

REFERENCE AND RESEARCH.

The parliamentary reference work, which is centred in the reference-room on the ground floor, grows in proportions every year. Owing to the transfer of Mr. Odell it is at present under the supervision of the Assistant Librarian, with a senior assistant and a junior newly appointed. There is a steady increase also in the amount of reference work done by the library for Government Departments. The Library continues to be used to an increasing extent both during session and recess by students and researchers from every part of New Zealand and from overseas.

COPYRIGHT.

The copyright division has grown in importance in the last few years, and now occupies almost the whole time of one assistant. Following a suggestion made at the Library Conference, we are supplying monthly a selection from the copyright entries for publication in the journal *New Zealand Libraries*. The decision a few years ago to separate the annual copyright list from the general accession list has proved of great service to librarians both in New Zealand and overseas. During the last few years this list has also been published independently of the general accessions. The same practice will be continued, but it is proposed this year, as a matter of convenience, to make the separate copyright publication cover the calendar year instead of the accession list year (which ends on May 31).

INTERLIBRARY LOANS.

There has been a steady development of this service, especially since the discussion at the Library Conference. Constant demands are received at the General Assembly Library, as the national library, for the loan to other libraries throughout the Dominion of books which are asked for by their readers and which they feel it is inadvisable to purchase. Books lent by us in this connection are sent on strictly reference conditions and are returnable at once on telegraphic demand if required in our Library. The interlibrary service has worked quite smoothly so far. Though the General Assembly Library will in the nature of things lend more than it borrows, we have on several occasions been able to borrow from other libraries out-of-the-way books which were wanted urgently by members of Parliament.

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE.

As the agent for New Zealand of the International Exchange service, the General Assembly Library received last year from abroad 3,668 packages and 16 cases of official and scientific publications, all of which had to be redistributed by our staff to Departments, libraries, and private addresses throughout New Zealand. These consignments, which came this year from Great Britain, the United States, Belgium, Spain, and China show a steady increase in bulk each year. The Library has also to receive and despatch overseas publications sent from New Zealand under the exchange system.

PUBLICATIONS.

The annual accession list was as usual in the hands of members when Parliament opened. In view of the great interest being taken in forthcoming legislation on social insurance and superannuation the Library has just published a new Select List on Social Insurance (compiled by R. S. Odell, B.A., and J. O. Wilson, A.L.A.). This list, which has already been of considerable service to members, has also been commented upon favourably by libraries in the Australian Commonwealth. A previous list on this topic was compiled by Mr. A. D. McIntosh in 1929.

The Union Catalogue of New Zealand Newspapers, on which the Chief Librarian has been engaged for some years past, is now in the Printing Office awaiting the return of proofs from checking by other libraries. It is hoped to publish it within a week or two.

In view of the Centennial Celebrations the Library is also engaged on the compilation of a union list of official papers (both British and colonial) touching on the early history of New Zealand. This also should be available within a few weeks.

LIBRARY FURNISHING.

The Library is once more feeling acutely the congestion due to restriction of accommodation. In view of the doubt as to when a new library will be possible, fresh plans have had to be made to relieve the pressure and enable the work to be carried on in the meantime. Further cellar accommodation, which became vacant during the year, has enabled us to move out a quantity of books, both duplicate official stock of our own and a mass of publications which constitutes the stock of the Royal Society of New Zealand. A considerable quantity of new shelving (in wood) has also been authorized for erection on all floors, including increased shelving and cabinets for newspapers and periodicals in the newspaper-reading room. To facilitate the movement of books from floor to floor a new lift is being procured to replace the antiquated lift which for years past has been more or less out of use.

The shelf list and other departments of the catalogue the growth of which is inevitable during the next few years will be housed in a new catalogue-cabinet of modern design in wood. This is placed for the present on the first floor (room A), close to the cataloguers.

STAFF.

During the current year the staff has lost the services of its reference assistant (Mr. R. S. Odell), who has been transferred to the Prime Minister's staff. Mrs. Hamilton is still on leave, and Miss McPhee seconded to the High Commissioner's Office. The vacancies have been filled by the appointment of the following: Mr. G. L. Gabites; Mr. B. D. Zohrab, B.A.; and Mr. I. K. McGregor (from the Wellington Public Library). Mr. Wilson, by passing another examination of the English Library Association, gained his diploma of A.L.A. On the whole we have been fortunate in keeping our staff intact, but staff work has suffered considerably through absence of members on leave.