

fulfil its other functions as evidenced by advertisements in the following November calling for enrolments in elementary classes in writing and arithmetic and announcing the first of a series of lectures on constitutional history. (13)

It is the rule rather than the exception with such public bodies as libraries and other similar institutions that the meagre finances which they can accumulate by means of subscriptions and donations are far from sufficient to enable them to fulfil, with any reasonable degree of success, their obligations to the public that supports them and should benefit from them. This was certainly the case with the Mechanics' Institute and on November 3, 1859 a Memorial from the members to the Superintendent of the province asking for a grant was laid on the table of the Provincial Council. (14) Later in the same session a motion was granted,

"That in the event of the funds of the province permitting it, his Honour the Superintendent be requested to authorise the expenditure of a sum not exceeding £200, to be divided equally between the Mechanics' Institute, Christchurch, and the Lyttelton Colonists' Society, for the purchase of books and periodicals for the use of the members thereof." (15)

The Provincial Council by granting this request established a precedent, whether intentionally or otherwise, and it is not surprising to find further requests made for increasing sums. Thus there was a grant of £150 in 1861 (16) while by 1863 the amount had risen to £250. (17)

The first year of life of any institution is a testing period

13. *ibid* November 19, 1859.

14. Journal of the Canterbury Provincial Council, Session XI, November 3, 1859.

15. *ibid* November 29, 1859.

16. *ibid* Session XVII, December 5, 1861.

17. *ibid* Session XX, September 24, 1863.