

1938.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1938.

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

To the Chairman Joint Library Committee.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report on the operations of the General Assembly Library for the year 1937-38.

ACCESSIONS.

During the financial year we were again able with our increased buying fund to purchase freely the books that are required to maintain and increase the stock. The number of books added to the stock during the year was 4,994, as compared with 4,240 in the previous year, and an average of 2,516 for eleven years previous to that. At the end of May the number of books accessioned was 147,724. This does not exactly correspond with the stock of the library, since allowance must be made for books that have been discarded owing to wear-and-tear or for other reasons.

The policy outlined last year of making up leeway in the acquisition of reference books, standard texts, &c., in addition to purchasing everything that seems to be desirable in the field of sociology, history, and official publications, has been continued, taking care always to avoid duplicating in the purchase of expensive books which are already in some other Wellington library or are being acquired elsewhere.

DONATIONS.

We have been fortunate again in receiving a steady stream of donations from various sources. In particular we have received from the Public Library of Victoria a number of volumes of the Melbourne *Argus*, which complete our holding of this paper back to 1874. This is the direct outcome of the publication of our union catalogue of newspapers. Following are the donors of some of the more important gifts received: American Association for Adult Education (New York), Ralph E. Barley (Hastings), British Medical Association (London), Carnegie Corporation of New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Washington), Consul for Italy (Wellington), Consul-General for Czechoslovakia (Sydney), Mariano F. Cornejo (London), Delegations for the Promotion of Economic Co-operation between the Northern Countries, Mrs. F. Dyer (Wellington), Empire Economic Union, Empire Parliamentary Association, General Export Association (Sweden), German Government, Guild of Saddlers of City of London, Liberal Publications Department, Library of Congress (Washington), Library of Parliament (Commonwealth of Australia), Dr. Jacob Ter Meulen (The Hague), Hon. Walter Nash, M.P., National Information Board for Commonwealth Anniversary Committee, Petschek and Co. (Czechoslovakia), Vivian Phelps (South Africa), Prime Minister's Department (Wellington), Stichting de Kindervrienden (Amsterdam), Theosophical Publishing House, United States Department of Agriculture, Voice of China Publications, World Calendar Association (New York), C. Kuangson Young (Geneva).

STAFF WORK.

During the year the shelf list, upon which a temporary assistant had been working full time, was brought to a completion. This work was urgently required, and it was quite beyond the capacity of the permanent staff to do it in spare moments, as it involved making cards of possibly 130,000 books. The shelf list is now maintained by the cataloguers in the ordinary course of their work. It is housed close to the cataloguing staff, and is a great aid to the efficient working of the library.

Steady progress is being made with the portrait index and the index of immigrant ships, both of which are being consulted daily for research purposes. Inquiries are also received from the United States, Australia, and Great Britain, to which these indexes furnish the reply.

Since the end of the financial year Mrs. R. M. Hamilton has returned to duty after extended leave, in the course of which she took courses in various phases of library work in London. Her return has enabled the staff to be reorganized, as had been intended, by segregating the cataloguers, who are now working in a group on the first floor. With the great increase in the number of books accessioned, the cataloguing has become much heavier, and it is hoped that under the new arrangement it will proceed regularly and smoothly.

I am glad to say that there have been no changes in the staff during the year. Mr. B. D. Zohrab gained his M.A. degree.