock is being taken. The carelessness displayed by some of those who use the Library is quite unpardonable. As a case in point I may mention that of twelve books returned at the commencement of the session by a certain member seven were found to have never been entered. They included, I may add, two dictionaries of quotations, which are distinctly to be considered works of reference and should not have been removed from the Library. This nuisance of "non-entered" books has gone on increasing to such an extent that it has become a most formidable obstacle to the proper control of the Library.

I desire to draw special attention to the fact that the sociology-room is only used by *members of Parliament and full-privilege holders*. It may be called a "close-tyled" room, for during the recess, as during the session, *no persons save the above are allowed to enter it without a Library assistant accompanying them*. This fact carries with it the unpleasant but inevitable corollary that the majority of the missing volumes cannot have been taken out by ordinary-privilege holders. I use the expression "majority" because it must be remembered that new books in all classes are, during the first session after their being added to the Library, displayed on the tables in the main reading-room, in order that members may have an opportunity of seeing the new accessions as a whole. To this main room many persons other than those mentioned have access, under the "limited sessional privileges," and it is possible that in some cases the privilege has been abused. As a matter of fact, I have proof that certain volumes have been removed, without being entered, from the display tables in the room above referred to. Salmond's "Summary of the Law of Torts," for instance, disappeared off the table upstairs immediately it was displayed, and Borchard's "Law and Legal Literature of Germany" must have been taken in the same manner. The detailed figures show that there was a loss of seven books of the 300 and 700 sections of those displayed in the main reading-room tables during the session of 1913. There is clear proof that each session witnesses a certain degree of loss from the shelves of the sociology-room, and for this ordinary-privilege holders cannot be held accountable. This loss should be easily preventable if the Library rules as to entering books were faithfully observed. The stock-lists are, as I have said, at the disposition of members. If necessary, I can review verbally, and in detail, the list of missing books, and quote Mr. McColl's remarks upon special cases which may call for comment.

I would earnestly request members having any "non-entered" books in their possession either to return them at once, or, if the volumes have been left at their homes, to send for them without delay. As to the future it is an open question whether some penalty should not be imposed upon those who, through carelessness or indifference, disregard the rules laid down for the return and entering of books. It is extremely disagreeable to me to have to write as I have done, but I have felt it my duty to draw special attention to the matter.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The large oil-painting, by W. R. Wyllie, Esq., R.A., of the battleship "New Zealand," presented to the Dominion by the artist, and formerly being in the Library, has been removed from the wall on the main staircase, and is now, I understand, in the Dominion Museum. A fine oil-painting (an enlarged copy, by Mr. J. Macdonald, of the Museum staff) of a smaller portrait of Governor Hobson has been placed in the position formerly occupied by Mr. Wyllie's picture.

I desire to draw attention to the necessity for replacing the chairs in the downstairs rooms by new furniture. In the newspaper and sociology rooms there are hardly two chairs of the same pattern, and some are almost beyond adequate renovation. The shabbiness of the furniture in these rooms has more than once been the subject of remark by oversea visitors. It is to be hoped that during the recess the downstairs rooms will be furnished with a set of entirely new chairs of comfortable pattern.

I have to tender my thanks to the Chairman of the Joint Library Committee, G. J. Anderson, Esq., M.P., and the Chairman of the Recess Committee, the Hon. J. Rigg, M.L.C., each of whom has devoted much personal attention to the control of Library matters; also to the Government Printer and to the High Commissioner and his staff.

The Library orders for books and periodicals purchased in London have, as usual, received prompt attention from Messrs. Sotheran and Co. and Messrs. Street and Co.

LIBRARY ACCOUNTS.

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

I have, &c.,

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

APPENDIX.

BALANCE-SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED THE 31ST MARCH, 1914.

<i>Receipts.</i>			<i>Expenditure.</i>		
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.
1913.			High Commissioner's imposts for books		
March 31.	Balance at the Bank of New		and periodicals	242	13 0
1914.	Zealand	521 11 6	Books and periodicals purchased locally ..	273	12 3
January.	Treasury—		American periodicals, newspapers, &c. ..	13	3 7
	Private Bill fees	125 0 0	Second-hand and other books bought at		
	Annual grant	600 0 0	auction sales	99	4 6
	Stamp impost refund	15 0 0	Fire insurance	18	0 0
			Extra newspapers, advertising, &c. ..	11	6 11
			Sundry small accounts	2	14 6
			Stamp impost	15	0 0
			Balance at Bank of New Zealand, less		
			unrepresented cheque, £1 16s. 6d. ..	585	16 9
		<u>£1,261 11 6</u>		<u>£1,261 11 6</u>	

Copy of Auditor's Certificate.

Account to the 31st March, 1914, has been examined and found correct, and the balance as shown, plus outstanding cheque, is found to coincide with the bank pass-book.

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

NOTE.—The balance shown at the end of financial year (£585 16s. 9d.) will probably be exhausted (in meeting current accounts and commitments) before the receipt of this year's grant.

CHARLES WILSON,
Chief Librarian.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (850 copies), £2 5s.

