

Standard 111 children and, owing to the scarcity of books in that grade, many had to be hurriedly obtained from other New Zealand centres. (42)

Despite difficulties caused by war conditions, the service continued to grow, aided financially, no doubt, by a share of the Government grant for public school libraries which, in 1942, was increased from £5000 to £15,000. When announcing this increase, the Minister of Education said that, although one or two districts already conducted excellent school library schemes in co-operation with municipal libraries, there was, in general, no greater educational need in the schools than the provision of good, well illustrated books. (43) In spite of a further rise in the price of books (from an average of six shillings and threepence per volume to eight shillings and ninepence) and the delivery of only fifty to seventy-five per cent. of orders, the scheme was extended during 1942 to a further five schools, bringing the total to twenty-three, 3417 pupils being active members. (44) No praise can be too high for the resourcefulness and determination of the organisers who, throughout the difficult war years, not only managed to hold their own in the face of rising book prices and uncertain supply, but also managed to accept the even greater responsibilities involved in widening the scope of the service under such conditions. That there were adults in the city of Christchurch sufficiently concerned with the reading needs of their young charges to ensure that they would not be deprived of the chance of future cultural benefit was a good omen for the post-war period.

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42. *ibid* June 16, 1941.

43. N.Z. A to J, 1942 E 1, p.2.

44. A.R. of C.C. and S.P.S.L.A., May 31, 1943.