

to be an initial charge of two shillings per head on all children, exclusive of Standard 111, which was to be found by the School Committees. This was reducible to ninepence in succeeding years. (38) The scheme, which was introduced (for Standard 1V, Form I, and Form 11) on February 1, 1939, met with immediate success and the first annual report recorded that seventeen schools, representing 1730 pupils, were participating, while the librarian reported book issues of 15,220 (of which 5025 were non-fiction) from a stock of 2212 books for the first six months operation. (39) Small wonder that in his report for 1939 the Senior Inspector of Primary Schools said, when obviously referring to Christchurch, that

"At present the best scheme in operation is in one education district where a Schools' Library Service operated by a Municipal Library in collaboration with the Board provides a fine range of books not only to town schools but to most of the country schools as well." (40)

At the annual meeting in 1940, it was decided to reduce the levy to ninepence per head (although the initial entry fee of two shillings was maintained) and to extend the service to Standard 111, provided the financial position was not jeopardised by the change. (41) However, it was not lack of finance but lack of books that was destined to be the cause of greatest concern. Although indent orders were placed with London firms, shipments coming to the Dominion were often lost by enemy action but, in spite of all and thanks to the men of the Merchant Marine, 808 volumes of good fiction and 280 of non-fiction were secured, bringing the total book stock to 3084. An added strain was placed on the book stock by the extension of the service to

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38. Personal information from Mr. N.P. Lory.

39. Annual Report of Christchurch City and Suburban Public Schools' Library Association, July 10, 1939.

40. N.Z. A to J 1940, E 2, p.4. This refers also to the Travelling Library for Rural Schools. vide infra p.130.

41. A.R. of C.C. and S.P.S.L.A. June 11, 1940.