

upon the system of barter, by which, in accordance with German practice, so much of the business was carried on at the book-fair. When Latin books were known as a general rule to be less saleable than those in German, it became difficult for the publishers of the former to do business with those who issued the latter; as a consequence, those who published in German betook themselves to the fair at Leipsic, which gradually became the great book centre in Germany, though without partaking of the cosmopolitan character of its rival on the Main.

The intestine troubles in France, the Civil Wars in England, the disastrous Thirty Years' War in Germany itself, all tended to reduce the importance of Frankfort as a distributing centre. Its decay was rapid: between 1650 and 1675 the number of publications mentioned in the catalogues fell fifty per cent., and though another century elapsed ere the last bookseller's booth disappeared, yet it had long practically lost all international importance, and, like many another institution that has played an important part in the world's history, the Frankfort book-mart disappeared into the limbo of forgotten things.

GEORGE SMITH.

THE LIBRARIES OF GREATER BRITAIN.

AUSTRALASIA (*continued*).

TURNING to the neighbouring Colony of New Zealand, we find a large number of important societies and institutions possessing valuable collections of books which are much used. Unlike the Australian colonies, New Zealand has no State library, but in Wellington and Auckland there are rate-supported libraries; Dunedin has a subscription library, and Christchurch has a library supported partly by public endow-

ments and partly by subscriptions; whilst in Napier, Invercargill, Nelson, Wanganui, Palmerston North and Oamaru, there are subscription libraries, the subscription ranging from ten shillings to one guinea a year. It should be mentioned that an agitation is now on foot for the establishment of a public library in Dunedin. Many of the smaller towns have institutions of minor importance which supply the wants of students in the country districts. The Auckland Public Library is by far the most imposing of the public institutions of the Colony, and was established in 1880, when it took over the collection of books gathered together by the Mechanics' Institute and Library, established in 1843, or three years after the foundation of the Colony. A special feature of the Auckland Public Library is the valuable collection of works presented to it by the late Sir George Grey, consisting of some 13,000 rare and choice books, about 700 manuscripts, over 3,000 autograph letters, besides a large collection of paintings and rare curios. The library contains about 34,000 volumes and pamphlets, and is destined in the near future to become a prominent rival of the magnificent libraries in Melbourne and Sydney. Attention should also be drawn to the Parliamentary Library at Wellington, which contains nearly 40,000 volumes, and lends books when Parliament is not in session to "respectable persons whose names have been placed on the recess list of borrowers." There are several University Libraries which have special collections suitable for academic purposes. The official returns show that there are 304 libraries in New Zealand, containing 409,604 volumes.

Such, then, is a brief account of the present condition of the chief libraries of Australasia, which, it may be mentioned, are administered by committees consisting of the leading literary men of the Colonies, as well as by a staff of most able, painstaking, and efficient librarians. Before leaving Australasia one word may be said as to the future. Now that the federation of these Colonies is likely to

become an accomplished fact, it is probable that in the near future a large and thoroughly representative National Library will be established in the capital city, wherever that may be. It may not be generally known that the nucleus of a magnificent collection of Australasian literature has already been offered to and accepted by the Premiers of the colonies concerned on behalf of the Federal government. The liberal donor is Mr. E. A. Petherick, who is one of the greatest living authorities upon Australasian literature, and the collection comprehends books, pamphlets, maps, and manuscripts, upwards of 6,000 in number, and forms a library mainly and essentially Australasian in character.

CANADA.

The Dominion of Canada may be said to have been the first British Colony to establish libraries, for as long ago as 1779 there existed a public circulating library in Quebec, with about 2,000 volumes. Since that date large and valuable collections have been formed in the various Provinces, with the result that at the present time there are about 480 libraries in Canada, distributed under the headings of Legal, Legislative, Public, Collegiate, etc., containing close upon 2,000,000 volumes and pamphlets. Of these by far the largest and most representative is that of the Library of Parliament at Ottawa, containing about 150,000 volumes, and stored in what has been described by a well-known Canadian author, Sir John Bourinot, as an edifice of architectural beauty, but not equal to existing demands. Parliamentary libraries exist in each of the Provinces, the collections varying from a few hundreds, as in British Columbia, to over 70,000 in the province of Ontario, all of which are available to readers provided with an introduction from a member of the legislature. Notable collections are also to be found in the universities and literary societies of Canada, those claiming special attention being the McGill University,

Montreal, the University of Toronto, the Canadian Institute, various geographical societies, the Geological and Natural History Survey, and last, but by no means least, the Library of Laval College, which contains about 100,000 volumes, and has been stated by Mr. James Bain, the Librarian of the Toronto Public Library, to be unrivalled for the extent and character of its French collection and its many scarce books on early Canadian literature and history. It is in the province of Ontario, however, that the library movement has met with the greatest support, for out of the total of 480 libraries in the Dominion, 374 are situated in Ontario, and it was also in this province that the Free Libraries Act, which was passed in 1882, was first adopted. Since that date twelve cities and towns have availed themselves of the Act, and it is anticipated that the movement will rapidly extend to other provinces now that it has proved so successful in Ontario. It may be mentioned, however, that in the province of Quebec the dual language and religion has so far had the effect of preventing united action in passing a Public Library Act such as exists in the province of Ontario. The Toronto Public Library has made good progress since its foundation, and now contains a collection of books numbering over 108,000, which are free for the use of the citizens. Its influence is far-reaching, for in the report for 1898 it is stated that readers are now continually attracted from distant points in the country as well as from the United States to consult its rare books.

In the Maritime Provinces there are forty-four libraries, of which two are free, viz., the Citizen's Free Library in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with about 11,000 volumes, and the Free Library of St. John, New Brunswick, with 10,000 volumes, the latter having been established by the citizens to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the landing of the United Empire Loyalists. There is also in Nova Scotia the Library of King's College, Windsor, which was founded in 1802, and, although not of large size, con-

tains one of the most valuable collections of bibliographical treasures to be found in the Dominion of Canada, including many beautiful specimens of the early printers. In Manitoba and the North-West Territories the library question is now occupying attention, and there are already good collections in the possession of the Literary and Historical Society of Manitoba and the University of Manitoba, as well as in the Law Society of Winnipeg; whilst in British Columbia two free libraries have been established, one in Victoria, the seat of government, and the other in Vancouver.

AFRICA.

Turning now to our South African possessions, viz., the Cape Colony, Natal, and Rhodesia, we find that the library movement, especially in the Cape Colony, has made considerable progress during recent years. According to the latest official returns, there are at the present time in the Cape Colony 115 libraries, containing 378,059 volumes, and receiving a government grant of £17,483. The public libraries of Cape Town, Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth, King Williamstown, Kimberley, East London, Cradock, and Graff-Reinet are the principal institutions in the Colony and receive special grants from government; whilst scattered throughout the Colony are similar institutions supported by subscriptions, together with small annual grants. The South African Public Library at Cape Town has been in existence since the year 1818, and contains 61,821 volumes, embracing every branch of science and literature, as well as three special collections which have been bequeathed to it at various periods of its history, viz., the Dessinian, the Grey, and the Porter collections. The first-named consists mainly of books, with a few manuscripts and paintings, bequeathed to the colony in 1761 by Joachim van Dessin, the number of volumes being about 4,000 in the Latin, French, German, and Dutch languages; the second, or the Grey collection, has attained a world-

wide notoriety, and consists of about 5,000 volumes, together with many valuable manuscripts, mostly on vellum or parchment, some of them belonging to the tenth century ; whilst the third, or Porter collection, consists of standard works purchased out of the funds raised for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of the Hon. William Porter, a prominent Cape politician. In addition to the Public Library at Cape Town, there is a Parliamentary Library containing about 12,000 volumes, and mainly used by members of the legislature. The Kimberley Public Library is a well-organized and excellently managed institution containing 22,000 volumes, a speciality of which is a collection of works relating to mining and mineralogy, geology, and the history, nature, and occurrence of gems and precious stones. This collection, it is stated, has proved of considerable service to residents in the centre of the diamond mining industry. The remaining libraries call for no special comment, unless it be that they are all making steady, if not rapid progress. Away in the north, almost as soon as Bulawayo was laid out as a township, a public library was founded, and it is satisfactory to find that its contents, whilst as yet somewhat limited, are nevertheless highly appreciated by the residents of that portion of Rhodesia.

In Natal there are a large number of societies in the principal towns of the Colony possessing libraries, but none of them of any great size or importance. For instance, in Pietermaritzburg there is the Natal Society, which has a collection of a little over 9,000 volumes, and is supported by private subscriptions and a government as well as a corporation grant. There is, as in other Colonies, a Parliamentary Library in Pietermaritzburg and a so-called public library in Durban, the chief seaport of the Colony, which, however, is very unimportant.

In the country districts such as Ladysmith, Dundee, Newcastle, Verulam, Pinetown, etc., small libraries have been formed, but in no instance is there one outside the two

chief towns which can compare with the smaller libraries of the Cape Colony.

WEST INDIES.

Throughout the West Indies there are several libraries belonging to learned and agricultural societies, as well as public libraries, in Trinidad, Grenada, Barbados, the Bahamas, and Jamaica. The most important is the last-named, which is known as the Institute of Jamaica, and is supported by a government grant of about £2,000 a year and private subscriptions. It contains about 11,000 volumes of scientific, historic, and general literature, whilst a special feature is a very comprehensive and valuable collection of works relating to Jamaica and the West Indies generally. The Trinidad Public Library is a well-arranged institution which was established in 1851, and contains about 20,000 volumes. The Victoria Institute, which was established to commemorate the Queen's jubilee, was opened in 1892, and is a literary centre in Trinidad which is likely to do good work in the future. In the Bahamas is the Nassau Public Library, containing about 13,000 admirably selected volumes in addition to a good collection of legal works; whilst in British Guiana there is the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society, which possesses a library of about 20,000 volumes, and the Berbice Reading Society with almost 5,000 volumes. The Public Library of Grenada was first established as long ago as 1846, but was reorganized about ten years ago and now occupies a newly-erected and handsome building. It has about 4,000 volumes. There is also in Grenada a law library containing some 500 volumes. In all the West India Colonies there are legislative libraries of more or less importance.

EASTERN COLONIES.

Turning once again to the East, there are the Colonies of Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, and Mauritius,

in all of which the literary requirements of the people are administered to by good collections of works in the possession of local societies. The libraries of Ceylon number twenty-four, four of which are to be found in Colombo, viz., the Colombo Library, the Museum Library, the Colombo Pettrah Library, and the Library of the Ceylon branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, and the remainder in the smaller towns of the Colony. The majority receive a government grant, which appears very small when compared with the grants made in other Colonies. In the Straits Settlements there are the Raffles Library and that of the Straits branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in Singapore, and in other parts of the Colony the Malacca and Penang libraries, both of which are well managed by local committees and supplied with recent literature. With the exception of the Legislative Library in Hong Kong, and a public library situated in the City Hall, there is no other representative institution. In Mauritius there is a public library at Port Louis with a collection of over 12,000 volumes of general literature, as well as several societies which are easily accessible to all persons engaged in literary work.

Having now travelled round the Empire, I would merely state in conclusion that this article is in no way exhaustive, but has been compiled for the purpose of supplying some slight idea of the scope and value of library work in Greater Britain as it at present exists.

JAMES R. BOOSÉ.