

A booklet is in preparation which will include a list of the books and letters, and this will be submitted for publication as a library bulletin. In it full information will be given concerning the various notable items, and the great value of this donation will then be realized.

Another valuable donation is that of the Swedenborg Society. That society, at an expenditure of many thousands of pounds, has had photographic facsimiles made of the whole of Swedenborg's works, published and unpublished. The result is eighteen great folio volumes, bound in parchment. A number of sets were printed, and these have been distributed through the world, one set coming to New Zealand—the set now in the library.

Library Conference.—A conference of librarians, at which the Librarian of the Alexander Turnbull Library attended, was held in Christchurch from the 8th to 10th February, 1928, when matters concerning the general working of public libraries were discussed.

Readers and Students.—Forty-four new readers' permits were issued during the year, and students have been working in the library regularly through the year, day and evening. The principal subjects studied were Pacific problems, education, influence of missions in New Zealand, New Zealand railways, gold-mining in New Zealand, biographies of various statesmen, histories of particular districts, &c. The Folk-lore Section, the classics and English literature, including drama and poetry, have also been much used. Visits were paid to the library by classes from public primary and secondary schools, and Kelburn Training College.

Visitors.—There were about seven hundred visitors during the year, in addition to the classes from various schools, primary and secondary.

Bulletins.—There are still inquiries for Bulletin 1, "List of One Hundred Representative New Zealand Books"; and of Bulletin 2 another 150 were sold during the year by the Government Printer, making 475 to date, which has more than paid for cost of printing it. Bulletin 3 (McCrae manuscripts of a visit to New Zealand in 1820) has been prepared and will be printed during the year, and Bulletin 4, dealing with the Mantell Collection, is in preparation.

Correspondence.—Many inquiries have been received regarding books and pictures and their values, historical subjects, &c., inward and outward communications amounting to upwards of 2,200.

Pictures and Drawings.—From three to four hundred pictures and drawings have been mounted and put in Solander cases during the year, and there are many still to attend to; all these require cabinets for their proper housing and so that they may be readily accessible.

CENSUS AND STATISTIC OFFICE.

The routine work has been kept well up to date, in spite of the huge volume of work involved in the extraction of statistics of the population census of 1926. In addition it has been found possible for several new branches of statistical inquiry to be inaugurated.

Banking Statistics.—Probably the most noteworthy achievement of the year is the successful initiation of weekly statistics of banking. Hitherto New Zealand has been sadly deficient in regard to statistics of banks of issue, the only information available being that contained in the quarterly statements of assets and liabilities supplied to the Minister of Finance and published in the *New Zealand Gazette*. Past efforts to bring New Zealand into line with other countries in this respect proved abortive, but the co-operation of the banks has now been obtained towards the collection and monthly publication of weekly returns covering debits, clearings, advances, deposits, metal reserves, legal-tender notes, and discount and overdraft rates.

Private Assignments.—For many years past, statistics of bankruptcies under the Bankruptcy Act have been regularly collected and published. While valuable in themselves, these have not indicated the full extent of insolvency in the Dominion from year to year, on account of there being no record of private assignments. This defect has now been remedied by the making of regulations requiring persons administering estates assigned privately to furnish the necessary statistical returns.

Motor-transport Statistics.—An entirely new activity in the statistical field is represented by the initiation in November, 1927, of statistics of motor transport. Regulations were made under the Census and Statistics Act requiring returns to be furnished by proprietors of omnibus services and of more or less regular motor-transport services operating over country roads. Particulars of mileage are also required in respect of cars used for commercial purposes in connection with the owner's own business where such use involves regular trips of ten miles or over from the home town.

The first collection of statistics under the Motor Transport Regulations was made for the month of November, 1927, the results being published in the *Monthly Abstract of Statistics* for January, 1928. For the distribution and collection of the forms the services of Deputy Registrars of Motor-vehicles were utilized.

Accident Insurance.—When the direct collection of statistics of accident insurance was undertaken by the Census and Statistics Office in 1926, a distinction was provided for in the statement of premiums and claims as between workers' compensation and other forms of accident insurance. By regulations made under the Census and Statistics Act in 1927, separate figures are for the future to be shown also for (1) personal accident and sickness insurance, (2) motor-vehicle insurance, and (3) motor-omnibus insurance (risks under Motor-omnibus Licensing Regulations).

Still-births.—The phenomenon that while the infant-mortality rate is decreasing the still-birth rate is increasing has drawn attention to the fact that these two matters are closely identified with one another, and are very largely parts of the same problem. A study of the cause of death of infants during past years shows that the whole of the improvement in our infant-mortality rates has been effected by the elimination and prevention of deaths from causes which attack the infant after birth, and that deaths (mainly neo-natal) from causes which originate before birth have been little affected. If anything, like still-births (from which they only differ in point of time of death), they