

the Literary Institute held its fourteenth and final annual meeting on July 3, 1873. In his annual report the chairman reviewed the struggle for existence over the last fourteen years and stated that at one period the situation had been so desperate that the committee had contemplated dispensing with the services of an attendant and opening the library only for an hour in the evenings, leaving the reading room entirely to the good offices of the subscribers throughout the day. At this stage Mr. Reader, the only paid officer of the Institute, had eased the situation by generously offering to forego twenty-five per cent. of his salary and to vacate his rooms in the building in order that they might be let. By the expenditure of much effort it had been possible to raise the number of subscriptions from 133 in 1869 to 270 in 1873 yet, in spite of this increase, the subscriptions were still barely sufficient to meet the expenses of the Institute if it was to be conducted on a scale commensurate with the requirements of Christchurch. Proceeding to the future of the Institute he said,

"It is therefore with great cordiality that your committee have welcomed an overture from the promoters of the public library for the absorption of the Institute in carrying out their free library scheme. Your committee had a meeting with two of the promoters of that scheme and the following resolution embodying their views on the matter was passed on that occasion. ...

'That the Committee of the Literary Institute learn with great satisfaction that it is likely that a public library will be established under the auspices of the Provincial Government, which will carry out the objects and intentions of the Literary Institute with more efficiency and to a greater extent than has been attained by the Literary Institute itself, and resolve to recommend the transfer of the property of the Institute to the proposed public library trustees, on condition that all the claims on, and obligations of, the Institute be satisfied; the committee of the Institute would earnestly recommend to the trustees that a portion of the library should be open for