



New Zealand

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NEW ZEALAND IS A SMALL COUNTRY with a population of 2½ million people who enjoy a high standard of living. Its economy depends on the export of the produce from its efficient farms to countries not absolutely protected by import barriers. The New Zealand farming community, which is prosperous, well educated, and conscious of the importance of science and technology for its well being, is something of an elite. There is no very large city, the biggest being Auckland, with a population (urban area) of 466,000. There are four universities, with two more in the process of formation. The total student population of the universities is about 16,000, but this figure is expected to climb sharply over the next two decades and reach 45,000 by 1982.

It is against this background that the development of libraries in New Zealand and of education for librarianship must be seen. Over the last quarter-century a good public library system has been built up, although there are still some serious gaps in coverage. The standard of book stock is high, and registered membership is commonly between 30 and 50 per cent of the population.¹ There is a well organized rural library service which is able to draw freely on other collections for special requests. The public library system does not have the large reference collections that one finds in Sydney and Melbourne, to go no farther afield. Special libraries have grown up since the last war, and are virtually all in government departments such as the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. There are three state libraries which together could make a national library of 500,000 volumes, apart from collections such as that of the Country Library Service; their possible combination has been a thorny political problem for some time.² The university libraries have developed slowly since the early 1930's, but now seem likely to be given much greater support; the largest of them has about 235,000 volumes and is plan-

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ning to reach an annual accession rate of 25,000 within the next few years. There has been no comparable advance in school libraries.

The fundamental achievement in librarianship of the last quarter-century has been the establishment of the principle of graduate entry to the profession and the capture of key positions by graduates of the New Zealand Library School established in 1945. These graduates, together with the group of far-sighted librarians who made it possible for them to enter the profession, have now set the conditions in which great advances in library service could be made. The difficulties which face the Library School at present arise from the need to supply enough graduates, with a sufficient variety of interests and abilities, to meet the demand which has thus been created.

Developments to Date

In 1931 the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which had been examining university education in New Zealand, offered grants to the four university libraries, on condition that the university librarians would be given improved status and remuneration and that they would be sent overseas for study. The grants were accepted. Four librarians, two of whom had just been appointed, were sent to study in the United States or Great Britain.

The Carnegie Corporation was then persuaded to undertake a survey of New Zealand libraries generally, and this was carried out by Ralph Munn and John Barr in 1934. The report of this survey³ touched off a revolution in library services in New Zealand which in ten years led to the strengthening of the New Zealand Library Association, the organization of rural library service, interlibrary co-operation, and two indigenous courses of training.⁴ The Corporation supported this revolution by making substantial grants of money to the Association and by providing overseas study for further groups of librarians from public, state, and children's libraries. These librarians, together with one or two others who were drawn in from such fields as adult education, were the architects of the system of libraries which was established by 1945, including courses of training. They were given vital support by the Labour Government which took office in 1935 and remained until 1949. This Government included a remarkable Minister of Education, Peter Fraser, who later became an outstanding Prime Minister. It was his personal interest that made possible many of the advances of those years in librarianship.

At the time of the Munn-Barr report there was only a handful of

people in New Zealand with any sort of library training, and most of these had risen from the ranks under apprenticeship conditions in British libraries. Munn and Barr saw the extreme importance of devising means to raise the general and professional standards of librarians and assistant librarians, and they recommended that every encouragement should be given to young library assistants to acquire a university degree and obtain overseas library qualifications. They looked forward to the time when the level of salaries would be raised, so that only university graduates would be appointed to professional staffs. For staffs of country libraries they recommended two methods of training: (a) elementary training, possibly through classroom methods, in the public libraries of the four main centers, and (b) instructional visits by the chief librarians of the main centers to country libraries.

In the next few years, a number of assistants took the examinations of the Library Association (London), and local instructional courses were given, with varying effectiveness. More was needed, however, and in 1937 the New Zealand Library Association set up a committee on library training, which recommended that a course of training should be established as soon as possible by the Association. Syllabuses were drawn up and notes written, and two courses were started: one for children's librarians in 1941, and a general training course in 1942.

Both courses were designed as courses of training, rather than systems of examination. They were based on the regular submission of assignments by students, who were working as library assistants, to tutors who commented on them at length. Examinations were also set at various stages of each course. The courses represented a brave attempt by a small group of dedicated librarians, who were more than fully occupied by their normal duties, to get to the heart of the staffing problem in New Zealand libraries.

The course for children's librarians was a tough one—both for the students, only two of whom ever completed it, and for the tutor, Dorothy N. White. It was remarkable for the quality of the notes on children's books written by White which later formed the basis for her *About Books for Children*.⁵ The course was abandoned when the Library School was established in 1945.

The General Training Course was planned in two sections, leading to a certificate and a diploma. In all, five parts, each consisting of monthly assignments followed by an examination, had to be passed. Students were also required to keep a reading record and submit com-

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ments on their reading to a supervisor of reading records. The full plan of the course was this:

A. Certificate

Part 1 (12 months). Administration.

Part 2 (18 months). Elementary cataloging, elementary classification.

Reading record for 50 months.

B. Diploma

The Certificate course, and

Part 3 (12 months). Book stock.

Two of the following three parts:

Part 4 (12 months). Organization.

Part 5 (12 months). Advanced cataloging and classification.

Part 6 (12 months). The social background of library work in New Zealand.

Reading record for 50 weeks.⁶

The reading record was a deliberate departure from the practice of overseas library training schemes. It has been developed, with experience, into a successful way of ensuring that no student can complete the course without demonstrating an ability to appreciate and understand books.⁷

Forty-two students were admitted to the first annual General Training Course in August 1942. The course began with enthusiasm, but within a short time a number of difficulties became obvious. The main difficulties were the shortage of tutors and the lack of incentive for university graduates to enter the profession. The number of people able to act as tutors was small, and they had to make a very special effort to do the work that was required. As later courses began, it became increasingly difficult to find people to conduct them. Further, there was need for a sharp increase in the number of well qualified people in the profession, and this was not provided by the course which catered to library assistants already working in libraries.

The entry qualification for the course was the School Certificate, gained after three or four years at secondary school. A number of people in the first classes were university graduates, but they were people who happened to have taken library positions. The course was

not geared for them. As a senior qualification, the Diploma could not have been satisfactory without a raising of the entry qualification.

Before anyone started on the Diploma course, there came an opportunity to make a new start. The New Zealand Library Association had already set on record its desire to see the eventual establishment of a university library school. This was not possible at the time for a variety of reasons, including the backwardness of university libraries and the lack of any real appreciation by the universities of librarianship as a profession. In 1944, however, a happy combination of circumstances provided an opportunity to establish an advanced training course at graduate level. The United States Government opened an Information Library in Wellington early in that year under the directorship of Mary P. Parsons, who had been Resident Director of a Library School in Paris from 1924 to 1929 and had taught in library schools in Canada and the United States. The New Zealand Library Association persuaded the government to obtain the services of Parsons and to establish a library school attached to the Country Library Service.

The Country Library Service was at this time the main growing point of library service in New Zealand. Besides its service to rural areas, it had begun the development of a national bibliographical center, a central reference collection, and a school library service. In 1945, with the addition of the Library School, it was reorganized as the National Library Service, each of these functions being carried out by a separate division of the new Service.

The government agreed that students of the Library School should be paid a living allowance, and it was therefore possible to organize a concentrated course and to require the students to work a full week. The first course opened in February 1946 with twenty-nine students, a number of whom were ex-servicemen, and ended the following November.

Parsons organized the programs of the School in three main parts: books, cataloging and classification, and administration. Each student's work culminated in an administration report on a selected topic and an individual bibliographical project. Greatest emphasis was placed on the book course, in which considerable use was made of practicing librarians and university staff as visiting lecturers. Over the years there have been many changes in the content of the course, but the foundations laid by Parsons have not been basically altered. The course was planned from the beginning as one that would

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serve the needs of a graduate profession.⁸ This was done with the approval of the Association which has always participated in the selection of students and regarded the Library School with proprietary interest.

The Library School offered a Diploma to students who came to it with a university degree, but it also admitted some people with lower qualifications but valuable experience; such students were awarded a Certificate. The qualifications Dip.NZLS and Cert.NZLS therefore represent success in the same course, but the Diploma has been preserved as a postgraduate qualification.

The first effect of the establishment of the Library School was that many people who would not otherwise have entered library work were added to the profession in New Zealand. The second was that entry to the senior ranks of the profession inevitably came to depend on university qualifications followed by Library School training. This was a great break with tradition, and it took some time for the stresses that were set up to be absorbed. There were the usual arguments about the relative advantages of theoretical and practical training, and some librarians of long standing were heard to declare that they would never employ a graduate of the Library School. In many libraries, even quite large ones, the standard of service was such that there was no suitable work for graduates to do, and they were judged on their proficiency in stamping books.

Those who had started the Training Course of the New Zealand Library Association, thinking to proceed to the Association's Diploma, had a legitimate grievance when the Association abandoned its Diploma course as a consequence of the establishment of the Library School, and could not have been expected to see that this course could never have been carried out. All that the students could see was that the senior qualification which they had had within their reach had been taken away from them and given to others.

Gradually, the differences between the two courses were sorted out.⁹ For a few years, holders of the Certificate of the Association were admitted freely to the Library School as candidates for its Diploma or Certificate, according to whether or not they had university degrees; and the Association's course was later reorganized so that students attended a final course given by the Library School in its long vacation before being awarded the Association's Certificate. The courses settled down side by side as means of training for senior and intermediate levels of work. The Association's course benefited from the

fact that graduates of the Library School were very soon able to take over the work of tutoring. At present, of the 35 people on the current panel of tutors for the Training Course, 29 are graduates of the Library School.

More important than undignified squabbles between holders of different qualifications was the difficulty of placing the graduates of the Library School. Its planners, who included librarians from various types of libraries, knew that there was a desperate need for well qualified people and that only a Library School could provide them. However, when the graduates first started to come on to the market most libraries were not organized to take them. It is hard to imagine how the School could have survived if it had not been that the National Library Service was able for a few years to take on to its staff practically anyone who was not able to obtain a position elsewhere.¹⁰ D. M. Wylie pointed out in 1950 that few good public library positions had been advertised until the previous two years, ". . . since when many of them have been filled by Library School graduates; those which have not almost certainly had School graduates among the applicants."¹¹ At one stage, in the early fifties, the possibility of closing the Library School for a year, in order to let the accumulation of surplus graduates drain away, was considered. This, again, is a difficulty that has vanished, and there is now a serious shortage of graduates, but it illustrates the problems that arise when the standard of entry to a profession is raised and safeguards are not planned ahead.

Since the two courses were begun, the Certificate of the New Zealand Library Association has been awarded to 392 students, and the Diploma or Certificate of the New Zealand Library School to 292 students. In the 1962 issue of *Who's Who in New Zealand Libraries*,¹² 137 of the former group and 152 of the latter group were listed as still being in library work in New Zealand. The smaller proportion of holders of the Association's Certificate who remain in library work is a reflection of the tendency for this course to be taken nowadays by young women who have no idea of a career and hope, in the words of a member of the Association's Education Committee, to be married and childed at 25.

Of the 152 graduates of the Library School who were working in 1962, 39 were in the National Library Service (compared with 42 in 1952), 50 in public libraries (33 in 1952), 30 in university libraries (8 in 1952), and 33 in other libraries (19 in 1952). If figures for un-

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satisfied demand could also be shown, it would be even clearer that the way has opened for graduates of the Library School to be employed in every kind of library. The strength of the School's position is further demonstrated by the fact that the *Who's Who* lists only 28 people whose library qualifications are not New Zealand ones—23 English, 3 American, 1 Canadian, and 1 Australian.

In addition to its work of preparing graduates for library work, the Library School has also arranged short courses for special groups such as librarians of small public libraries and librarians of government departments. In 1961 it convened a study group on the subject of the free-and-rental system in public libraries,¹³ which was successful enough to lead to a desire for more subjects to be dealt with in the same way. The administration reports and bibliographies done by its students have been available for consultation through inter-library loan, and some of the best have in recent years been published. The School has also trained a number of students from Asian countries, including Indonesia, Singapore, Sarawak, Thailand, and Korea.

In 1955, after much discussion, the New Zealand Library Association established a Register of Qualified Librarians, by adopting rules for the granting of Associateships and Fellowships of the Association (ANZLA and FNZLA).¹⁴ The Associateship was designed as a vocational charter indicating that professional qualifications had been reinforced by satisfactory experience. The Fellowship is awarded as a high honor ("the highest title of merit in the gift of the Association"), and its importance for the registration scheme derives from the fact that a credentials committee, which must be composed of Fellows of the Association, advises the Council of the Association on the award of charters.

Since the establishment of the Register, 165 Associateships and 15 Fellowships have been awarded. About ten per cent of applications from people with satisfactory formal qualifications have been declined because their experience did not satisfy the credentials committee.

The standard prerequisite library qualification for the Associateship is the Diploma of the New Zealand Library School, but under the 1955 rules it was possible for people with lower qualifications to satisfy the credentials committee on other grounds, and 36 Associateships were awarded to holders of the Association's Certificate. This was a necessary transitional provision, but the Association has recently adopted amendments which follow the world-wide trend towards a purely graduate qualification. In re-examining the rules, the Associa-

tion was impressed by the statement of the ALA Board of Education for Librarianship on equating professional library qualifications¹⁵ and by a statement on graduate qualifications for librarianship issued by the Library Association of Australia.¹⁶ It also considered the system for the award of Associateships and Fellowships of the South African Library Association, but it rejected the automatic element contained in them. The convener of the committee which redrafted the rules summed up the committee's views in this way: "[There is] an increasing tendency, in librarianship as well as in other professions, to demand a university degree as a normal prerequisite of professional status. The Library School was established on this basis and has maintained its policy, sometimes in the face of criticism, of awarding its Diploma only to university graduates, and to the extent that the Diploma of the Library School has been taken to be the standard qualification for the Associateship this policy has carried over. But it is not in the rules, and it should be. The graduate standard is recognized in North America and South Africa. The Library Association of Australia is looking to the day, not too far off, when a university degree is necessary for professional status in Australia. Who knows, the United Kingdom might some day follow suit."¹⁷

In the amended rules, a "university degree which is not a degree in librarianship" is now required, in addition to a library qualification, of applicants for the Associateship. As long as other conditions are complied with, foreign (including English) library qualifications are accepted as prerequisites for the award of charters.

Current Problems

New Zealand now has a system of library training which has established quite firmly the principle of graduate entry to the profession, but which also provides for the training of the technician, a system of registration which is more than a mere rubber-stamping, and a strong and confident library profession which has been built up under these systems of training and registration. This is a considerable achievement, and Dr. Andrew Osborn was able in his recent report on New Zealand library resources to say, "The notable contribution [the graduates of the Library School] have made to library progress in New Zealand is a remarkably fine tribute to those who have planned and operated the school. The New Zealand Library Association owes much of its strength to the graduates."¹⁸

Dr. Osborn also found many weak spots in New Zealand librarian-

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ship, and all of them have implications for library training and especially for the Library School. The situation in which it was hard to find suitable positions for graduates of the Library School has now given way to one in which progress is held up because there are not enough qualified people to do everything that needs doing. At the same time, as libraries become better organized and more diversified, the problems of training become more complex, so that it is not sufficient simply to try to persuade more people to take the same old course of training.

The shortage of Library School graduates is probably the greatest problem facing New Zealand libraries at present. The Annual Report of the National Library Service for 1962 says that the inadequate supply of graduates who aim to become professional librarians “. . . has reached the point where it is possible to demonstrate a scarcity of suitable people for existing senior library positions, with a serious risk of decline in the quality of professional leadership.”¹⁹ The Annual Report of the New Zealand Library Association for 1961, discussing the same point, said, “The rate of recruitment of university graduates to the library profession through the Library School continues to give cause for great concern. The development of libraries in New Zealand in the last decade, stimulated by the work of the graduates of the School, has increased the demand for fully qualified librarians, but this development has occurred at a time when other opportunities available to university graduates have been made more attractive. In the 10 years 1951-60 the Library School, which could train 25 students a year, granted diplomas and certificates to only 143 people (apart from Colombo Plan and other overseas students), of whom only 32 were men. . . . The seriousness of this situation will be felt increasingly, as senior positions fall vacant and are filled by people without sufficient experience, and as the operations of libraries are hampered by the difficulty of filling professional positions at all levels.”²⁰

One recent incident has demonstrated the nature of the present problem. In 1961, salaries offered by university libraries were improved, and there was a noticeable movement of qualified librarians from other libraries to the universities. This was the kind of movement that could have been absorbed by a fully staffed profession, but because of the present thinness of the ranks it left very serious gaps, and the libraries which lost qualified people have found it hard to find replacements. Yet this is only a foretaste of what is to come: the universities have recently made plans which could require the

addition of seventy-five graduates of the Library School, or the entire output for three or four years, to their staffs by 1969. At the same time, the number of professional positions available in public, state, and special libraries is increasing steadily, and replacements must be provided for those who leave library work. No real attempt has yet been made to assess the number of people who will be required in school libraries when they begin to be staffed at a proper level.

It is only seventeen years since the Library School took in its first class of students, and only twelve since there was concern over the difficulty of placing its graduates. The accelerating demand for professionally qualified librarians began in the middle fifties, after the reorganization that followed the Munn-Barr report, and which included the establishment of the Library School, had begun to take effect. It is by now obvious that it is no flash in the pan, and that the state of education for librarianship should be considered again and new plans made for the future.

The need for the Library School to produce more graduates is clear, but it is also clear that to find the twenty-five students a year, which the School can handle at present will not be enough. A thorough program of planning is needed which will deal with at least the following four points: (1) The number of university graduates who are induced to proceed to the Library School must be increased beyond the present target of twenty-five a year. (2) The Library School must be strengthened so that it can handle greater numbers, and at the same time it must reorganize its courses so that they keep step with the developing needs of New Zealand libraries. (3) Further consideration must be given to the possibility of developing intermediate levels of training. (4) The importation of foreign librarians should be encouraged.

There has been a very serious shortage of university graduates in New Zealand for some time, and librarianship is only one of the professions which have been affected by it. At first, the living allowance which the Library School was able to offer to its students gave it a useful advantage, but so many inducements are now offered by other professions that the Library School no longer seems to offer an unusual opportunity. The reason is, of course, that the depression generation has been coming to maturity at a time when an expanding community has wanted more and more highly-trained workers. The Government decided to give the highest priority to recruiting for the post-primary teaching service, and the government instituted a system of bursaries

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which took students through their university course and then obliged them to enter the teaching profession. No parent could deny the real need for the number of post-primary teachers to be rapidly increased, although there are many who dislike the whole idea of bonded bursaries. Nevertheless, the effect of the teaching bursaries on recruitment for librarianship must have been devastating. The New Zealand Library Association tried to persuade the Government to offer similar bursaries to university students intending to take up library work, but without success, and the Library School has had to compete on a market in which its initial advantage has been steadily whittled away.

Propaganda, therefore, is the next best thing, and, after that, actual demonstration that libraries are good places in which to work. The New Zealand Library Association has issued a pamphlet entitled *A Career in Library Work*,²¹ which, together with the prospectus of the Library School, is widely distributed to vocational guidance officers and career advisers. Branches of the Association have arranged recruiting meetings, and some libraries have offered bursaries to university students, without much response. All of this work will probably have more effect as the generation which has known better libraries grows up, and as the post-war bulge of population begins to look for work.

The apparent attractiveness of library work will be enhanced, in the eyes of university students, as the university libraries themselves show the effects of improved financial support. They are now entering a period of expansion, and each of them will have a new building before the end of the present decade.

There seems, therefore, to be every possibility that the numbers of students wishing to enter the Library School will increase, but the conditions under which the School works will also have to be improved.

The teaching staff of the Library School consists at present of a Director and two senior lecturers. They are supplemented by a large number of visiting lecturers, but they are nevertheless too hard-pressed to teach as well as they should. Their salaries and other conditions of employment are fixed by Public Service standards, which set very little value on librarianship, and are quite inadequate to attract enough of the best people in the profession to the staff.

Since the Library School was established, the question of transferring it to a university has been discussed from time to time, but although the desirability of having a university school has been generally accepted, it has been hard to see where or how the change

could be effected. In particular, the fact that the Library School was established as a part of a dynamic library organization was valuable at the beginning; the relative backwardness of all the university libraries and the consequent ignorance, on the part of university staffs, of the significance of librarianship has made some caution necessary in the approach to this problem. Historically it is a fact that the Library School would not have come into being if the job had been left to the universities, and the National Library Service is naturally concerned that its creation should not be thrown to the wolves.

In the next few years, the situation in the university libraries will improve rapidly. There is also a growing interest in librarianship among academic staffs, and the important report of the Committee on New Zealand Universities urged that the University Grants Committee establish a standing committee on library resources keeping under review, among other things, "The need to train, recruit, and retain library staffs of the quality and in the quantity required."²²

The difficulties under which the Library School is now working and the likelihood that its transfer to a university would facilitate improvements, together with the certainty that the Library School must be able to operate even more effectively in the future than in the past, combine to make it imperative that the possibility of a transfer to university control should be very carefully examined. The Education Committee of the New Zealand Library Association has recently decided to draw up a statement of its interest in the matter.

If it is not possible to establish a university school, it will still be necessary for improvements to be made in the conditions under which the Library School works at present, both to enable it to take more students and to enable it to give more variety to its course. From the beginning, the Library School's course was very heavily oriented towards public library work. Too much can be made of this, and graduates of the early courses have in fact found themselves at home in other types of libraries. However, as the special and university libraries have developed they have begun to demand that the School should provide a more varied diet. This the School has tried to do, by reorganizing the general part of its course and by offering an increasing range of options on topics such as New Zealand reference material, children's library work, university libraries, and historical bibliography. This development is still in the experimental stage, however; one of the advantages of the establishment of a university school would be that the change would provide an opportunity for a com-

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plete overhaul of the program and the development of a more complete range of alternative courses. Another, of course, is that the superficial prestige of a university school would be a stimulus to recruiting.

The Training Course of the New Zealand Library Association, in contrast to the Library School, has had no difficulty in attracting students, and the problem that is currently concerning the Association is how to cope with the increased numbers. In 1962, 118 people sat for the Preliminary Examination, a pass in which is now required before a student embarks on the correspondence course. The number qualifying for the Certificate has been about forty a year for some years, and is likely to rise to sixty in 1965. The Association has recently raised the entry qualifications to demand at least one year's sixth-form schooling, and it is considering whether it is still possible to continue the kind of tutoring which was possible when there were fewer students. The value of having some kind of course at this level is not in question, however.

Between the two courses there is an area in which a new kind of training, for semi-professional work in limited fields, might emerge. As a result of many years of agitation by the New Zealand Library Association, it seems likely that the staffing of school libraries, which has been very badly neglected, might be improved in the future. The Association has stated its view that ". . . a school librarian should be a university graduate with professional training in teaching and librarianship, . . ." ²³ but it would certainly be impossible, if the Department of Education suddenly announced a policy of professional staffing of school libraries, to find enough qualified people for even the biggest secondary schools without denuding other libraries of their professional staff. In such circumstances, it would seem sensible to organize a limited-objective course which would cater to people who take positions in school libraries. Possible ways of doing this were discussed by Milne in 1957 ²⁴ and have been considered more recently since the Commission on New Zealand Education reported. There has also been some discussion of ways of arranging a similar course for people working in special libraries. Even if such courses became redundant after ten years or so, they would help to ease the problems caused by the present shortage of fully qualified professional librarians.

The possibility of inducing foreign librarians to emigrate to New Zealand will also have to be considered. There has never been a great influx of librarians into New Zealand, and indeed until recently there

were very few suitable positions. Most immigrants would have to come from the United Kingdom, and some difficulties can be foreseen, arising from the different ways in which the two countries have approached the question of professional qualifications. Nevertheless, there will be opportunities for English librarians who have university degrees to make their way in New Zealand libraries on their own merits. At the present stage of library development in this country, a fairly heavy addition of suitable people would have a stimulating effect on the profession in New Zealand. It is less likely that immigrants could be attracted from the United States, where salaries are much higher, or from Australia, where salaries are higher and there is also the same kind of shortage of librarians as exists in New Zealand.

Those who are responsible for education for librarianship in New Zealand undoubtedly face a challenge at present. Because of their past activities, the profession is now well organized, but the opportunities which have been opened up are more than its numbers can cope with. It will be interesting to look back in another ten years' time to see what solutions have been found to the array of rather interesting problems that face New Zealand librarians at present.

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