

book club. His ideas with regard to the users of a reference library would also have received a rude shock if he had spent a few hours in the one in the city, where the diversity of callers is amazing.

In his leading article of the following morning, the Editor overlooked this mistaken conviction in his eagerness to reiterate the advantages which would accrue from a centralised system.⁽⁸⁵⁾ The Councillor, in reply, said that, unfortunately, only his reference to the continuation of the suburban libraries was reported and that the rest of his speech dealt with the very subjects mentioned by the Editor. Evidently he also had stressed the advantages that would accrue from bulk buying and the interchange of books.⁽⁸⁶⁾ But this still does not excuse his apparent woeful ignorance of the functions of a public library.

Here the matter was allowed to rest pending the completion of negotiations for the transfer of the Canterbury Public Library to the city. But, just over twelve months later, Mr. E.J. Bell, speaking at a meeting of the Canterbury branch of the New Zealand Libraries Association, said that a library rate of a farthing in the pound would bring in about £12,000 per year, the cost to the average ratepayer being approximately four shillings and twopence. In support of this, Dr. J. Guthrie (a member of the City Council) declared that it was the duty of every local body to supply education and instruction wherever possible together with occupation for leisure time. He for one would not be happy until there was a free central library and a number of

85. *ibid* March 5, 1937.

86. *ibid* March 6, 1937.

