

very small attendance at a further public meeting, and it even seemed likely that it would be difficult to raise enough money to claim a portion of the government grant.⁽¹⁴⁾ However, by October 15, it was reported that £110 had been collected although it was remarked that an unpleasant feature was the apathy of those for whose immediate benefit the library was projected.⁽¹⁵⁾ When the Mutual Improvement Association held its annual meeting a few days later, Mr. Moor, a vice-president, remarking upon the high standard attained by the library, said that not only was it the pioneer of such institutions in country districts in the province, but it was also the best suburban library in Canterbury. He declared that an attempt to start a rival library in another part of St. Albans would only serve to excite members to renewed energy.⁽¹⁶⁾ But the rival society continued in pursuit of its goal and, in mid-December, it was announced that a site had been acquired, plans were to be drawn, and the building commenced in the near future.⁽¹⁷⁾

Here we leave the St. Albans district for the present and turn to the other districts surrounding Christchurch. The month of July 1873 witnessed a tremendous quickening of interest in the library sphere, with public meetings at Papanui, Sydenham, Woolston, Addington, Waltham, and New Brighton. At Papanui the question was whether to erect a new library and reading room or whether to improve the existing one which had been established in the Church of England schoolroom about seven years earlier, but which, after a somewhat precarious existence, had been compelled to close, being revived during 1872.⁽¹⁸⁾

14. *ibid* September 18, 1873.

15. *ibid* October 4, 1873.

16. *ibid* October 7, 1873.

17. *ibid* December 20, 1873.

18. *ibid* July 16, 1873.