

that the Library could not receive its just due, because of the financial position. From the facts set out so far, it appears as if the latter alternative is more probable, and, as the twentieth century advanced, there can be no doubt that the financial position was becoming really desperate. Thus the matter was not allowed to lapse for long before the Board once more called attention to the position, when a deputation from it waited on the Finance Committee of the City Council in June 1940. (36) The deputation pointed out that the loss, for the preceding year, had been £412/10/4 and that there did not appear to be any hope of improving those figures, nor was it possible to carry on under such conditions. In stating its case, the deputation produced some interesting figures which showed that upwards of a thousand persons visited the Reading Room every day, while a daily average of four hundred made use of the Reference Library, and about one hundred children used the Juvenile Library. These figures showed that about 1500 people used the free sections of the library each day - and, it was pointed out, that three quarters of the floor space of the building was devoted to the free service. In 1939, the City Council's donation to the Library had been £400 and, with their own funds falling and the Library understaffed, the deputation was sure that the Council would realise the impossibility of attempting to carry on. The Finance Committee decided to hold over the question of a grant for consideration with the Estimates, and, in the meantime, to recommend the Council to approach the Board with a view to the Library being transferred to the Council.