

for further financial assistance, but if they continued to make the provision of light fiction their only purpose, he expressed doubts as to whether the City Council would continue to be impressed with the nature of their work. (78)

When the conference resumed after the delegates had reported to their respective committees, the matter seemed no further advanced. Although many of those present showed an intelligent understanding of the nature of the problem, their very speeches showed also the hopeless inadequacy of the existing system. While looking to the setting up of a non-fiction department as an essential feature in the evolution of a suburban library, Mr E. Parlane of Addington said that the fact that all the work was purely voluntary and that the wants of the members had to be catered for impeded the development of such a section. This of course is one of the gravest defects of a subscription system. In order to maintain a high membership it is necessary to supply, not what the readers should read, but what they want to read. However, the Linwood delegate, after having admitted the difficulty of enticing readers into a non-fiction section, added that, when once established, its popularity increased by leaps and bounds. Nevertheless, a further difficulty was raised by Mr. F. Holland and Mr. J. Jones from St. Martins who, although realising that the evolution of any library was towards providing books of an educative nature, reiterated their woeful lack of finance. That all the delegates were not possessed of such sound commonsense was shown by one gentleman declaring that, although the majority of reading was of light fiction, he felt it must be of some educative value! (79)

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78. *ibid.* October 18, 1928.

79. *ibid.* November 29, 1928.