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Linwood Library Gazette

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."

Vol. 2, No. 2.



NOVEMBER, 1936.

THE STORY OF LINWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

As an old subscriber to Linwood Public Library I sometimes allow my thoughts to go back to those days in its emergence as an actual fact and then trace through the years the development of the vision held by the men who launched it on its career.

The founders of our Library included in their number men possessing sound judgment and vision; cultured, yet eminently practical. While their ideal was yet ahead somewhere in the future, they paid careful attention to their foundational activities. They attempted to achieve something more and better than the usual suburban library, and by offering facilities to readers of all tastes hoped to gradually build up a library in the truest and widest sense. To illustrate. Mr A. Marshall, an ex-Mayor of Linwood, expressed himself in these words: "There is no book too good for our shelves, money must be found for the best." And another founder, Mr W. W. Tanner, M.P. for Avon for 18 years, was equally emphatic. He said: "We aimed to found a library of the best books money could buy."

In connection with the views expressed above, it is interesting to mention a recent experience. When Jonathan Cape published T. E. Lawrence's notable work "Seven Pillars of Wisdom" the Committee decided to purchase four copies of the work, and in view of the numerous enquiries drew up a list of subscribers in order of application. It is now some fourteen months since these four copies were

put into circulation, and many months yet will elapse ere the list will be exhausted.

On June 11th, 1909, the library was formally opened by Mr C. C. Allison, Mayor of Christchurch, and speeches were made by Mr W. W. Tanner and the Hon. W. G. Russell. At the opening there were about 240 books on the shelves and a few magazines, all donated by generous friends. Since then approximately 35,000 books have been catalogued, and about half of this number have been either worn out or discarded. To-day the stock is roughly fiction, 12,000; juvenile, 2,500; non-fiction, 3,800; with 37 magazines and many periodicals and newspapers, the annual issue being nearly 110,000.

Last year 1804 volumes were placed on the shelves, 1428 being fiction, 230 juvenile, and 146 non-fiction. During the last four months 843 volumes have been placed on the shelves.

Two features are worthy of notice. First, that the institution was to be a library only.

No social, or card or billiard room, thus the whole of the Committee had but one interest upon which they could focus their thought and energy.

Second, that one subscription entitled the member to one book only, any extra volumes to be paid for at the rate of 3d. each.

Regarding the first item, the committee have been, and are, just as earnest in their allegiance to the principle "A Library only" as were the founders 27 years ago, and the second item is held in an equally emphatic manner. The amount received

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from extra books during the last ten years is approximately £3,500, and when stated in this fashion, the nimble 3d assumes quite a different aspect.

The changing times have brought us into closer contact with other libraries in New Zealand, thus bringing to us a fresh view point and a wider outlook. The gain of knowledge concerning library work and administration is helpful and interesting, but with limited financial support it is impossible to apply that knowledge to the routine in libraries such as ours. To sum up. Much of the progress between 1909 and 1936 is the result of wise and sound judgment at the earlier period, and earnest conscientious work through the intervening years.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

NEW NOVELS.

By OUR REVIEWER.

Snowstone, by J. M. Scott, is a story of a treasure hunt in Greenland, the main figures of which are Geoffrey Troy, a young athletic explorer with a slight figure and pale face, but limited means, and Ivan Sound, an unscrupulous knave with wealth on his side. An old Eskimo divulges the secret of "Snowstone," a new mineral to be found in an inaccessible fjord on the east coast of Greenland, to Geoffrey who leads a party across the Ice Cap from the west coast. In the meantime Ivan, who has got wind of this untold wealth, gets together another party, charters an aeroplane and flies direct to the fjord where the two parties meet and come to grips, the younger and legitimate party winning in the end. The story has adventure, romance, thrill and suspense and, above all, it should appeal to readers for its description of the country and life of Greenland.

Cruise to Adventure, by Annabel Lee. A light romance of Caroline Freeling, who relinquishes her position to accompany a flighty widow to the East. On the way out she goes ashore in the Duchy of Luana, steps into a tangle of politics, is captured by brigands in the company of an English journalist named Guy Farling. Farling is engaged to Bionda, an American millionairess, who ransomed them both, but becoming suspicious of Farling's attentions to Caroline, abandons her in a precarious position. Farling, hearing of this, breaks with Bionda and marries Caroline. The romance is woven with skill in a convincing manner.

of ships and nautical terms. Being unsuccessful in his literary attempts he had to sell up his house at Dartmouth and go to sea again, taking Ann at her earnest entreaty, with him as his steward. The reader will find pleasure in reading of their many and various adventures.

The Horned Crescent, by Douglas V. Duff. With a framework of reincarnation the story is

of an ancestor of Sir John Harding, told in the form of a dream, telling how one, John Harding of Dorset in 1181, became proscribed for killing a powerful Norman noble in defence of the Lady Elgiva, a daughter of Sir William of St. Thorold and Lord of Bridport. In thankfulness for his daughter's escape and in recognition of John's gallantry Sir William assists him to escape by finding him a passage in a Norse fleet bound for the Mediterranean. His adventures with these bold mariners—sea fights, pillaging and plundering—are skilfully and thrillingly told, until they arrive in Palestine. In Palestine he takes service with various nobles, becomes knighted and goes back to England to claim and marry the Lady Elgiva. Returning to Palestine he takes part in many adventures of those turbulent times, finally being killed in the battle of the "Horns of Hattin" in 1187, when the Emir Saladin utterly destroyed the Latin forces under King Guy, and broke up the feudal kingdom of Palestine. The Times Literary Supplement in summing up this book says "The author evidently knows Palestine and can describe any number of fights without making two alike." "The politics of the unique feudal kingdom are well brought to life, the austere life of the Hospitallers and the reasons why most of the Frank ladies had three or four successive husbands."

Not Wisely, by "Sinbad." This author is in his element when telling stories of the sea and the men who make a living on it, and those who have enjoyed his earlier books will welcome this present volume. Ned Drayton, the master and owner of the windjammer "Sheila," finding his eyesight failing and profitable cargoes hard to obtain, decided to lay his ship up and settle down trying to make a living by his pen. Ann Lerwick, a London typiste and artist's model, answering his advertisement for a typist, was engaged on the strength of her looks and her knowledge of ships and nautical terms. Being unsuccessful in his literary attempts he had to sell up his house at Dartmouth and go to sea again taking Ann at her earnest entreaty, with him as his steward. The reader will find pleasure in reading of their many and various adventures.

I love the tumult of the trees,
The silvern slant of willow leaves,
The song that falling water sings,
These, and a thousand thousand things
I love.
The shadowy tideways of the moon,
The drowsy gold of afternoon,
Blue uplands where cloud shadows flee
Pines calling, sea like, to the sea.

The clear pale evening star alight
Far down the windy gulf of night,
Cloud-purpled seas of changing hue,
And bright web-threaded drops of dew,
The twilight song, a late thrush sings,
Sun on a soaring sea-gull's wing,
These and a thousand thousand things
I love.

—By Doreen Price, from "Kowhai Gold," an anthology of contemporary New Zealand verse.

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Linwood Library Gazette

The Official Organ of the
Linwood Public Library

Vol. 2. November, 1936. No. 2

EDITORIAL.

The Christmas season is almost here again, with its recurring problem of finding suitable gifts. We would again suggest to our members that a year's subscription to "Our Library" is an excellent way of expressing one's goodwill message.

We want more members, particularly during the summer months, when the usual seasonal decline in our membership is in evidence. Our subscribers may help the Library, show their appreciation of the Committee's work and earn the gratitude of their friends by giving effect to our suggestion.

A book is a popular gift at Christmas time, but a whole year's reading will surely be a more welcome present.

We have, on several occasions, asked our readers to express their views upon any matters connected with the library. The response to this request, during the past year, has been very slight. While this probably reflects a satisfied spirit, we would appreciate any suggestions that make for the better management of the

Our readers' opinions upon any matter relative to Library matters are welcomed.

Address all correspondence to "The Editor,"
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Mountain Mystery J. J. Farjeon
A Mystery at the Rectory A. Fielding
Nine Waxed Faces Francis Beeding
No Hero This Warwick Deeping
Not Too Narrow, Not Too Deep .. Richard Sale
Not Wisely "Sinbad"
A Pageant of Victory Jeffery Farnol
A Pall of the Painter E. C. R. Lovac
The Prisoner's Mistake Belton Condon
A Prayer For My Son Hugh Walpole
Recoil T. L. Hardy
Red Husky Chas. H. Snow
The Riddle of the Hill E. W. Savi
Secret Dancer Norman Berrow
Shadows On the Grass Valentine
She Married Raffles Barry Perowne
Sinister River Andrew Soutar
Sir Percy Leads the Band Baroness Orczy
Snowstone J. M. Scott
Someone New To Love Jan Tempest
Sooner Or Later Elinor Glyn
Sorreltop W. McLeod Raine
There Goes the Queen G. U. Ellis
They Walk In the City J. B. Priestley
Touch Me Not Ann Hepple
Vagabond Minstrel Thomas Burke
Were I Thy Bride Denise Robins
The Wilful Jade Jean Barre
Yellow Jacket Edmund Snell

JUVENILE SECTION.

Books for the Girls.

Millicent Gwent, Schoolgirl Bessie Marchant
A Countess from Canada Bessie Marchant
Hopefuls Adrift F. O. H. Nash
A Mysterious Inheritance Bessie Marchant
The School On the Moor .. Dorita Fairlie Bruce
The Secret of Primrose Cove Mary Gervaise

Books for the Boys.

Scouts of the Sky E. K. Chatterton
The Secret of the Lab. Capt. J. E. Gurdon, D.F.C.
Great Exploits in the Air
F. V. Monk and H. T. Winter
The Channel Pirate Laurence R. Bourne
Wolfskin. A Tale of the French Revolution.
Major Charles Gilson
Eastward Bound Laurence R. Bourne
Saracen Junior Capt. J. E. Gurdon, D.F.C.
Jim Mourse South Sea Trader J. Allan Dunn
Glory of the Seas, by Danforth Hewes. This is a swift moving story of the days when Donald McKay of Boston launched one beautiful clipper ship after another, the forerunners of our Cutty Sark and sent them on record breaking voyages through the seven seas. In such exciting times young John Seagrave worked as a shipping clerk and dreamed of California gold, drama crowded into his life. Danforth Hewes has written a gripping story chock full of action.

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Two Young Adventurers, by E. Marc. The author is a well known magazine story writer, who lives up country in Australia, in recounting the bush adventures of James and Valerie Hope, tells a story that will thrill boy and girl readers.

NON-FICTION BOOKS RECENTLY PURCHASED.

Five Sous a Day, by Francis Waterhouse. A Foreign Legion book, but mostly void of romance, for it tells the unvarnished truth about the Legion, at least, so the author says.

Brutality, starvation, unmitigated hell, are here pictured and the author devoutly hopes that his revelations will have the desired effect of destroying for good and all, some of the glamour that has become attached to the Foreign Legion. The fighting in Syria is well described in his recent book "Twixt Hell and Allah," but this book gives some light on the misgovernment of Syria by France under the mandate.

Altogether, a strong indictment against France.

Some Milestones of Aviation, by W. E. Johns. This is a very fine book by a well known writer. It is not a list of famous fast flights—these can be enjoyed in some of his other books—"Thrilling Flights," etc. It is a record of all the epoch making events from the earliest balloon experiments in 1784 right up to the Australian Air Race.

The swift advance in design, and notable flights made during the war are naturally passed by, as they have been written about so often. The record of the first aeroplane cross Channel flight by Bleriot in 1909 brings back to some of us, the thrills and wonders of that event. Since then it has had to be some outstanding flight by one of our own countrymen to raise much admiration. A book well worth reading by all air-minded people.

J.H.

True Thomas, by Thomas Wood. Those of our readers who have read "Cobbers" need no telling that the author is a writer that appeals. In his book we find the same fine atmosphere, different in expression, but with the charm and breadth of vision that holds one from the first page to the last.

A fine book and one that will give pure enjoyment.

News From Tartary, by Peter Fleming. Following "One's Company" we have now the latest book by this author. It is the record of a journey of 3500 miles through Central Asia which took seven months. The "Manchester Guardian" says, "The whole journey is wonderful and wonderfully described and wonderfully illustrated." We have enjoyed every page and can warmly recommend it to our readers.

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FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR.

While the number of subscribers still stands at a substantial figure, the usual seasonal decrease has been in evidence the last month or two.

The lure of summer games and sports is taking effect, and the thoughts of cricket, tennis, boating, hiking or the breaking surf on the beach overcomes the appetite for reading. And who dare say this should not be? For, as man is said to be God's greatest work, man is honouring his Maker by maintaining physical health at the highest mark.

But as an incentive to retain membership during the summer months, the committee have substantially increased the book buyer's allocation, so that there is, and will be, a much larger number of new books placed on the shelves. Is it too much to ask subscribers to pause ere resigning and, rather, to encourage the committee in their efforts to gratify the demands that are so often made vocal, by renewing the subscription that is about to lapse. The committee would gladly welcome such a gesture of co-operation.

During October forty-one new subscribers joined the Library and seventy-two resigned, the total number of members on October 31st being 1743. The number of books issued during the month was 9,569; 372 more than the previous October. New Books placed on the shelves were:—Fiction 128, non-fiction 22, and juvenile 62, a total of 212.

"Tomorrow—The Independent Fortnightly," a literary journal for thinking folk and published in New Zealand will be placed on the table in the Non-Fiction Room. It has been decided to subscribe to the journal for a period of six months with a view to ascertaining if it becomes popular with subscribers. "Tomorrow" is the only paper in New Zealand in which vital issues may be freely discussed. An imposing list of writers the journal discloses the fact that the best brains of the country have been enlisted to provide readers with matter that will keep them abreast of the times.

The National Library for the Blind, London, has completed a Braille edition of "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom," by T. E. Lawrence. The work runs into thirteen volumes.

The Library on the promenade deck of the R.M.S. Queen Mary has accommodation for 1700 volumes.

Those who have access to good books sometimes fail to realize what a great influence such books may have in the proper development of our lives.

Those who are able to discern and assimilate that which is best in literature, find that really good books, like true friends, are most useful when the need is greatest.