

*A Science Library.*

64. The Report of the Select Committee of the House on industries issued in 1919, and Dr. J. Allan Thomson in a memorandum submitted to the Government Committee in 1925 (see Appendix A, Sections 5 and 6) call attention to the inadequacy of the scientific libraries in New Zealand, and to its hampering effect upon the scientific worker. The committee recommended the establishment of a central reference library, while Dr. Thomson recommended "the publication of adequate library catalogues." A really representative library of scientific literature centrally placed would undoubtedly be of the greatest value to science, but the capital cost of bringing it into existence rapidly and supplying the necessary housing would be very great indeed, especially if it was to be additional to existing libraries in Wellington. It is much to be hoped that all the present scientific books and pamphlets in the different libraries in the capital, both those in Government and those in other institutions, may ultimately be housed under a single roof and arranged in such a way as to make them the nucleus of such a library as the committee desired to see. But there are many difficulties to be overcome before such a plan could be put into effect, and in the meantime some improvement on the present unsatisfactory condition is urgently called for.

65. Dr. Thomson's suggestion of adequate library catalogues published for the use of scientific workers would do something if carried into effect, but I venture to think that it is possible to improve upon his plan without too serious an increase of cost and with a great improvement in convenience and utility. I recommend that it be the duty of the new central scientific authority to prepare and publish a catalogue of all scientific books, pamphlets, and journals in the public and (so far as possible) in the private libraries of the Dominion, with an indication of where copies of each publication are to be found, and the number of copies available. Each library should agree to lend copies on suitable conditions to serious workers wherever they are working. The central authority should itself make good any gaps of importance in the combined list, and keep these supplementary copies in their own charge for loan or consultation. Books or journals for which there is considerable demand (other than text-books) the supply of which is inadequate in existing libraries should also be added to the central store. In this way a complete scientific lending library might be brought into existence at the minimum of cost, though with the inevitable delay in availability due to its dispersal throughout the Dominion. But delay is less serious than denial. The Workers' Educational Association has established just such a supplementary lending library in London with conspicuous success. Each scientific centre and worker would know at once from the general catalogue where what was needed could be found, and the annual publication of a list of accessions would keep the original volumes up to date. It would probably be necessary, in the interests of economy, to confine the actual publication to authors and titles, but a subject catalogue should gradually be prepared on cards at the headquarters office, which could be consulted by the public and supplied to institutions at the bare cost of copying them.

*National Research Scholarships.*

66. What has already been said of the serious shortage of qualified research workers in the Dominion makes it necessary that the new central authority should place the provision for the training of promising young persons in scientific research and the encouragement of research by existing investigators in the forefront of their programme. If they do not, it is certain that competent workers will not be forthcoming for the various scientific institutes and co-operative undertakings which it will be the duty of the new authority to promote. Young men and women of the requisite ability will undoubtedly be forthcoming to undertake the necessary training if once it is realized that there will be openings for them afterwards. Accordingly I recommend that the funds at present available for the granting of National Research Scholarships be transferred to new authority, and that, together with some additional money, it be expended in maintenance grants to promising young workers in science. The awards should be made by the authority itself on the recommendation of the student's professor, and should be sufficient, together with any assistance he can obtain from his college or other local sources, but not more than sufficient, to meet his expenses for a period of two years. The authority should be empowered to make the grant conditional on the student going elsewhere, whether in the Dominion or beyond it, if such a course is thought to be necessary. But one of the objects of the grants should be to help professors of original powers gradually to build up a school of research. Students in receipt of grants should be encouraged to do a strictly limited amount of teaching in the laboratories of the college—but not more than six hours a week—not in the interests of the college so much as in the interest of the student in training himself.

67. Means should also be provided to enable the central authority to make grants to professors and others engaged in research work of value, to be expended on the payment of research assistants or the purchase of special and expensive apparatus. In this way the productivity of existing original workers would be increased. These grants should not be used to supplement the salaries of existing teachers but for the employment of full-time workers. The central authority should enter into an agreement with the New Zealand Institute to prevent any overlapping between their own grants and those of the Institute. Such an arrangement has been made between the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research at Home and the Royal Society with very satisfactory results.

The cost of these two services should not exceed £2,000 a year for some years to come, part of which is already covered by the present expenditure on National Research Scholarships.

*The New Zealand Institute.*

68. I recommend that the present grant to the New Zealand Institute be continued; that they be assisted to pay off their heavy overdraft to the Government Printer; and that thereafter they be required to make their own arrangements for printing.