

end of 1925 a campaign for books and money was inaugurated resulting in the collection of £330 and the gratifying number of 1000 books suitable for boys and girls.⁽¹²⁾ Membership continued to flourish and the year 1931 saw the 2000 mark passed for the first time⁽¹³⁾ and, in succeeding years, it has only once fallen below that figure.

Another popular innovation, resultant on the increased area made available by the building additions, was the series of weekly story hours during the winter months. Although an established custom in other countries this was a novel introduction in New Zealand and, when inaugurated in 1925, the series was attended by approximately 900 children, the average attendance being eighty.⁽¹⁴⁾ However, in the following year, these Saturday morning sessions drew only an average attendance of thirty.⁽¹⁵⁾ and, although the 1927 story hours were slightly more popular, attendances fell off so drastically in the early winter that it was considered fruitless to attempt to keep the scheme functioning. In a further attempt to stimulate interest, a Children's Reading Club was formed in 1930 under the guidance of Miss E. Chaplin B.A., and, although the attendance was not particularly large, the members proved very keen and good progress was achieved during the winter months.⁽¹⁶⁾ But, like its predecessor, lack of sustained interest proved an immovable stumbling block and after the winter of 1933 nothing more is heard of it. Commendable as these introductions are, it would not appear that any stimulus was necessary for throughout the early thirties membership remained steady about the 2000 mark. What would appear to be of more permanent importance was

12. *ibid* 1926, p.37.

13. *ibid* 1932, p.37.

14. *ibid* 1926, p.37.

15. *ibid* 1927, p.36-37.

16. *ibid* 1931, p.38.