

# LIBRARY SCHOOL

## THE MINISTER'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

'To help to meet the very great shortage of trained librarians in New Zealand the Government has decided to establish a library school attached to the Country Library Service in Wellington,' said the Minister of Education, the Hon. H. G. R. Mason. 'The Government is impressed with the advances that have been made in library work during recent years particularly in the extension of library service to rural areas, to the armed forces, and to country schools. While much of this progress has come through the work of the Country Library Service, founded in 1938, the New Zealand Library Association, an active body incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1939, has been a vigorous proponent of improved library service.' The Minister stated that the development of the Country Library Service in spite of the war had been very great and decentralising of its administration through regional development was being planned. 'Fullest use of the stocks of books in our public and other libraries can be achieved only through better staffing,' said the Minister. 'The Library Association has begun a system of training and final tests for the New Zealand Library Association Certificate will be taken shortly by a number of students. The need is clear, however, for more powerful means of training, and a library school which will give a full academic year's training is to be established.'

The Government has asked for, and the United States Office of War Information, through the U.S. Legation in Wellington, has agreed to make available the services of Miss M. P. Parsons, Director of the U.S. Information Library in Wellington, as Director of the Library Training School. This is a generous action which is deeply appreciated by the Government and which the library profession in New Zealand will applaud. Miss Parsons is experienced in library school matters, and in addition to being Resident Director of a Library School in Paris from 1924 to 1929, she has taught in library schools in Canada and the United States and has held responsible library posts. Miss Parsons has an impressive academic record with the degrees of A.B., B.L.S., and Ph.D. University of Vienna.

Subject to the appointment of the necessary staff and other necessary preliminaries being carried out, the library school will give short courses this year, one for librarians of

smaller town libraries and one for librarians of government departmental libraries.

In 1946, with the approval of the manpower authorities, the school will give a year's training to 30 students, who will be University graduates in science or arts.

'Other developments may be possible,' said the Minister, 'such as short courses given by the faculty of the school between the full courses. These could be given in other centres than Wellington and would be open to librarians approved for the course by the Director of the School and the Training Committee of the New Zealand Library Association. The students accepted for training at the full course of the School will be paid allowances sufficient to meet their living costs and will be required to give an undertaking that they will remain in library work for a certain period.

'It is clear that adequate training of our library personnel is the logical and economical way of using our stocks and imports of books and printed material,' concluded the Minister.

## PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY SCHOOLS

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*By Mary Parsons*

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EDUCATION IS A LIFELONG PROCESS, according to Henry Adams, and how especially true this is of the education of librarians who have chosen to enter one of the learned professions. In considering professional library schools it is important, therefore, to make clear their relation to the formal education of universities on the one hand and, on the other hand, to the informal education which good librarians continue to give to themselves during their entire lives.

What is a library school? It is generally agreed that it is an institution of higher learning which trains professional librarians just as law and medical schools train lawyers and doctors. It is generally agreed also that a library school should not attempt to give librarians all the formal education of all kinds which they will need in library work. Instead of this a library school should make sure, through its entrance requirements, that students have already obtained, through university graduation or its equivalent, the kind of general