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Linwood Library Gazette

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

Vol. 2, No. 1.



OCTOBER, 1936.

OUR LIBRARIES.

By A. BRETTELL.

In the front page article on "Christchurch Libraries" by Mr E. J. Bell last month, we find much food for thought. Stressing the lack of co-operation between the Central Library and the suburban Libraries (which are controlled by voluntary workers, a system unusual, and unique in the Dominion, and probably the British Empire), he goes on to say that, in a city as large as Christchurch, at least £3000 should be expended on these libraries as they exist today. If this amount be divided and £1500 be allocated to the central and the other £1500 to the suburban libraries, it follows that not only do each of these at once receive the original subsidy, but it is doubled.

As for the central library, this amount would enable Mr E. J. Bell to bring his library nearer to the standard of the libraries in the other main centres, and not only relieve him of much anxious thought, but would soon prove to be a boon to the subscribers of the central library. The splendid results resulting from the gift of £250 made by the Christchurch City Council helps one to visualise the enormous difference £1500 would produce under the very capable management of Mr Bell. Instead of being harassed and worried (if ever Mr Bell does get worried) there would be little hindrance then to the introduction, in all departments, of the most modern methods, and also wider purchasing, resulting in the attainment of the highest efficiency. His wide knowledge of librarianship, gained through a

life-long acquaintance with libraries, and capped by the recent tour through U.S.A. and Canada, would then find opportunity to enrich the library of which he is in charge and those to benefit most would be the citizens of Christchurch.

Passing on to the matter of suburban libraries he suggests that all subscriptions be made uniform and that 6/- per annum be charged by all, both central and suburban. This has been a subject often keenly discussed by suburban library committees, but without tangible result. But is it not quite obvious that uniformity would in time prove beneficial, not only to the libraries themselves, but to an increasing number of subscribers.

If those of us most closely concerned would develop the "Rate Supported Library Spirit" and take a broad view of this matter, as it affects Christchurch and surrounding districts, we would then lose the local and parochial outlook. Further, the increased amount of subsidy under this tentative proposal would eliminate all financial anxieties, for instance, a library receiving £50 under the present subsidy, £700, would, under a subsidy of £1500 receive more than double, which would offset any loss by virtue of the decreased subscription, and in addition there is the almost inevitable increase of subscribers at the cheaper rate.

This would more readily give us a broad foundation on which to work, and the compromise necessary to accomplish the greater object, would seem almost puerile in their relation to the final objective. Mr Bell also stresses the development of a Non-Fiction Section. It is speci-

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ally pleasing to know that several of the suburban libraries already possess a Non-Fiction Section and this despite the fact that most—nearly all in fact—of our subscribers are purely fiction readers. The experience of all interested in the non-fiction portion of their respective libraries is, the more we cater for this section of readers the greater they grow, and it relieves a library from the stigma of just being a collection of novels.

Possessing a non-fiction section involves classification and cataloguing and here again uniformity is very desirable. Fortunately the best system of classification, that used by all standard libraries throughout the world, is, at the same time the simplest, and is capable of such modification that it easily becomes within reach of men who have comparatively but little time to spare for library work. This method (Dewey's) also brings us all into line with the central library and opens up the way for interchange of special non-fiction works, which is a desirable feature of library work, inasmuch as a member of a small suburban library has at his or her command any book in either the main or any other suburban library.

This scheme, or suggested scheme rather, is merely tentative, leading up to a Rate Supported Central Library and incorporating all the suburban libraries as branches under the charge of the Relief Librarian.

Is the idea worth working for? Surely there is only one answer to that. Unquestionably yes! Then in every legitimate way and all the time, advocate the "Rate Supported Library," until the library spirit permeates our citizens and the City Council, then being all of one accord, the way is clear and we move forward to gain the long sought for goal.

The Canterbury Public Library, the Canterbury University Library and the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, have each materially benefited by generous gifts of books from the library of the late Sir Joseph Kinsey. These were donated by Lady Kinsey, the bulk of the volumes being given to Wellington.

NEW NOVELS

By OUR REVIEWER.

Challenge to Happiness, by Maysie Greig, is a light love story in which Sara Alton, Michael, Ursula Manning and Grierson, a millionaire, are the predominant characters. Sara loves Michael but he loves Ursula, for whom he is writing a play. Grierson, who is backing the play desires Sara, and takes advantage of its failure to force Ursula to marry Michael. He sets Sara up in a gown shop and the story goes on to tell how he finally won her. The figures are somewhat unsubstantial but the complications of which, of course, there are a few, are cleverly worked out and overcome, leading to the inevitable happy ending.

The Shadow in the House, by Maxwell March, is the story of an Australian heiress who goes to England to visit her Aunt Eva in Bedfordshire but on arrival in London preferred to try her luck on the stage. To this end she persuades Mary to impersonate her in Bedfordshire with very lively results. Aunt Eva, grey-haired and dainty, with no scruples, has a taste for risky finance, and one of her schemes was to get hold of the £300,000 her niece was heiress to. She endeavours to trick Mary into marrying her son Richard but is frustrated by rival financiers kidnapping Mary who they think is an accomplice. Mary suffers a very bad time when Aunt Eva gets her back, being tortured in various ways nearly to death. Well, the reader will find the book far from dull in tracing the course of events to the complete frustration of Aunt Eva's plans and the ultimate happiness of Richard and Mary.

With Intent to Kill, by E. C. Vivian. Followers of this author can always be sure of a good thriller and the present book is no exception and Inspector Head is again to the fore in unravelling the mysterious murder of a Mr Berrow, a Londoner with nothing to do but make love to other men's wives. Inspector Head's inference is that a husband of a blonde wife is the culprit, but as blondes are numerous the difficulty of sifting out the right one is the task he undertakes. How he does it is for the reader to find out.

Mother of the Bride, by Alice Grant Rosman, is a pleasantly told story in which the Lister family figure and opens with the marriage of the daughter Noel, the usual attendant excitement in preparation and the after effects in the household. Margaret, Noel's mother, is the heroine, and she and Charles, her husband, are estranged, but on the evening of the wedding day become reconciled. The Literary Times commenting on the book, says, "At first glance this novel appears to be a facile product of the Denis Mackail school; it is written in the upper class colloquial style, it concerns people of large and steady income and its pivot is a social function. A closer reading however discloses a pretty wit, and a quick deep sensitiveness not only to individual characters, but also, which is much rarer, to their continual delicate interplay."

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Linwood Library Gazette

The Official Organ of the
Linwood Public Library

Vol. 2. October, 1936. No. 1

In commencing this, our second year of publication, we desire to thank our advertisers for giving their support to the journal. Without it, the "Gazette" would be an impossibility, and so we have no hesitation in again asking our subscribers to patronise those who are paying for space in our pages. It is an easy matter to purchase our wants from those retailers who conduct their businesses in our own district and it shows, in a practical manner, that we appreciate the part they have played in the foundation of our own journal. Now that we have passed the first milestone, it is more than ever necessary that we should encourage these advertisers, for without their very valuable help we cannot continue publication of a medium that is undoubtedly a useful and desirable link between subscriber and committee.

Once again we invite our subscribers to utilise more fully these pages for their own needs. There must be queries that occur to readers, perhaps relative to the management of the library or maybe suggestions for the betterment of conditions. The committee will welcome any such enquiries or hints on library matters, and bearing in mind that our subscribers own

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

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the library, will endeavour to respect their wishes in this direction.

With the advent of warmer weather, our register of subscribers shows the usual seasonal decline. There is no real reason why this should be, for summer reading is in no measure less enjoyable than that indulged in by the fireside. With the increased leisure that seems to be predestined for most folk in the Dominion, a good book will be found a fitting companion with which to share some of those extra hours. The summer reader in New Zealand is assured of a supply of the best books of the year, for the English publishers have a habit of placing on the market about Christmas time large numbers of novels by the most popular authors.

FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR

"Our" magazine this month enters upon the second year of its life and "the chair" thought it fitting that the first anniversary of its birth should be briefly noted.

A year ago we were hoping that the conference between the Christchurch City Council and the Canterbury University College Library Board would produce some tangible result. It is not too much to say, that today we are in a chastened mood and more or less resigned to the "wait and see" policy of the Christchurch City Council. Is the belated gift of £250 an implication of recognition of their responsibility to the citizens to provide a city-controlled library with branch libraries? We fervently hope that "library spirit" will grow, and during this second year of "our" magazine's life, something really worth while will be done.

During the past year we have had some excellent articles on our front page, by prominent people: The Rt. Hon. M. J. Savage, Prime Minister, the Hon. D. G. Sullivan, M.P., Minister for Industries, Mrs Mona Tracy, a gifted authoress; Dr. Lester, well known in Christchurch; Mr E. J. Bell, Chief Librarian, Canterbury Public Library; Mr J. Norrie, Chief Librarian, Wellington Public Library; Mr J. Barr, Chief Librarian, Auckland

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Public Library; Mr C. W. Collins, Chief Librarian, Canterbury College Library; also a Library Policy statement from Rt. Hon. G. Forbes, M.P. Whether our Editor can achieve the maintenance of such a fine list of public writers, to grace our pages this coming year, may seem to some a bit doubtful, but knowing Mr E. E. Wiltshire as we do and his delight in hard problems, away with that "wee sma doot." We look forward in full confidence that the front page will be as interesting as hitherto and the high standard set will be fully maintained.

It is pleasing to know that our subscribers enjoy "our" magazine. "Very good," "Really fine," "Very helpful," and similar expressions have been offered to the writer on many occasions during the past year.

NON-FICTION BOOKS RECENTLY PURCHASED.

Harpoon, by Henry Fergusson. The story of a voyage from Dunedin to the Antarctic in a whaler, manned mostly by Norwegians, with a few Aussies, New Zealanders and Englishmen. The author is fully alive to the beauty and poetry of Antarctica, and his description of the voyage, daily routine, and the exacting nature of the actual work from the firing of the harpoon gun, to the full barrel stowed below is full of realism, often enlivened with a touch of grim humor. His pen pictures of sunsets, ice, blizzards are told in vivid graphic words that hold one's closest attention. A fine book, worthy of a wide circle of readers.

Living India, by Lady Hartog. Lady Hartog, for many years resided in India and through her husband's official position, had special opportunities of seeing the many different phases of Indian life. Her own work among the women enabled her to gain a deeper understanding of the Indian outlook. This is reflected in the book, written at the request of the Royal Empire Society. While the book is full of information, the presentation is so charming that one absorbs it as a delightful experience. For instance, there are over 338,000,000 inhabitants, of which 238,000,000 are Hindus, 97,000,000 are Mahomedans and 20,500,000 divided among Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists and Jains, leaving between 7 and 8 million classed as Tribal Religion. These are traced back to origins and defined. "Hinduism is not only a religion, it is also a social system permeating the whole life of the people and is without parallel."

India's chequered history is one ceaseless internal war between different kingdoms and of ceaseless invasion from the outside, from Alexander, Asaka, and right on to the day when under British suzerainty the country came under our rule. "Public Health" reads like fascinating stories, while the final chapters on "Native States" and "Administration" are deeply interesting. The whole book is a laying open of a country lovely and lovable and the gigantic re-

sponsibility of its welfare is better understood when one has read this really splendid book. We warmly recommend this book to readers.

World Politics 1918-1936, by R. Palme Dutt.

This book is wider in its scope than European Politics which we recently mentioned and in its handling of the subject is a fine critical and exhaustive analysis. Written from a purely labour viewpoint it is trenchant in its criticism and somewhat sinister in its conclusions. Summing up his argument dealing with the economic struggle between British and American capitalism for world trade, the author says:—

"This economic struggle is only one aspect of the wider developing struggle. The conflict between British and American Imperialism and in particular between the dynamic invading force penetrating the British Empire and the counter offensive of the weakening British Imperialism, goes forward ceaselessly in all fields with no solution within the conditions of Imperialism. There is only the certainty of increasing conflict as long as Imperialism remains."

While the argument is plausible the solution as stated by the writer does not correspond with the world situation as it is today.

The analysis of the German Policy is most interesting and to Britishers carries a word of warning. "We still have time, though not for long, to turn the course of history and to prevent the incalculable disaster to humanity which a new world war would represent."

The author, in finalising his argument, says:—"If there is delay in mobilising the mass peace front against the immediate menace of new world war and in going forward against Fascism and the Capitalist offensive . . . then world war is inevitable . . ."

The book is a closely reasoned exposition of the Socialist platform and whether we agree or not with the writer, one feels on laying it down that it is revealing, in the awful possibilities to mankind, in the grim struggle.

SOME RECENTLY PURCHASED FICTION.

Buccaneer Blood Kenneth Perkins
Challenge to Happiness Maysie Greig
The Doctor Mary R. Rinehart
Fair as the Morn Temple Bailey
Fish in the Sea Eliz. Carfrae
The Five Ferries B. M. Bower
Freedom Farewell Phyllis Bentley
Gay Roads Marjorie M. Price
Green Gates R. C. Sheriff
Happy Jack Max Brand
The Innocent Imposter Dorothy B. Upson
The Island of Sheep John Buchan
Last Will and Testament G. D. H. & M. Cole
Love Never Comes Singly Annabel Lee
The Merry Mug H. M. Raleigh
Mistress Pat L. M. Montgomery
Moccasin Men John Ross
Mother of the Bride Alice G. Rosman
The Mystery of Pine Point Kathleen Norris
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Snake Face Roland Daniel
Spies' Vendetta J. M. Walsh
Tarzan and the Leopard Men .. E. R. Burroughs
Thorston Hall O. S. Macdonald
Tomorrow Will Be Lovely May Christie
The White Hare Francis Stuart
Wyoming Tragedy W. B. M. Ferguson

NEW BOOKS FOR THE JUVENILE SECTION.

GIRLS.

An Exciting Term Angela Brazil
The Fourth Form Crusaders .. Amy E. Seymour
Paula of Durrapore Mary Hill
Circus Ring Mary Grant Bruce
Peg. Lieutenant Mrs A. C. O. Hann

BOYS.

Steeley Flies Again Captain W. E. Johns
Six Tough Fellows Anton Lind
Dingy and Pip's Ltd., Detectives ... Anton Lind
Wreckers' Bay Percy Woodcock
Ringed By Fire Percy F. Westerman
Midshipman Raxworthy ... Percy F. Westerman
To the South Pole B. Webster Smith
The City of Death Oliver Barton
Captain McBlaid of the Air Police, Roland Walker is an excellent story of the International Air Police and their efforts in breaking up a world wide organisation of crooks. Well written and full of excitement.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

Mr A. Brettell, president, occupied the chair at the monthly committee meeting on Tuesday, September 15th. There was a good attendance of committeemen.

A letter was received from the Town Clerk, Wanganui, enclosing a copy of Miss Blackett's report on the Library Association Conference held at Margate, England.

The treasurer's statement was received and accounts for £76/12/11 were passed for payment. New subscribers for August were—Adults 44, Old-age Pensioner 1, Juveniles 10. Resignations were: Adults 38, Juvenile 21, leaving the total number of subscribers on August 31st at 1816. Books issued during the month totalled 9788, those placed on the shelves being 130 fiction, 19 non-fiction and 44 juvenile.

At the recent Library Conference held at Margate, England, Mr McColvin, Librarian, Hampstead, during an address, stated that Public Libraries had a moral responsibility in providing material to help in the better employment of leisure and urged that the best approach to non-users of libraries was not that of offering them popular fiction, but of giving them suitable practical books on things in which they were already interested. He stressed the point that people must be given pleasure by reading and this was done not always by novel reading, but by keeping in touch with all the ways in which folk spend their leisure.