

To-day the incongruous position exists in which all the ratepayers of Christchurch contribute towards the upkeep of the Canterbury Public Library and of the suburban libraries yet only subscribers have the right to borrow books. However, the most important point that must be made is that there has been a change in outlook on the part of the citizens. Whereas there was once an appreciation of the purpose of a public library, this has been replaced by a frame of mind which regards "public library" and "book club" as synonymous terms. This has been emphasised even more markedly in the suburban library sphere.

What is necessary is a return to the former conception. The solution is in the hands of the people and of the Council. Proof is not lacking, both in New Zealand and overseas, that there should be a definite liaison between city and suburban libraries, if not complete centralisation. Although it is a comparatively easy task to point out the deficiencies in the present system and to deduce the requisite reforms, the great difficulty is to educate the people of Christchurch to a degree at which they will be prepared to act. In a city whose very future is jeopardised by parochialism (I refer, of course, to the question of the amalgamation of outlying areas with Greater Christchurch), a solution to this problem would appear even more remote. Nevertheless, the encouraging interest which has been taken in juvenile libraries throughout the country, and especially in Christchurch, during the last decade, gives reason for believing that the future of the Library is assured. The accompanying graph of the membership of the Library, with the membership of the Children's Library superimposed, strengthens this belief. The rapid increase in adult membership after 1937 should be compared with the