

## LIBRARY TRAINING :—WHAT WE NEED IN NEW ZEALAND.

(By Miss E. J. Carnell, F.L.A., Liaison Officer, Country Library Service.)

That "something must be done" about the facilities, or rather difficulties, of library training in New Zealand, is universally agreed. Almost though not quite everybody with whom I have discussed this thinks too that to be effective extension and improvement of training must be accompanied by a change in the present system of library examinations. Changes which have been suggested fall into four groups:—

1. To continue our connection with the British Library Association but to persuade that Association (means of persuasion unspecified) to accept in lieu of its own Elementary, and possibly also Intermediate, Examinations a corresponding examination organised by the N.Z.L.A. and adapted to New Zealand conditions. The advantage claimed for this plan is that it would preserve for those senior students who proceed to the Final Examination of the British Library Association the prestige associated with its Diploma while saving junior assistants the not inconsiderable expense attached to sitting these examinations. Also, the misplacement of energy involved in teaching junior assistants in New Zealand the ins and outs of library authority in Great Britain would be avoided.

2. To put library training and examination under the wing of the University of New Zealand. Several comparable professions have taken this step. As this has already been discussed I need not go into its pros and cons at this stage.

3. To organise a complete N.Z.L.A. system of training and examination. The advocates of

this aim not merely at saving expense and concentrating more upon New Zealand than British conditions, but also at producing a more stimulating and realistic syllabus and a less fluky and deadening method of test than the "Answer six out of the following nine questions" method.

4. As 3, but the course to be a New Zealand-Australian one organised in conjunction with the corresponding Association in Australia. Advantages claimed are that the prestige of a course organised upon an Australasian basis would be higher than one limited to New Zealand; that bonds with our nearest neighbour would be strengthened, staff exchanges facilitated, and the possibility of a New Zealand candidate obtaining an Australian post very much increased.

It is not possible, I think, to decide upon the relative merits of these plans until we have a definite syllabus before us of the ground we want covered. We cannot negotiate with the University or Australia until we know fairly exactly what we want, and we cannot decide whether a N.Z.L.A. course would be markedly superior to the British Library Association course until we have some evidence more tangible than a few hopeful remarks by the Liaison Officer at a Branch meeting. The next step is for the Standing Committee on Library Training to produce a syllabus. In drafting that syllabus the Committee will take into consideration all the suggestions made verbally to me, of which the above is a bare outline, the articles in this number of the Bulletin, and any correspondence which they may arouse.

## ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE N.Z.L.A.

It has often been asked what the purposes of the New Zealand Library Association are and what advantages may be gained from membership. The N.Z.L.A. consists of a group of institutions and personal members who are interested in the provision of an efficient library service available to everyone in New Zealand through school and college libraries, universities, special libraries and public libraries. A number of years ago the Association began to realise that library development in this country was far behind that in other

parts of the world, and an approach was made to the Carnegie Corporation of New York to make a survey of all types of libraries in New Zealand and to suggest lines of development. This request was granted in 1934, and since that time the Association has become a more active body concerned with working out the recommendations made in the Munn-Barr Report.

Very great progress has been made during the last few years, but it must be remembered that the Association cannot change conditions