

The Summary also shows that Christchurch's rate of .1285 in the dollar is well below those of the other main centres, and most secondary cities.

Apart from the physical limitations of the building, lack of finance is the major specific factor limiting further growth. The present budget is barely adequate to maintain existing services which in many respects are well below the standards of service other New Zealand cities enjoy. If Christchurch's library rate could be brought more into proportionate alignment on valuation with those of other cities it would still be a far lower rate per head of population than theirs but as an intermediary step would provide finance to allow for improvement of those services which are below standard.

THE CANTERBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

BUILDING :

The 1967 Report dealt at some length with the inadequacies of the Library building and how important these inadequacies were in retarding growth in services. Much worthwhile material which would be of interest to borrowers cannot be displayed on the open shelves and considerable staff time is taken up in locating prematurely stacked books which may be shelved in one of several different places. With adequate over-all floor space to provide attractive access to the stacked stock a great deal more of it would be out on loan and material which deserves a permanent place in the collection would not need to be withdrawn from stock.

The recently installed steel shelving in the New Zealand Room has provided additional shelving for 5,000 volumes and the use of part of the Library flat for storage will provide room for a further 15,000 volumes though many of these will be prematurely stacked and their use will thus be restricted. At an average growth rate of 7,000 volumes a year this gain in shelving is a very temporary solution and in no way solves the problem in the main lending area.

It would appear that the only relief to be found within the walls of the existing building for the Lending Room would be the addition of a mezzanine floor at the western end of the main Lending Room, calculated to provide approximately 1,000 feet of shelving to accommodate 10,000 volumes. It is estimated that the cost of this mezzanine would be approximately \$6,000 and it is considered that its construction should be proceeded with in the next financial year.

A NEW BUILDING :

The most optimistic estimate would indicate that the present building, even with the addition of the mezzanine, will be jammed to capacity within four years, so a firm decision relevant to a new library building should be made forthwith.

The expenditure of public money on a new library building is justified where good library services are operating in cramped quarters, where professional work is impeded through physical restrictions, or where, simply, the work being done has outgrown the building designed for it. On all three counts Christchurch needs a new library; without one, further growth of services is being stifled and in fact it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the standards of service already reached.