

containing matter which might easily be copied. Books obtained by private persons are constantly loaned to others and even sent hundreds of miles by post. Wholesets of books have been so constantly handled as to become offensive, and have literally fallen to pieces on the shelves. Books have been taken away by persons who have appropriated them and who have boldly declared that the books had been returned. The best editions of our classic English writers, in particular those editions which would afford most pleasure to gentlemen of both Houses who are advancing in age, and who find a good type essential to study, have had to be hidden away in cupboards to save them from the reckless handling of persons possessing and misusing a special privilege in the Library.

The Librarians consider it essential also that some fixed rule should be adopted with regard to the practice of permitting strangers to obtain books through members of Parliament during the Session, and with regard to the number of books obtainable by members themselves. Considerable difficulty is always experienced in enforcing the return of books obtained by strangers and charged to members.

The Librarians consider that the rule which limits a member of either House to three works at one time, might reasonably be made more liberal, and the number increased to six. But in the face of the rule which limits the number to three, the Librarians regret to have to report that books have been taken out of the Library in numbers from six to sixty. It is obvious that such a practice must seriously interfere with the usefulness of the Library, and with the readiness of its response to the continual demands made upon it by the members of the two Houses.

Among the practices most objectionable is one that has prevailed too much among members of Parliament, who, against the strict rule of the Library adopted by Parliament, have insisted on taking from the Library the volumes of Canadian pamphlets. The consequence has been disastrous. Losses have occurred continually, and the gaps in the lists of our volumes offer constant protest against the practice of permitting the pamphlets to be taken out of the room. Many of the pamphlets are valuable; most of them can never be replaced. Even the English Sessional Papers have not escaped loss; and recently it was found that a most valuable report on Acts of Parliament had been deliberately cut out of the papers for 1875. The usefulness of the series was destroyed by the abstraction of a report which might have been obtained in London for a shilling.

For the first time the Catalogue of the accessions to the Library during the year is presented in a form which includes subjects as well as authors, so that books sought for on any subject may be found under the name of the author and under the subject-heading also. The books under the subject-heading have been placed in alphabetical order. This annual Catalogue is susceptible of further improvements in its classification, and in future issues it is expected that these improvements will be affected. Since 1880 the catalogue of accessions has been published as an author-catalogue simply; and the Librarians entertain with interest the hope of being authorized to present to Parliament a subject as well as author-catalogue of all accessions from 1880 to the present time.

During the last Session gentlemen in the House of Commons, whose interest in the Library the Librarians desire most cordially to solicit and which they hope may continue and increase, offered various criticisms of its management, and various suggestions for its improvement.

Two complaints were particularly made. One was that books named in the Catalogue were not to be found in the Library, and no record of their fate is preserved. This is quite true. It is one of the unhappy consequences of a relaxation of wise rules, of the too liberal granting of the privileges of the Library to strangers, and of the indifference, which even on the part of members of Parliament, has too often prevailed regarding the books of the Library.

The other was, that the Catalogues of the Library were not systematic, and that access to the contents of the Library was not easily had. The Librarians desire to say, in justice to the memory of the distinguished gentleman who preceded them, whose merits they can only hope in time to aspire to, that after giving the system