

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE ART COLLECTION

Apart from the Swainson Drawings covered in the last number and the Ashworth Journals and Sketches — to be discussed in detail at a later date — the major addition has been Charles Meryon's large drawing of the death of Marion du Fresne, at the Bay of Islands on 12 June 1772. This picture was generously presented to New Zealand by the Australian Government — together with a Sidney Nolan landscape, deposited in the National Art Gallery — to mark the visit of Mr Holt, the Prime Minister of Australia, last February. It came from the Rex Nan Kivell Collection in the Australian National Library, and was last seen in this country in 1953-54 when a selection of the Nan Kivell paintings was sent on tour by the Turnbull Library on behalf of the Department of Internal Affairs. The picture is perhaps of greater historical importance because of the artist than of his subject. It is believed to have been made about 1850, after Meryon had abandoned painting and was turning towards etching: in this latter field he was to become recognized, posthumously, as France's master in the nineteenth century. Meryon has a particular interest for New Zealand as he was stationed at Akaroa in the corvette *Le Rhin* from 1843-46. His etchings of Akaroa in 1845 are well known. They have been on exhibition at the Library with his *Mort de Marion du Fresne*, which will later be displayed in the main centres.

The Library was most fortunate to purchase at Sotheby's one of the few known oils by Augustus Earle. It depicts the young chief Te Rangituke, of Kawakawa, with his wife and son. The painting is being cleaned and restored in London before being sent out.

Generous donations have included a collection of sketchbooks and drawings by Frances Hodgkins and her sister, Mrs Field, presented by members of the Field family, and covering chiefly scenes in the South island; a collection of sketchbooks and watercolours by the Lysaght sisters, of views in Taranaki, South Canterbury and the Chatham Islands, presented by Miss Josephine Whitehorn on behalf of the estate of the late John L. Moore, the well-known artist; and a large number of watercolours of the Hutt Valley, Lake Manapouri and Oamaru by A. C. Gifford, presented by his son and daughter.

A number of pictures have been purchased by private treaty, and at auction in New Zealand, London and Sydney. Among several of the more significant items may be mentioned a series of eight historically useful sepia wash sketches of Auckland in the eighteen-sixties, by J. B. C. Hoyte; a water-colour by C. Aubrey of Masterton in 1891; a wash sketch of the Hutt Valley from the Rimutaku road, by Nicholas Chevalier; an engraving by J. T. Johnston of the baptism of Te Ngahue at Te Ariki in 1876; and a collection of thirty-seven engravings, being portraits, chiefly of Cook and of Banks, with a few of other noted explorers.

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