

By 1945 the number of children participating exceeded 5650 and twenty-five schools belonged to the scheme; but the librarian reported that the past year had been the most difficult period the English publishers had experienced during the war years. The publication of children's books had been considerably reduced and, although indent orders had been placed through the Education Board and the local booksellers, the results had been disappointing. To aggravate the position, the wear and tear on war time productions had been excessive and 266 well worn and dirty volumes had had to be withdrawn. Nevertheless, two more schools were admitted during that year but, when a third applied, it was advised that owing to shortage of book stocks it would have to be placed on the waiting list.<sup>(45)</sup> In six war years this was the first time that it had been necessary to refuse admission. Although the book stock continued to increase, many of the volumes could not be circulated because of the problem of binding. In 1946 only a hundred were bound while a further 350 were waiting to be done. "Book Week" held in November 1945 created added interest and another large city school clamoured to join the scheme. When the librarian resigned in that year, her place was filled by Miss Cowey whose work in the Children's Library has already been mentioned.<sup>(46)</sup>

With the successful conclusion of the war, it was possible to extend the service to five new schools, although the two Lyttelton schools withdrew to join the Country Library Service, leaving the number of participating schools at twenty-eight. Mr. Bell reported that, as a result of a talk with Mr. H. McCaskill of the National

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45. *ibid* June 23, 1945.

46. *ibid* July 15, 1946. Miss Cowey continued in both positions.