

doubt the best in the world on N.Z. literature.' Mackay had asked him to state his terms — 'It is difficult to do this fully now... I think 30 or 35 copies would do for myself. I should like the volumes to be printed per se — that is, as not forming part of an "Historical Records" idea which I understand the Government is proposing to publish....'

Hall-Jones minuted the letter to the Parliamentary Librarian through Col. Pitt then Colonial Secretary — 'As Dr Hocken's work appears to be of some value I think it would be as well for the Librarian to see the manuscript. I understand the Doctor would be satisfied with 35 copies for his own use. The cost of printing this work to be borne by the Govt....'⁵ Pitt concurred.

Charles Wilson commented at length on the same day as the Minute and only two days after Hocken had dated his letter. 'I have often heard of Dr Hocken's work, and of his bibliography. If it really merits the encomiums that have been passed upon it, I for one, as Librarian of what is really New Zealand's National Library, would be only too glad to hear that the Government had decided to print and publish it.'⁶ He claimed that the only existing bibliographies of New Zealand were three, firstly Collier's, secondly the Catalogue of the York Gate Library (The Silver collection, by E. A. Petherick, published in 1886) and a Francis Edwards catalogue, presumably *Edwards' Australasian catalogue...* 1900. He considered that 'the first of these is very imperfect and now almost useless; the second has many good features but is practically confined to books possessed by Mr Silver... [and] the third is merely a trade list.' For one whose lengthy professional life as a librarian appears to have been innocent of any bibliographical exercise good or bad, Wilson's strictures on his predecessor were unwarrantably severe. Collier's work was incomplete but until replaced by something better was useful and worthwhile.

If Dr Hocken has done his work well, he has produced a bibliography, which will be welcomed by librarians all the world over... But I would not like to say, that the work is worth undertaking, unless I saw the manuscript. I have not yet taken my yearly holiday and if you approve I would be glad to place a portion of it at the disposal of the Department, and personally examine the Manuscript on the spot. I could then give a reliable report upon the whole matter. The incidental expenses for travelling, etc., would be comparatively trifling. Such an investigation would also be useful in affording an opportunity of ascertaining particulars of many publications that at present the Library lacks. To show how incomplete is our own Collection, I may mention, that I know of nearly 380 books and pamphlets, which we have not got, and very few of these are included in Collier's bibliography.

I could also thoroughly inspect Dr Hocken's famous library of New Zealand books and would no doubt gather much information that would be of value. If ever Dr Hocken's Library Comes into the market I hope it will be secured by the Government, for the General Assembly Library. The Doctor has, I believe, hundreds of items, especially rare pamphlets, which we have not got....