

Correspondence.

HOW TO ADOPT THE ACTS IN RURAL PARISHES.

SIR,—With reference to the article extracted from the *Local Government Journal*, appearing in this month's issue of THE LIBRARY, it may be of interest to your readers to know that I have prepared a pamphlet with the necessary forms showing the procedure to be followed for the adoption of the Acts in a rural parish, which will be issued in the course of a few days.

Yours &c.,

TOWN HALL,

EASTBOURNE,

March 9th, 1896.

H. W. FOVARGUE,

Hon. Solr. L.A.

AN ERUDITE COMMITTEE.

SIR,—Here is an amusing account of a recent meeting of a public library committee which shall be nameless. According to a local paper, a reader has proposed the addition of two books to the library, viz., *The City of Dreadful Night*, &c., by James Thomson (B.V.), and Edward FitzGerald's translation of the *Rubāiyāt of Omar Khayyām*. This suggestion has greatly exercised the minds of some of the committee. One member is reported to have said that "he thought there were plenty of poets in the library at the present time," whereupon the librarian was asked, "How do you find the poets go?" "Fairly well," replied the librarian; so it would appear that, in Stock Exchange parlance, poets are "steady." Another gentleman would have liked to know something about the books before he voted for their purchase; but afterwards was struck with the idea that "they ought to have *The City of Dreadful Night*, as it was the work of one of their own poets, who had lived not three miles away," thus confounding Thomson (B.V.) with the author of *The Seasons*. This statement called forth a remark from the opener of the discussion to the effect that there were a number of poets in the district, and if they purchased one local poet they would have to purchase another! A better informed member of the committee here pointed out that the James Thomson referred to was not the author of *The Seasons*, and a reverend gentleman present somewhat hesitatingly adopted this view. The serious objection to the poet having a local interest being thus disposed of, and other individuals having confessed that they were not acquainted with the works, the decision of the committee was postponed "until more information is obtained about the books." And these are the luminaries to whom is entrusted the duty of providing intellectual pabulum for the people. Comment is needless.

Yours, &c.,

OBSERVER.

PERPETUAL CATALOGUES.

DEAR SIR,—In this country we are proverbially slow in putting new ideas to a practical test—witness the extent to which the English citizen avails himself of the telephone, phonograph, electric light, and electric traction, as compared with such countries as Norway, Sweden,

and Switzerland, and it is only by "pegging away" that the advocates of new ideas can get even a hearing. This is my excuse for drawing the attention of British library managers to the advantages to be obtained by means of the Linotype. Those who were present at the first Summer School will remember the visit paid to the Linotype Company's premises in London, and Mr. MacAlister's demonstration of its perfect practicability for catalogue work. In America several excellent catalogues have been printed by this means. In the hands of a single operator, the machine does work equal to the turn out of five men, working by ordinary means. I presume it is generally known that the machine composes and stereotypes matter into solid lines, each line separate from the other, all of equal size, and ready for placing in the chase. Further, it will be admitted that machine-composed type, after being printed from, is of no value to the printer, except for melting purposes, and, therefore, could be purchased from him at that value, viz., 1½d. per lb. On the other hand, [letter] type when new, costs 1s. 4d. per lb., and when worn out, the melting value is 3d. per lb. My suggestion is that a catalogue should be linotyped, and, after the required number of sheets have been printed, the lines of type should be purchased for the library, and stored in "galleys" or boxes, ready for re-use at a few hours' notice. In the interval between different editions, all new entries should be linotyped at times most convenient to the librarian, and sorted into the main body of entries; or, if a supplementary catalogue is desired, they may be printed from before being sorted.

By this means catalogues could be produced at a cheaper rate, and a librarian's work would be made much less arduous, especially in re-issues, where seven-eighths of the matter is already checked, and thus obviate the necessity of re-composing old matter for every edition of the catalogue.

Yours, &c.,

T. ALDRED.

A PUBLISHERS' CRIME.

SIR,—I need not inform you, nor any other member of the Library Association, that in the consultation of many books, perhaps more especially those on scientific subjects, it is of great importance that the date of publication be known.

Nor will the information be new to you that of late years many publishers omit this necessary knowledge on the title-pages of books published by them. Can any excuse be urged in favour of this omission, except that of an intention to defraud the purchaser?

Will you kindly direct the attention of the members of the Association to this serious matter, for the express purpose of considering the advisability of endeavouring to get an Act of Parliament passed compelling every printer or publisher of a map or of a book to have distinctly printed thereon the year of publication.

In America no copyright is valid unless the date of publication is printed—in the case of a book on the title-page or on the back thereof, and of other publications on a conspicuous place thereof. Such an Act will be, not merely of value to bibliophiles, but a great protection to the public against fraud by unconscionable booksellers and publishers.

Yours, &c.,

EADWEARD MUYERIDGE.

The Chestnuts,

Kingston-on-Thames,

January 28th, 1896.