

1927.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1927.

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

To the Chairman of the Joint Library Committee.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report for the year 1926-27.

The meetings of Committees held during the year were as follows: Recess, 3; House of Representatives, 1; Legislative Council, 1; Joint, 4; Joint Selection, 2.

During the financial year 2,162 books were added to the Library, as compared with 1,501 last year, and 2,089 in the year before. This brings the total number accessioned to the 31st March, 1927, up to 112,880. Since the end of the year an unusually large number of books has come to hand, making up in part for the short buying at the beginning of the year. These purchases will absorb much of the balance shown at the beginning of the year.

STACK-ROOM ACCOMMODATION.

The pressure on the shelf-space, which was very marked a year ago and was the cause of much confusion, has been somewhat relieved by the erection of a quantity of wooden shelving in the large room over the main reading-room. This accommodation, though not of the best description, is being used for the storage of some thousands of books which are not so much in demand. The serious problem of accommodating United States official publications has been overcome in the meantime by carefully weeding and classifying the books which were issued during the last decade or two, and putting them on the shelves in their proper classes. For the past six years, unfortunately, these publications have not been coming to the Library, but they are now being resumed, and I hope that we shall be able to accommodate all that are of service, handing over to the scientific Departments of the Government those which are purely technical in character.

Structural alterations in the Library have greatly improved the accommodation for current fiction, and for the staff working-room. Unfortunately we have not yet a room available for use as a staff-room, which is sadly needed.

THE STAFF.

The vacancy on the staff caused by the resignation of Mr. P. McColl was filled by the appointment of Miss Q. B. Cowles, who had many years' experience in the Turnbull Library. The death occurred early in 1927 of Mr. F. Sampson, one of the oldest members of the staff, who had seen fifty years of faithful service in the Library. Mr. C. Brown has been promoted to Mr. Sampson's duty.

STOCK-TAKING.

The year has been a particularly strenuous one for all members of the staff, and I much appreciate the cheerful manner in which they have met the demands upon them. Owing to the staff being short, and the heavy work entailed in the transference of books to the new stack-room, it was possible to take stock only in the Science class (500) which had not been overhauled since 1916. There are 5,284 volumes in this class, of which 831 were added since 1916. Mr. Dighton, who took the stock, reports that twenty-eight volumes are missing. Of these, sixteen had disappeared before the first stock-taking in 1913. As books are constantly coming back after long periods of absence, it is to be hoped that a good number of those now reported missing will eventually return.

CARD SYSTEM.

The obsolete system of charging books on issue by means of ledgers and day-books has been abolished, and the much less cumbersome and more accurate card system substituted.