



## THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# THE LIBRARY SERVICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

1959-60

8th Annual Report of the Board

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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#### THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Members as at 30th June, 1960:

Professor F. Alexander, M.A., Chairman

Mr. L. W. Nenke, J.P., Vice Chairman

Cr. C. N. Harris, J.P., A.A.S.A.

Cr. C. L. Harvey, J.P.

Mrs. L. S. Higgins

Cr. B. W. F. Lee

Mr. R. W. Manning, W.A.O.A. (Dip.)

Mr. G. Richards

Mr. T. H. Roberts, M.A.

Dr. T. L. Robertson, M.A., Ph.D., Dip.Ed.

Mr. A. H. Rushton, J.P.

Mr. J. E. Try

Professor K. F. Walker, M.A., Ph.D., Dip.Anthropology, F.B.Ps.S.

State Librarian :

F. A. Sharr, B.A., F.L.A.

Communications should be addressed to:

The State Librarian, 3 Francis Street, Perth.

Telephone 28 2461

#### GENERAL SURVEY

If I have seen further than most men it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.

Sir Isaac Newton.

THE contribution of the Board to the Western Australian community is just that it provides such shoulders for those who wish to see further and make progress. It offers to the business man, for example, the latest techniques from Europe and America, to the student, the masters he must study, to children windows on a wider world, and to the general citizen help with practical problems, background reading for his interests or simply recreation.

The Board offers: the public of Western Australia increasingly takes up the offer and makes more and more demands on the libraries.

During this year six new public libraries have been established serving some thirty thousand further citizens. The use of the State Library has continued to grow, and is now more than three times what it was in 1955, before it was reorganised. The list of local authorities awaiting service remains as long as it was. The number of books specially asked for by readers through the Request and Information Service has increased from 8,205 last year to 9,868 this year.

Apart from the personal happiness and satisfaction to the people concerned, this increased activity results in the steady injection of a stream of new ideas into the community; ideas which serve to render it not only culturally richer, but economically more viable and edu-

cationally more advantageous to our young people.

In the year 1958–59 the Board was not given the additional funds with which to meet its increasing costs and obligations to local authorities. As a result the beginning of this year found its developmental work almost at a standstill; the shelves for new books in Accessions Section empty, the State Library staff under strength, and no planned

programme of new libraries for the year.

Fortunately during the year under review the Government was able to allocate a substantial increase of funds to the Board, with which it has been possible to get under weigh again. The Board is grateful to the Government for the increase, and for the appreciation of the library service which it betokens. It is, however, seriously concerned at its financial inability to plan ahead, particularly as the time is now coming when some of the larger local authorities will have to be served. The Board cannot plan its purchase of books economically, if it does not know what places it will have to serve; nor can local authorities, however interested they may be, suddenly embark upon major projects in the middle of a financial year.

Adequate accommodation for Headquarters and State Library is also becoming a matter of increasing moment. The Board was very pleased to learn recently that the Town Planning Board would shortly be in a position to submit proposals to the Government for the "Civic and Cultural Area," which include a new site for a combined Headquarters and State Library building. It earnestly hopes that this site will be approved and that building may commence in the not distant

future.

Meanwhile, the allocation to the Board of a part of the former Government Printing Office as temporary accommodation offers a short term solution to the acute need to rehouse Circulation Section and to relieve the pressure on the State Library book stack, which is almost completely full.

This year saw substantial changes in the membership of the Board. The Governor was pleased to appoint Mrs. L. S. Higgins, Mr. Russell Manning, Professor K. F. Walker and Mr. G. Richards in place of Messrs, W. H. Anderson, J. W. Bridge, C. Lemon and Miss M. E.

Wood.

Miss Wood and Messrs, Anderson and Bridge were foundation members of the Board, to whose enthusiasm and wise counsel it has been deeply indebted. Mr. Lemon, a member of the former Trustees of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery, was appointed in 1955 when the Board took over the State Library, and his knowledge of the former Public Library administration was of considerable

assistance to the Board.

Apart from her service as one of its members, the Board was indebted to Miss Wood, in her capacity of University Librarian, for the ready and genuine spirit of co-operation which she at all times displayed towards the Board's service. Not only does co-operation between two libraries enable both to give better immediate service to their readers, but it also permits useful economies to be made, and better development of the total library service for any given level of expenditure.

Mr. L. W. Nenke was elected Vice Chairman in February, the customary period of office of Mr. C. N. Harris having expired.

At the end of May the State Librarian proceeded on long service leave and Mr. James Hammond, Chief Assistant Librarian, was appointed Acting State Librarian for the period of his absence.

#### PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Books totalling 31,480 volumes (as against 37,252 last year) have been supplied for:—

six new libraries at:

Kelmscott Beverley Boyup Brook Norseman

Dowerin Osborne Central, Tuart Hill

additional services at:

Margaret River where a children's library was established; Scarborough, to provide for an enlargement of the service area;

supplementation of existing stocks in the Fremantle library to meet the unexpectedly large demand from children, and to establish the service to the State Shipping Service, and at a number of other libraries to compensate for population increases. The Board had insufficient books available in the year to provide the whole of the stock needed for Osborne Central and it was arranged that the balance should be supplied early next year.

The total number of public libraries in the service is now 41,

serving 47 local authorities, which are listed in the Appendix.

Kelmscott, Boyup Brook and Osborne Central are all housed in new buildings erected for the purpose. The Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board earned the distinction of being the first local authority in the State to build two libraries in its area. Later in the year Perth Road Board followed suit at Tuart Hill, and concurrently increased the floor area of the Scarborough Library by about fifty per cent. to enable a somewhat larger population to be served and to provide a large study room for the many students resident in the district.

Experience at both Fremantle and Scarborough strongly suggests that a study room for school children and students should be provided in every metropolitan library and the same would probably be true in country towns where Senior High Schools exist. In the average modern home, especially now that T.V. has arrived, it is not easy for one member of the family to have quiet and good light to study without

curtailing the normal activities of the rest of the family.

The Upper Blackwood Road Board was the first country local authority to begin its library service in a new building. The library forms a separate wing of the new Road Board office building, with entry from the main entrance to the building. This plan, which is becoming accepted Western Australian practice, is very efficient in smaller country centres. It enables the library to be staffed at particular times for townspeople and nearby residents, and to give in addition, service throughout office hours to those who live a long way from town.

The new library at Margaret River was built to replace the earlier small and inconveniently sited library in which the service was established in 1955. This library was always well used by adults; in its new premises, very well sited in the centre of the town, it is able to afford the adults ample space and convenience and also to meet the

needs of the children of the district.

While the Board is usually asked to assist local authorities in the siting, planning and equipment of their libraries, it takes to itself no credit for the growing number of really attractive buildings which they are erecting. The cost is borne by the local authorities and the credit must go to them; the Board is, however, glad to record their achievements because well planned buildings of adequate size give tangible evidence of local appreciation of the value of the public library service.

In an overseas journal recently, Mr. J. E. V. Birch, City Librarian of Fremantle, wrote "An organisational framework has been devised in Western Australia which enables the State to provide a reference and information service and an inter-library lending service of con-

spicuous efficiency and economy."

This service is, in fact, one in which the Board takes a modest but real pride. Following the practice of previous reports the first fifteen requests received on the last Monday of the financial year are listed below as a random selection giving an indication of the type of books for which readers ask. When it is realised that these represent not books which librarians think the public ought to read, but those which individual readers take the trouble to request, they give the clearest indication of the quality of reading generated by the libraries.

Bruce . . . . British Aeroplanes 1914-1918 Martin . . . O Rugged Land of Gold

Philpott .. . . Modern armature construction, winding and repair

Italian Touring Club.. Italy in three weeks

#### History of the Co-operative movement

Valentine .. .. How to be a lightning cartoonist

Cuppy .. .. The decline and fall of practically everybody

Manning .. . The theory and technique of ship design
Foenander .. . Industrial conciliation and arbitration
in Australia

Ford Motor Company Ford 8 and 10 h.p. cars . . . workshop (Australia) manual

#### Elementary dressmaking

Woodruff .. .. The trotting horse in America

Snead .. .. How to hit a golf ball

Jouvenel .. Sovereignty: an inquiry into the political good

Ishimoto .. . The art of plant and driftwood arrangement

The total number of requests received from public libraries was 8,759 (6,369 last year).

In September the Headmaster of the Claremont Government School, on his own initiative, made a survey of the use made of the Claremont Public Library by the children of the school. This showed that the proportion of children regularly using the library rose steadily from 32 per cent. of those aged seven to 88 per cent. of the twelve year olds.

There are a few areas of the State of very small and scattered population where it would be impossible to establish public libraries for their residents. For these isolated people the Board supplies books directly from Headquarters. There are, as yet, not many who use this service, but their number is slowly growing.

An interesting and potentially valuable experiment has been started with the co-operation of Mr. D. G. Wilcox, the Department of Agriculture Adviser at Wiluna, who covers a vast area on and around the Murchison. He has agreed to carry a copy of the Printed Catalogue of the Board's stock with him in his utility, together with

vouchers to join the service, so that when he visits outback stations, he can interest the station people in the library service and from the catalogue give them an idea of its resources. Several new readers have already enrolled as a result. The Board very much appreciates Mr. Wilcox's help and enthusiasm.

A request was received during the year from the Fremantle City Council for assistance in providing the crews of the ships of the State Shipping Service with ships' libraries. The Board agreed to issue additional books for this purpose, the Fremantle Council meeting the cost of so doing, and small collections of books have now been placed on all the ships. The collections are returned to and exchanged with the stock of the Fremantle Library at the end of each voyage.

Following upon the success of the Nurses' Library at Royal Perth Hospital, the Board of Management of Princess Margaret Hospital requested a similar service. The Library Board gladly agreed to the request. The expenditure involved in the purchase and maintenance of the bookstock will be met by the hospital and the Board will provide its full Headquarters service.

All public libraries have been visited during the year, to maintain contact, ensure that the Headquarters service is efficient as seen from the local point of view, and to advise on any difficulties which may have arisen.

The Newsletter has continued to be published and distributed to all libraries and staff.

#### DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

#### HEADQUARTERS

Briefly, the function of Headquarters is to provide the books and central professional services for all public libraries throughout the State and for the State Library.

It consists of four Sections:

The Chief Assistant Librarian is responsible for the bookstock of the whole service: selection, balance, condition and

Accessions Section has the duty of purchasing in the best market, receiving and processing all books, and carrying on all related functions.

Catalogue Section prepares catalogue entries for all books, classifies them, prints the catalogue cards and maintains the Headquarters' catalogues.

Circulation Section puts out books to public libraries in the country and suburbs.

Administration Section carries out all functions concerned with administration, finance, staff, supplies and buildings.

#### **Book Selection**

The two most potent factors affecting book selection and purchase in this year have lain outside the Board's control: the lifting of import restrictions and the English printers' strike.

The decision of the Commonwealth Government to cease import licensing of all American books was very welcome. Even under licensing there was no difficulty with technical books but now the whole field of American publishing is open. A particular advantage to the Board arises from the growing American output of "paper-backs." Both English and American publishers are now issuing scholarly books in original paper backed editions. American publishers have, however, been more active in reprinting in this form standard works, classics and near classics long out of print. These offer the opportunity to fill many gaps in the basic stock both of the State Library and of Circulation Section.

The settlement of the protracted printers' strike in England and consequent increased labour costs has caused a marked increase in the cost of books. The Board will need a correspondingly larger book fund in the coming year if it is to buy even as many books as it has been buying. The subscription cost of periodicals has risen still more sharply, that of *Chemical Abstracts*, for example, rose from £175 to

£288 per annum this year.

A programme of stock revision for the Library of Social Sciences, Philosophy and Religion has been begun and will probably be continued for about three years. When the State Library was reorganised, the stock of the new Library of Business, Science and Technology was brought to a good standard and it was intended that the Social Sciences Library should be treated likewise as soon as possible. While many of the standard works required are out of print and can be obtained, if at all, only on the second hand market as copies turn up, a systematic review of the stock has enabled a useful number of important works to be acquired.

At the beginning of this year the responsibility for book selection in the State Library was placed upon the subject librarians under the general supervision of the Chief Assistant Librarian. This change gives the subject librarians responsibility for all aspects of the work of their libraries and allows their detailed knowledge of reader demand in relation to book resources to be used to the best advantage. While it increases somewhat the clerical work of ordering books, it offers a safeguard against the risks involved in one person alone being au fait

with book selection practice.

The fortnightly meetings of professional librarians in metropolitan libraries to discuss book selection have continued, with advantage to all concerned.

The bookstock of the Board at 30th June was 361,203 volumes; 174,146 in Circulation stock and 187,057 in the State Library. This stock is not to be despised, when the youth of the service is taken into account, but it gives no ground for self satisfaction or relaxation of effort. One million books will be needed in Circulation stock before the whole State can be provided with a public library service.

Competent authorities regard half a million volumes as the minimum for fully effective reference service in a general library such as the State Library. There is thus still a long way to go.

#### Accessions Section

Florence McKeand, A.L.A., Librarian

A new project started in Accessions Section this year has been that of recording the receipt and allocation of serial publications as

distinct from periodicals.

Much of this material, particularly that from governmental or semi-governmental sources, had previously been received and stored but not recorded or catalogued with resultant difficulty in tracing particular items when required. In that unorganised state it could not be exploited fully in the State Library by either the staff or the readers.

The recording of receipt is now being made on a Shannon Visible Control Record and each individual item is routed to a specific location in the subject library responsible for its holding. A temporary card controls any particular title until a decision has been reached regarding the continued acceptance of the title, the length of time the file is to be kept, the present holdings and the catalogue form of entry. So far 2,539 serials have been dealt with in this way. As the State Library is a depository library for the publications of the United Nations and of the United States Government, which can be traced by using existing published indexes, it was decided not to record them on the Shannon until material received from all other sources had been dealt with.

There have been several by-products of this reorganisation of material. Broken sets have been completed when possible or have been disposed of to other libraries where they would be more useful. More precise retention periods for some ephemeral, though currently useful, titles have been defined. It has been found possible to make "standing order" arrangements for many publications which previously required a special order or demand for each issue.

Consideration was given this year to stock revision in Circulation Section. The holdings of standard fiction authors were checked and titles in print reordered. With the expansion of the service it was also necessary to review the basic non-fiction stock in all classes in relation to accepted subject bibliographies in fields of particular interest in Western Australia.

The Board supplies books as the major part of its subsidy to local libraries, but it does not dictate the selection of the books. Indeed, the participation of the local librarian in selection is welcomed. One way in which such participation takes place is the use of "stock request" forms, sent in by the local librarians as an indication of his or her desire to have the book concerned added to the local stock as soon as possible.

Local librarians are taking an increasing interest in the selection of books for their libraries—a very satisfactory development—and consequently the number of stock requests received is growing fairly rapidly. Sometimes, these refer to new books, sometimes to books recommended by readers, and sometimes to books which appear on

the reading lists of schools and the University.

The checking of these requests (which numbered some 4,623 this year) against the existing stock, the file of books on order, and not infrequently in bibliographies to complete or correct their details, is coming to occupy a substantial amount of staff time in Accessions Section, but it is time well spent if it leads to local libraries having

the books which they most appreciate.

The service is now six years old and many of the books purchased in the beginning are reaching the end of their lives. A total of 4,766 books were discarded through normal wear or obsolescence this year. Discarding a book involves, of course, more than simply throwing it out. First it must be examined by a responsible staff member to decide whether or not, having regard not only to its physical condition, but also to its subject content in relation to other books in stock, it should be discarded; if the decision is to discard, then all stock records in which the book appears must be amended. These tasks are absorbing a growing amount of staff time, but they are a necessary result of growth of the service.

The Board is entitled under the Copyright Act to receive one copy of everything published in Western Australia. It is the responsibility of Accessions Section to obtain these publications so that they may be preserved in the Battye Library for future research use. Much more attention is now paid to this matter than formerly with the result that a much larger intake is being received, but the price of success is perpetual vigilance and detective work to discover and locate Western Australian publications put out by bodies who, even if they have ever heard of the Copyright Act, are quite unaware of

its importance.

The Board is happy to take this opportunity of expressing its gratitude to many organisations who have gone to considerable trouble to make up back sets of their publications as well as supplying the current numbers.

#### Catalogue Section

#### C. L. Drake, M.A., A.L.A., Chief Cataloguer

The number of volumes handled in the Section during the year was 35,126 representing 17,202 titles of which 9,274 were new to the stock. The comparable figures for 1958–59 were 44,595 volumes and 8,799 new titles.

An additional member was seconded to the staff of the Section during the year so that a sustained and systematic attack might be made upon the cataloguing of the serials in the State Library stock, including the re-cataloguing of those taken over from the Public Library of Western Australia in 1955. At the same time the content of the Union Catalogue of Periodicals (renamed the Union Catalogue of Serials) was changed so as to include entries for all serials as well as periodicals. The number of main entries added to the combined catalogue during the year was 1,649.

Revision of the Printed Catalogue continued steadily at a rate which ensures a complete revision about every two years.

As in past years lists of books on farming have been compiled periodically for publication in the Journal of the Department of Agriculture.

As from 1st January, 1960, the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services, through the agency of the Commonwealth National Library, began the compilation of a union catalogue of books published after that date and added to a selected number of the major libraries of Australia. This catalogue will be of great value in the future as a means of locating books needed by students and research workers which are not locally available. The Board is happy to contribute entries for books added to the Library Service of Western Australia.

#### Circulation Section

#### A. T. Pugh, A.L.A., Librarian

Circulation Section is responsible for the supply of books to public libraries and for maintaining records of the whereabouts of every book in the lending service. This involves: receiving, checking and shelving all new books received from Accessions Section; selection and despatch of the initial stock for new libraries; maintenance of a regular programme of exchanges with libraries already established; arranging direct loans, or interloans between libraries, in connection with the Request and Information Service; recording all book movements in the stock and location records; training new local librarians, and, finally, guiding, advising and sorting out "tangles" for local librarians throughout the State.

A total of 31,201 volumes were despatched to new and existing libraries as initial or supplementary stock; 72,000 were received and despatched in the exchange programme (58,000 last year). Some 4,403 loans were arranged between libraries and 1,947 books lent directly from Circulation Section to libraries.

The total programme during the year involved, therefore, some 109,551 volume movements. In relation to this large figure and the fact that 41 libraries situated at up to 600 miles from Perth were involved, the number of errors in stock records has remained very small indeed. This is a tribute not only to the care with which local librarians all over the State carry out their part of the work, but also to the staff of Circulation Section who have been working in conditions of increasing congestion and inconvenience.

The lease of the Havelock Street premises, in which Circulation Section is located, expired in April. The lessor kindly agreed to the Board remaining in occupation on a week to week basis. Arrangements have now been completed for the Section to move into new premises, a part of the former Government Printing Office, in July.

#### Administration Section

Librarians are by aptitude and training fitted to work in the realm of information and ideas, education and research. Good librarians, too, are fairly scarce. In the interests of efficiency it is clearly desirable that their time should be devoted to the exercise of their particular professional skills, and should not be spent on work which can better be done by other staff with different skills and training. This is but an elementary example of the principle of specialization of function.

The real efficiency of any professional organisation is to be judged by the service it gives to its clients, and this derives from the skill and understanding of the professional officers acting as individuals. The contribution of "the administration" to such an organisation is to determine objectives and then to assist, counsel and smooth the path for the professional officers so that they can do their own work to the best advantage and in the best conditions.

The function of Administration Section is to assist the State Librarian and to enable the professional staff to concentrate on their particular responsibilities by carrying out, as far as possible, all functions in the fields of finance, personnel control, stores, upkeep of premises and clerical routine. With the growth of the general activity of the service, the work of Administration Section also grows, and little purpose would be served by quoting statistics to demonstrate this obvious fact.

#### STATE LIBRARY

The State Library is the reference division of the Library Service of Western Australia. It is divided into four subject libraries and two centres.

The number of books used by readers was 155,250 (142,062 last year); 20,970 information enquiries were recorded and answered (20,535 last year); 8,909 pages of photocopies or microfilm were produced at readers' requests (6,157 last year).

This increase in public demand and use of the library is a cause for satisfaction. It shows that the library is meeting public needs and demonstrates, in so far as figures can do so, the growing contribution which it is making to the life and development of the State. On the other hand, it has caused some concern.

In library service, quality is at least as important as quantity. In view of the importance of many of the enquiries made of the central State reference library—importance to the enquirer either in terms of cash or of personal well being—it is vital that not only the correct, but the best answer should be given. In this work quality is perhaps more important than quantity.

It has not been possible to increase the staff, indeed last year the Board was faced with a reduction of staff. A greater work load cannot be carried by the same staff without loss of quality. Hence the concern. If, for example, an average information enquiry takes only six minutes to answer—by no means an unreasonable guess—every 1,000 additional enquiries will occupy 100 hours of staff time—hours which can be found only by cutting corners in dealing with enquiries or by neglecting other aspects of the work.

The Board by attention to efficient organisation, and the staff by personal endeavour will do their best to maintain the quality of service upon which the recent reputation of the library has been built up, but it must be recognised that there is a limit to their capabilities. If the increase of public demand is to be met, the public through its elected government, must be prepared to pay for the service it seeks.

During the course of this year, as was forecast in the Board's Report two years ago, the problem of book storage in the State Library became acute. Since 1955 books occupying half a mile of shelving had been added to the State Library, but no additional shelves provided to house them. An increasing number of books in the stack were accumulating on window ledges and even on the floor and the simple task of inserting two or three new books into their correct place in the classified sequence more often than not required the shifting of 30 or 40 feet of adjacent material. During January the pressure on part of the stack storage was relieved by taking into use 1,200 feet of additional shelving space. Approximately 900 feet became available as a byproduct of the reorganisation of the serial material, referred to elsewhere. The remaining 300 feet consisted of newly purchased steel shelving which has been erected in the room formerly used as a map This new shelving now takes the collection of British Hansards. The maps have been rolled and put aside until such time as work on the map collection is resumed.

The distribution of the additional space throughout some 7,000 feet of the stack involved the movement of approximately 50,000 volumes. Four students were employed on the work for several weeks, working under the supervision of State Library staff.

This move, together with a small quantity of additional shelving which it is hoped to purchase in the new financial year, should enable a further year's additions to be accommodated. By that time, however, the storage limit of the building will have been reached: the last of the unused space will then have been taken into use.

A temporary alleviation of the situation has been made possible by the recent allocation to the Board of an area of the former Government Printing Office for use as a reserve stack. When the funds for the purchase of the necessary shelving have been made available, and the shelving bought and installed, the pressure on the storage capacity of the State Library building should be eased for a while.

### The J. S. Battye Library and State Archives

Mollie Lukis, B.A., Librarian and Archivist

When over 100 years is allowed to pass before a real attempt is made to collect local history materials, it is not surprising if there are serious gaps in the collection. No opportunity of making them good is overlooked and documents are continually coming in, but it has been found useful to concentrate on the various deficiencies in turn. Recently a particular effort was made to build up the collection of Western

Australian maps, and as a result many of the old series have been almost completed. Eight hundred and forty-two obsolete maps have been located, repaired and accessioned during the year, and indexes for them compiled.

An attempt has also been made to enlarge the collection of annual reports of local organizations—reports which had formerly been collected intermittently or not at all from such bodies as social welfare groups, educational, cultural and sporting bodies, industrial and mining companies, scientific, professional and trade associations. An appeal to these organizations has met with an enthusiastic response; not only current reports but back issues have been supplied, and in many cases where the latter were not available, the office file has been lent so that microfilm copies could be made.

One of the most interesting aspects of the work in a local history library is the tracing of material for addition to the collection. Some relatives of notable figures in the history of the State can be easily located; others are scattered in various parts of the world, and a fruitless correspondence may be carried on for months before documents are either located or definitely proved to be no longer in existence. A search this year for the papers of F. C. B. Vosper, a colourful personality of the Western Australian goldfields, involved letters to his sister in Canada, a cousin in Cornwall and to Mr. A. R. Vosper, a half-brother in Plymouth (England) and eventually resulted in the discovery that the latter had collected his brother's remaining papers and deposited them in the Plymouth Public Library. Too late to secure the original documents, an attempt was then made to get microfilm copies; no facilities for microfilming being available in Plymouth, the Librarian kindly agreed to lend the records to the Agent General for Western Australia in London, who had them filmed for the Board. This incident is typical of the way in which original documents or copies of them may be acquired for the Battye Library.

Only one hundred and forty-eight feet of records were transferred to the Archives from government departments in the past year. This low figure was partly due to the fact that the bulk of the older records have already been deposited and partly because the crowded state of the stack inhibited transfer of more modern records except when departments were particularly anxious to do so. Useful series of records which were added include letterbooks from 1915 to 1938 from the Premier's Department, State Electoral Rolls from 1904 to date, and police and court records from Roebourne Courthouse, 1879–1935. Records have again been received from a number of local authorities, the most notable accession, from the Perth Road Board, including the minutes of that Board from its inception in 1871 to 1949.

There were numerous requests from government departments to examine files for disposal; it is satisfactory that departments now generally set aside for disposal as soon as possible files dealing with routine matters; these can be examined and destroyed without the delay which occurred in the past when material was allowed to accumulate for so long that it became difficult to identify.

The library has been fortunate this year in the number of important private papers, including business records, which have been deposited. Notable among the latter were papers from Peet & Co. Ltd., land and estate agents; Emanuel Bros. Ltd., whose interests were mainly pastoral; records of the Western Australian Bank, lent for copying by the Bank of New South Wales; and all the non-current files of the Perth Chamber of Commerce.

One of the most important collections of private records in Australia, the Durack Papers, was recently presented to the library. The records, which date from 1867, were kept by three generations of the Durack family in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia; the bulk of them however, consisting of diaries from 1877 to 1950, with letterbooks, files containing business papers, station accounts, maps and photographs, relate to Western Australia.

This year has also seen the decision of the Western Australian Historical Society to deposit its collection of documents in the library. The Western Australian Historical Society, founded in 1926, has collected through the years a quantity of valuable books, manuscripts, photographs and maps, but has not had either the room or the staff to make this material available for use. The records can now be consulted. Research students in Western Australia have the great advantage that all the main sources of information on the State's history are concentrated and co-ordinated in one library. In this respect Western Australia is more favourably situated now than any other State.

Records of all kinds not available for permanent deposit have again been borrowed for copying, and over thirteen thousand pages on microfilm have been added. Microfilming of the Western Australian newspapers has continued; the early files, which were in a frail state, of forty-eight goldfields and country newspapers, including the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, have now been photographed, and work on the *West Australian* temporarily suspended at 1910, has been resumed.

A steady demand for the services given by the library leaves little time for the staff to do other than the necessary work of processing the records deposited and continuing with the indexing of current

publications.

A notable publication during the year was the *General Index to the Papers presented to Parliament*, 1947–56, compiled by the staff of the Battye Library in consultation with the Chief Cataloguer. This takes the form of a decennial supplement to the index edited by Mr. L. P. Hawley and published in 1948 and it is proposed to issue further supplements or cumulations at ten-yearly intervals. This supplement continues the basic arrangement of the 1948 index, but includes for the first time the manuscript papers as well as the printed papers presented. The opportunity has also been taken to introduce certain modern improvements in indexing technique.

The assistance of the Officers of the House in connection with the publication of the index, and their cordial concurrence in the library's assuming responsibility for future indexing were greatly

appreciated.

Library of Business, Science and Technology Norman Horrocks, F.L.A., Librarian

When this library was formed some three and a half years ago there had been no centre in the State to which business and technical men could turn for the kind of information so necessary to industrial and commercial well-being and development. Although from experience gained elsewhere it was known in outline what sort of service to provide, only time and local experience could show the particular demands that would be made in Western Australia.

Two main findings have been made. Little demand has been felt for books on the theoretical sciences beyond intelligent layman and undergraduate level; but significant use is made of the library's large holdings of the scientific publications of governments and learned societies. Secondly, there is a great demand for information on the practical applications of science, technology and business method. A point worth reiterating is that despite the comparatively small population of the State the range of demand is just as wide as it is in larger libraries serving much greater numbers. The present policy of book selection is to give as full a coverage as funds permit of all practical and applied subjects of interest in Western Australia, but only a generally representative coverage of the pure sciences. The valuable holdings of learned scientific journals are, of course, being maintained.

The Bibliographical Centre carries a wide range of published indexes to the contents of books and periodicals. But in common with most large libraries the need has been felt for supplementary indexes based on the information contained in the library's own stock. A written record of the more complex enquiries dealt with has always been maintained. This year, however, active steps have been taken in the exploitation of the stock by the compilation of indexes designed to help the staff make more effective use of the material on the library's shelves. To take an obvious and popular example, requests for information about old makes of cars are received regularly. collection of workshop manuals recently acquired deals almost exclusively with current models. The library does, however, possess back files of a number of motoring journals, most of them lacking indexes or having poor indexes in which a search for the required model was a tedious business. The contents of these journals have now been indexed systematically and the required information can be located quickly. Other indexing of a more specialised nature is being undertaken currently but much more remains to be done in this field.

Mention was made in last year's Report of the work in progress on the many series of research reports housed in the former Public Library. This entailed, in co-operation with Accessions Section, locating and bringing together physically the various parts of each series, which in most cases were in two or more places in the building, collating the parts for binding where appropriate, writing for missing parts if necessary, and passing the completed sets to Catalogue Section for the cataloguing and classification procedures necessary to their recording

in the public catalogue. This is a slow, painstaking job and work has continued throughout the year. The end now seems to be in sight. At the beginning of the year some 140 serials had been processed; today the figure stands at 833. All these serial items, which form a considerable proportion of the total serial holdings of this library are now drawn to the attention of readers through the catalogue and can

readily and conveniently be found by the staff.

The major event in the library fields of science and technology in Australia this year has been the completion of the publication by C.S.I.R.O. of Scientific Serials in Australian Libraries. This records the holdings in these fields of the major libraries in Australia. It is in loose-leaf form and is to be kept up-to-date. Its usefulness in quickly locating a given reference is obvious, but it has a less apparent usefulness in the particular circumstances of this library. The former Public Library took only a limited number of technical journals. The Library of Business, Science and Technology receives some 800. It would not be practicable, even if it were desirable, to file all 800 titles permanently. A tentative decision was made, therefore, on each individual title: to file it permanently or only for a limited period The publication of this new guide has provided the opportunity for a timely reconsideration of these decisions. Now, not only can the use made here of a journal over the past three or four years be taken into account, but also the overall Australian picture, before a final decision is made. Of a number of journals it has been found that this library holds the only file in Australia, of many others the set here is one of only two or three recorded. All unique files will be bound for preservation and those for which few other holdings are recorded will normally be retained in view of their comparative scarcity.

The production of Scientific Serials in Australian Libraries was and is a joint enterprise between C.S.I.R.O. who take the leading part, and contributory libraries who make its preparation possible by sending in records of their serial holdings. Many of the serial holdings of the former Public Library were not recorded and consequently the Board has been unable, so far, to fulfil its obligations in notifying all its holdings. While the bulk of the entries in the publication lie in the fields covered by the Library of Business, Science and Technology, a not insignificant number are for titles allocated in the State Library

to other subject libraries.

So that the Board could fulfil its moral obligation to this Australia-wide undertaking and so that the fullest advantage could be derived here from its publication, every entry listed (some 24,000 titles) was checked against the State Library stock, and in time, as the serials project progresses, complete records will be sent to C.S.I.R.O. of all the library's holdings. This task of checking was not a small undertaking.

Libraries all over the world regularly send out lists of duplicate books and periodicals which they have for disposal. Most of the items listed are out of print. All such lists received are carefully checked against the library's stocks. In this way gaps can often be made good. A recent acquisition may be quoted as an example. The library's set of Reports of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, as it then was, lacked the volume for the Brisbane meeting of 1909. This was offered on a list circulated by the British National Book Centre in London and has now been obtained and added to stock. This library itself receives a number of donations of books and periodicals which are surplus to its requirements. Many are presented to appropriate libraries locally. A list of some 110 titles of duplicate books and periodicals has been compiled and sent to other libraries which participate in this international co-operation.

A library might almost be regarded as an iceberg, with a great mass of its content not visible to the naked eye. The work so far described is not immediately apparent to the enquirer seeking some specific piece of information. Nor is there any reason why it should be. What is aimed at is the provision of the required information promptly and fully, whether from the latest journal to arrive in the library or from some older book whose worth is not immediately apparent. Two recent enquiries well illustrate this. A Works Chemist 'phoned for information on a new material which it was thought might rival his firm's existing product. He was given its technical specifications and also a recent journal containing a report on the material carried out by an independent consumers' research association. The information in these two sources enabled him to reassure his Managing Director that there was little likelihood of their product's sales being affected. In the other instance the request was for constructional details of a process now almost entirely superseded by more modern methods. (There was a special reason for the reversion to this particular method). The files of Engineering News Record around the early 1900s gave a good deal of information and directed attention to the standard work on the subject, published in New York in 1899. Somewhat to the surprise of the reader, this book was produced from the stack shelves.

Many of the enquiries received are confidential but a few of those

that are not are given below:-

A history of the development of the ball point pen and biographical information about Biro.

What is the Hegman scale as used in the measurement of pigments in paint?

What size of roof gutters should be specified for a building in an area receiving tropical rainfall?

A diagram illustrating the principle behind the free-piston engine developed by Otto and Langen in 1866.

What is the formula used for correcting air temperatures which are influenced by compression due to air speed?

What is the point of maximum depression in a venturi tube? Is a child's toy made from Acetyloid likely to catch fire easily? Information required on the sonic flocculation of dust.

Information required on the working of the Kitchen reversing gear which was fitted to Royal Navy survey vessels in the 1920s.

Library of Social Sciences, Philosophy and Religion Arthur Ellis, F.L.A.

Public use of this library has increased during the year and is still increasing. A large proportion of staff time has therefore been spent on answering enquiries and assisting readers to make use of the facilities of the library for themselves. Increased public use has also meant of course that more time has to be spent in simple "house-keeping" duties such as returning all the books to the shelves after they have been used.

All this time is well spent but it means that enough cannot be devoted to other important work which needs doing. During this year nothing has been done towards "weeding" the former Public Library stock and for practical reasons this needs doing fairly soon. New books are reaching the shelves continually but it is becoming increasingly difficult to find room for them, while there are still a number of older books which have outlived their usefulness occupying shelf space.

An important part of a good reference library's stock is its collection of maps—provided they are organized for use. Although the library has a substantial number of maps, all but a small proportion are unusable because staff time cannot be spared to arrange and index them. During the year no work was done on the map collection.

The heavy use of this library by students confronts the staff with the problem of striking a balance between giving them directly the information they require and assisting them to help themselves.

The problem is aggravated at present because there is insufficient staff to do either properly. It would be of great advantage if students were given adequate instruction in the use of a library, prior to their coming to the State Library.

During the year important, further work was done towards the full bibliographic control of the serial holdings referred to in last year's Report. In co-operation with the Accessions and Catalogue Sections of Headquarters, most of the current serials received in the library, except those received from the United States Government and the United Nations, were catalogued and proper records made for them. This library provided the basic information to permit the cataloguing of those which fall within its subject field—the greater part of the whole—in addition a rough card index was made to the American material which enables the staff quickly to route each item on arrival to the particular section of the State Library into whose subject field it falls.

The State Library has by far the largest collection in Western Australia of the official publications of Australian and overseas governments. They are of great importance for information and research service and the progress made in their organization will serve to enlarge substantially the effective resources and service of the library.

Because of the subjects covered by this library it is well used by men and women who take an interest in world and national affairs and who wish to be well informed on subjects of current interest. During the year, for instance, information has been provided for readers on apartheid in South Africa; race riots in Notting Hill; the United Nations Organization; divorce; equal pay for equal work; and the social effects of television.

Other enquiries included:-

What nationality is a child whose father is Ukrainian, whose mother is German and who was born in Yugoslavia?

What are the figures for American investment in Europe?

Has any Australian State introduced legislation prohibiting the manufacture of filled milk?

History and significance of the symbol of the fish in the early Christian Church.

Information on the right of the individual to petition the sovereign.

In travelling by train from Bombay to Colombo must a passenger leave the train to board a boat or is it possible for him to remain on the train for the whole trip?

#### Library of Literature and the Arts

Ronald Wright, B.A.

The past twelve months have seen the resources of Arts Library more extensively used. Requests for assistance, covering a wide range of subjects, have come from both town and country districts.

Typical examples include the following:-

A city store asked for biographical details of a number of Australian and overseas artists, to compile a catalogue for a loan exhibition.

An advertising agency requested examples of cartoons of the Devil, to assist their artist in an advertising project.

Wongan-Ballidu Public Library relayed an enquiry for literature on judging needlework at agricultural shows.

The increasing appreciation by the general public of the library's resources is exemplified by a letter from an enquirer in the South-West. Asking for information about orchestral music she wrote:—"I have only just realized that a lot of this information is available at the library."

From time to time readers have brought to Arts Library books, paintings and other objects for identification or an indication of their value. One such item, a woodcut found between the pages of an old German Bible, was identified as being one of the series "The Dance of Death" by Holbein. The British Museum confirmed it as being an original proof impression of "The Waggoner" (1538).

Other items brought in for identification have ranged from Indian temple coins to a fine example of a Chinese carved ivory joss.

As is natural, in view of its subject field, this library has considerable holdings of old or rare books.

An enquiry for the Journals of the British historical painter Robert Haydon (1786-1846), published by Longmans in 1853, was met from stock, as was another for a reference in the Nouvelle Biographie Generale

(Paris, 46 volumes, 1852–1866).
On the other hand the letters of the Norwegian painter Hans Fredrik Gude (1825-1903), Af Hans Gudes liv og værker, published in Oslo in 1898, was not available here, nor could it be located in Australia, but was eventually traced in the Universitetsbiblioteket,

Oslo, and borrowed to satisfy the request.

The library's stock has benefited greatly from the policy of filling gaps in important serial holdings, as opportunity arises. The accession of Palmer's Index to "The Times" newspaper for the years 1906-1936 helped to complete a set which is held from 1867. In a somewhat different field "The Australasian" Turf Register for the period 1942-1955, obtained this year, gives the library a virtually complete set of this publication from 1866.

It is unfortunate that the limited shelving space for open access books is necessitating useful material being placed in stack to make room for new books as they are received. Additional space to display more books on open access is becoming increasingly desirable if the

resources of Arts Library are to be effectively exploited.

#### Information Centre

Rex Price

The Information Centre has for the past twelve months continued to give quick answers to both 'phone enquiries and to the public who call in at the State Library. The scope of questions can be judged from the following list selected at random from the hundreds asked during the year.

Who are the Game Wardens in Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika?

Migration in Australia since 1945.

What frequency does the B.B.C. use to radio to Australia? Wool prices for the years, 1868-1893.

Names of three steel centres in China.

Trading information on Malava.

Agent or Manufacturer of "Econo."

Two American and two Japanese manufacturers of outboard

Not all enquiries come from Western Australia. Requests for local information have been received from enquirers as far away as England and the United States.

Since the lifting of the trade restrictions there has been a noticeable increase in enquiries for particulars and addresses of business firms in Asian and other countries with which Western Australia has not

previously traded.

The Quiz programmes run by a commercial radio station have given the general public an increased awareness of the State Library; hundreds of people have come in search of the answers to a remarkable range of questions.

The Information Centre has operated now for about three years and sufficient experience of the type of enquiry commonly made in Western Australia has been acquired to enable a systematic programme of revision of the book stock to be started. Much of the stock of the Centre comprises expensive annual publications, and it would be wasteful to buy a new edition every year of those which change but little or are seldom consulted. Replacement schedules are being compiled which will ensure that the fullest and latest practicable information is available at the most economical cost.

#### Bibliographical Centre

G. A. Stafford, A.L.A.

Since its establishment in 1956, the Bibliographical Centre which now contains about 4,000 bibliographies has been a godsend to the staff and to other librarians seeking information about books and the contents of periodicals. Possibly because it was an entirely new departure not only in Western Australia but in Australia, the public was at first slow to grasp its usefulness. During this year, however, a quite noticeable and welcome increase of use by the public has been apparent.

The recataloguing of the stock of the former Public Library, halted last year due to lack of staff was not restarted this year when staff became available because it was decided to give priority to the cataloguing of serials. When that project has been completed, it is intended to swing the staff concerned on to the recataloguing project

and so restart it.

One of the less obvious tasks of the staff of the Centre is to file the cards added to the catalogues. Since 1956, one 180 drawer cabinet has been filled; another is now being made. The good progress made in the cataloguing of serials has produced even more cards to

be filed during this year.

The scope of the Union Catalogue of Periodicals has been expanded to cover not only periodicals but also serials, that is yearbooks, annuals, bulletins and reports. Over a hundred Western Australian libraries and organisations now contribute entries for their current serials to this catalogue which is of great value in tracing references which, because they are local, may be expected to be quickly available.

The major routine function of the staff of the Centre is the handling of requests received from public libraries, the State Library and other libraries in Western Australia and interstate, for the loan of books

and periodicals.

As the figures given later show, the number of such requests has again increased. With more metropolitan libraries now operating, and the increasing use of the State Library service by university students and staff, there has been a noticeable trend for more obscure or rare books to be requested. For example, an old book on Polish history was borrowed from the Polish National Library, and a Russian book on railway administration, from the Library of Congress in Washington. Naturally, the tracing of such material is more difficult than that of current publications in English.

Every request (except subject requests) is first checked in the Board's catalogue and the file of books on order in Accessions Section and if it is found, the request is passed on to Circulation Section or the appropriate subject library for action. Such requests are almost always passed through on the day on which they are received.

All those which are not found must be fully checked in bibliographies to make certain that the author and title given are in fact correct, as they often are not, and to complete the full details of date of publication, publisher and price. In some cases information about the subject and standing of the book must also be obtained before further action can be taken. This checking consumes a lot of time; twenty to thirty volumes may have to be consulted before the correct entry is, at last, found. Sometimes, however, the monotony is relieved by a successful stroke of detective flair, for example the request which appeared in the form:—

Author Rachnida, A. Title Savouries

was quickly solved when the supposed author's name was re-arranged. The book required was in fact

Savory, T. H. The arachnida

Often bad writing at some earlier stage is the cause of trouble, as this case shows:—

Author Tose Plus Title History

which was fairly soon spotted as

Josephus Flavius Jewish antiquities

Only very rarely is a request passed on by Bibliographical Centre either for purchase or for inter-library loan without the full details having been completed and verified.

The following figures show the increase in the use of the Request and Information Service this year. A total of 9,868 requests were received (8,205 last year). 93 per cent. were satisfied; 88·2 per cent. (8,772 volumes) were supplied from the Board's own stock; 2·3 per cent. (230 volumes) were borrowed within the State; 0·75 per cent. (75 volumes) were borrowed from other States; 828 pages of photocopies were obtained from other States or overseas to meet 1·0 per cent.; while three works were borrowed from overseas. 210 volumes were lent to other libraries intra and interstate.

#### PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Three candidates sat for the Preliminary Examination of the Library Association of Australia and all passed. Nine candidates sat for twenty-one papers of the Registration Examination and eight passed in a total of fourteen papers. Messrs. R. P. Wright and E. Zalums completed the Registration Examination.

Mr. I. D. Tweedie, who was granted leave of absence last year to accept an internship in Lancashire County Library, England, for further professional study and experience, returned to duty in March. In-service training in bibliographical method and reference work for recently appointed members of the State Library staff has been continued.

The Board has acquired a film strip and slide projector partly for use in in-service training and partly for the classes for the professional examinations conducted at the technical college. This will enable students to be shown illustrations of methods and techniques used

elsewhere or in types of library other than their own.

An unusual extension of its value, however, arises from the decision about a year ago of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, to publish colour microfilms of some of its outstanding manuscripts. Apart from their beauty, these manuscripts are important examples of various types of writing, illumination and so on and the films serve to vitalize the study of historical bibliography for students here who would otherwise have no opportunity of seeing the material they have to

study.

The Staff Training Fund, set up two years ago, made its first grants in August, to four members of the staff to attend the biennial conference of the Library Association of Australia in Sydney. The fund was established on the initiative of the staff as a means of meeting the high cost of travel to professional conferences in the Eastern States and thus reducing the inevitable professional isolation of Western Australia. Membership is voluntary, but virtually all professional members of the staff contribute on a graduated scale by fortnightly procuration from their salary payments. The Board assists the fund by subsidizing it on a basis of a pound for a pound of money raised by staff up to a maximum of £100 per annum.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With the expansion of the service the number of persons and bodies to whom the Board would wish to express its appreciation for help, co-operation or donations has grown beyond the reasonable limits of this Report.

To all of them individual thanks have been tendered at appropriate times but some should be particularly recorded: the Lord Mayor and the City of Perth for continued hospitality in placing a committee room at the Board's disposal; the Government's London Office for unfailing efficiency and courtesy in handling overseas business; and the librarians of other libraries who have assisted the service by the loan of books and in other ways.

FRED ALEXANDER, Chairman.

JAMES HAMMOND, Acting State Librarian.

#### APPENDIX

Districts in which public libraries operate in association with the Board:

Central Wheatbelt-Metropolitan-Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board: Beverley Bruce Rock Armadale Kelmscott Dowerin Goomalling Canning Bridge Merredin (c) Claremont Darling Range Narembeen Fremantle (a) Quairading

Kwinana Perth Road Board: Toodyay Osborne Central, Tuart Hill York (d)

Scarborough

South-West-

Augusta-Margaret River

Balingup Drakesbrook Preston

Upper Blackwood

Great Southern—

Kojonup Lake Grace Narrogin (b) Nyabing-Pingrup Plantagenet

West Arthur

Northern Wheatbelt-

Carnamah Irwin Mingenew Moora

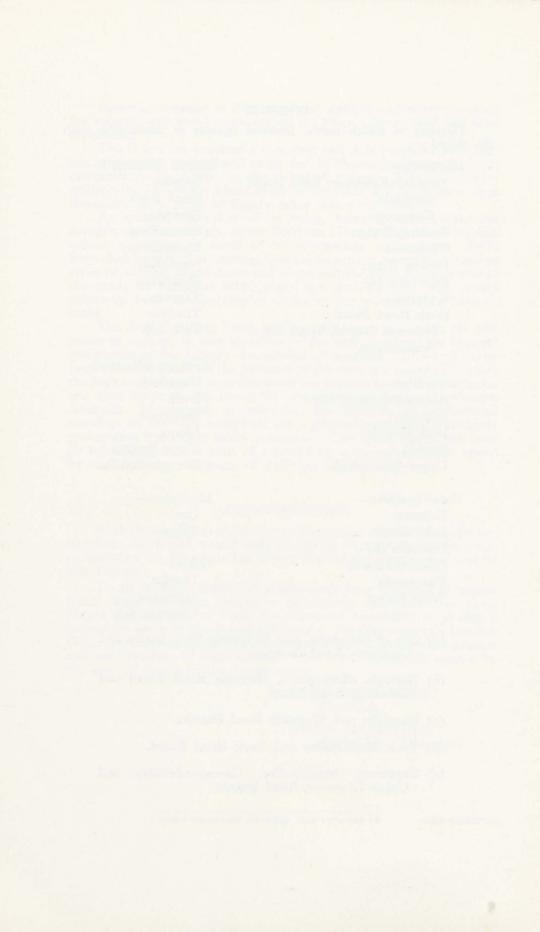
Tammin

Three Springs Wongan-Ballidu

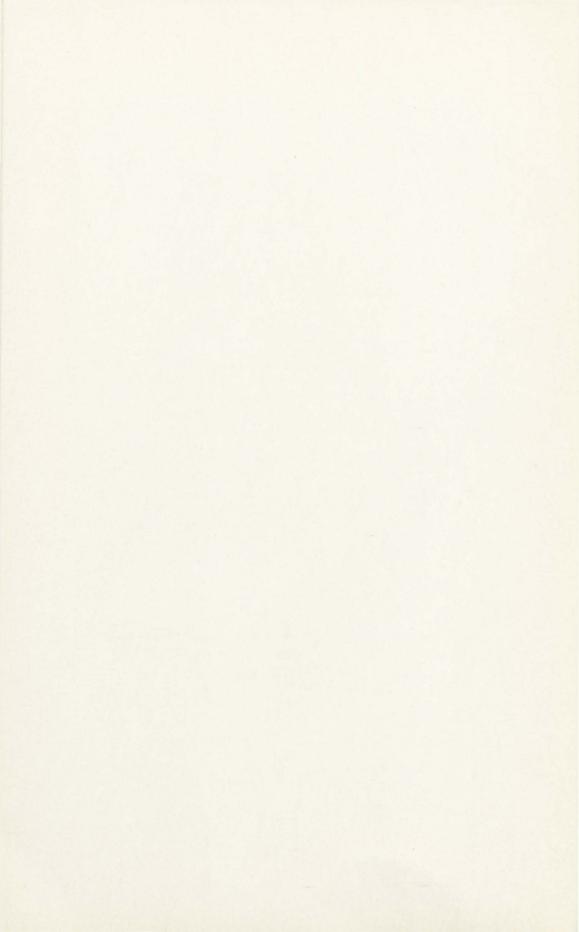
Murchison-Cue Yalgoo

Other-Dundas Esperance Gascoyne (e)

- (a) City of Fremantle, East Fremantle Municipality and Cockburn Road Board.
- (b) Narrogin Municipality, Narrogin Road Board and Cuballing Road Board.
- (c) Merredin and Westonia Road Boards.
- (d) York Municipality and York Road Board.
- (e) Carnarvon Municipality, Gascoyne-Minilya Upper Gascoyne Road Boards.







For information about the establishment of a library in your district you are invited to write to the State Librarian, who will be glad to give any details required.

It is emphasised that the Board does not itself set up and control libraries; its function is to assist local authorities who wish to do so. The initiative for the establishment of a local library lies wholly with the local authority.

The flower on the cover of the Report is the West Australian Pitcher Plant. It is drawn life-size. The design was executed by Miss Mary B. Devlin of the Government Lithographic Staff.