

ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY

Report by the Chief Librarian, J. E. Traue

The Alexander Turnbull Library collects, maintains and makes available within the Library a range of research materials on New Zealand, the Pacific, English literature, Milton, rare books and the development of the art of printing. It is responsible for the national collection relating to New Zealand and the production of the New Zealand National Bibliography.

During the year, by making major additions to several of its established collections and developing a number of new research collections, the library further defined its role as a national research library. Policies for the future will give further emphasis to the acquisition of research materials, especially original documentary sources, and to the encouragement of scholarly work based on the collections. The principal justification for a research library is the volume of publication of books, pamphlets, theses, essays and articles by its users and the Turnbull Library has a very special responsibility to facilitate research and publication in all aspects of New Zealand's history.

Building The Collections

The purchase in London of 12 early watercolours by John Gully added significantly both to the Sir Julius von Haast papers in the library and to the topographical paintings collection. The paintings, commissioned by von Haast in 1862 to illustrate an important geological paper on the glaciation of the Southern Alps, were purchased from the Royal Geographical Society in London by the Alexander Turnbull Library Endowment Trust for £5,000. Four of the paintings were selected by the Trust for publication in its 1974 Print Series and are thus being made available to the general public. The Mansfield collection was further strengthened by the bequest of a Vera MacKintosh Bell collection of original letters, clippings and books relating to her sister Katherine Mansfield. A large collection of William Colenso association letters were purchased at auction in New Zealand and 70 letters written by Lieutenant C. G. S. Foljambe from New Zealand in the 1860s were purchased at auction in London. A selection of paintings by a hitherto unknown but clearly important early colonial painter, John Guise Mitford, was also purchased at auction in London and Wellington.

The largest purchase during the year was of 694 volumes of books by or relating to John Milton the English seventeenth century poet and pamphleteer. The library's collection relating to Milton and his times,