

1926.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN, FOR THE YEAR 1925-26.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

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

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year 1925-26. In doing so I would point out that the late Chief Librarian (Mr. C. Wilson) retired at the end of the year, and as I was not appointed until a few weeks later the report refers to a period of which I have no personal knowledge.

During the year the following meetings of the various Library Committees were held: Recess, 3; House of Representatives, 1; Legislative Council, 1; Joint, 4; Joint Selection, 1. The revision of the Library rules by the Joint Committee was the most important work of the Committees during the year. The new rules have since been printed and circulated to members.

ADDITIONS.

The number of new books added to the Library during the financial year 1925-26 was 1,501, as compared with 2,089 during the preceding year. The limited number of accessions is reflected in the considerable credit balance with which the year ended.

The total number of volumes catalogued in the Library to the 1st August, 1926, is 111,448, but it is necessary to remember that very many books which have been worn out, or lost, or otherwise disposed of are no longer in the Library. The number of books in the Library at present is probably, therefore, a few thousands less than the total number of accessions.

The arrangement hitherto existing with the Alexander Turnbull Library to obviate the dissipation of money by overlapping in the purchase of books has been continued. The Turnbull Library devotes itself more especially to the acquisition of rare and expensive books dealing with the early history of New Zealand, Australia, and the Pacific, while the General Assembly Library directs its attention rather towards recent and current literature, with special reference to economics, political science, and other branches of sociology, history, and biography.

RECESS PRIVILEGES.

Recess privileges were granted during the late recess to 817 persons, an increase of more than 20 per cent. over the number in the preceding recess. The following shows the numbers for several years past: 1918-19, 289; 1919-20, 526; 1920-21, 757; 1921-22, 549; 1922-23, 611; 1923-24, 740; 1924-25, 670; 1925-26, 817.

The number of books lent to recess privilege-holders during the last recess was 9,391, as compared with 6,137 in the previous recess, an increase of 53 per cent. As the recess privilege-holders are not entitled to take out books of fiction, these numbers are eloquent testimony to their appreciation of serious literature. I am glad to say that most of the privileged readers show their appreciation of the privilege also by a strict observance of the rules. At present eleven volumes borrowed during the recess are still outstanding, but it is hoped they will all be recovered.

The occupations of the privilege-holders were given as follows: Accountants, 13; analyst, 1; architects, 4; artists, 6; auctioneer, 1; bakers, 11; builders, 2; chemists, 6; civil servants, 138; clergymen, 15; clerks, 86; conchologist, 1; dairy worker, 1; dentists, 3; domestic duties, 86; draper, 1; draughtsmen, 10; electrical engineers, 5; civil engineers, 7; mechanical engineers, 3; gardener, 1; geologist, 1; inspectors of schools, 2; insurance agents, 4; interpreter, 1; journalists, 23; labourers, 2; land agents, 2; law clerks, 10; mechanics, 2; medical practitioners, 11; merchants, 20; messengers, 7; meteorologist, 1; military officer, 1; municipal employees, 4; musicians, 3; naval officers, 2; no occupation, 90; nurses, 4; optician, 1; palæontologist, 1; piano-tuner, 1; retired civil servants, 37; salesmen, 12; seamen, 2; settler, 1; shipping managers, 2; shop-assistant, 1; solicitors, 29; students, 26; surveyors, 3; teachers, 57; timber merchants, 2; trade union secretaries, 3; typists, 21.

STOCK-TAKING.

The stock-taking was proceeded with during the recess by Mr. W. F. Johnson, who, with the assistance of Mr. Dighton, checked three important classes, one of which had not been overhauled