

room; that its duties do not cease with the issue of books but extend to advice and help; and that it is unable to forget for one moment, even if it so wished, that there is more in print than light fiction.

In general, few difficulties have been encountered with regard to sources as the files of the local newspapers and the minutes of interested organisations have usually sufficed. However, the chapter concerning suburban libraries offered no such readily available information. In some cases, meagre scraps of information have been gleaned from old minute books but in the majority of cases this source proved either entirely inadequate or else non-existent. All except one of the suburban libraries are completely controlled by volunteer workers who are only interested in supplying themselves and their friends with good(and more often indifferent) reading matter. Naturally they are not interested in maintaining the type of records in which a historian is interested and, because of this woeful lack of material, it has been necessary in many instances to resort to personal recollections to furnish a brief outline of the growth of a library system in the suburbs of Christchurch. Fortunately these accounts have shown remarkably small divergence from the primary sources available.

Bare facts are, in themselves, of little value and of less interest and, moreover, they can even be misleading. Because of the obvious impossibility of incorporating every item of evidence, it is understandable that one is forced to select and discard. In so doing, one naturally forms appraisals and criticisms which, while making complete impartiality impossible, should not detract from the writer's disinterested standpoint and honesty of purpose. Failure to include these opinions reduces the value of a historical work to an almost