

shock of deprivation the deep surgery which pruned back Turnbull's list of current periodical subscriptions was almost unnoticed.¹⁹

It must, however, be recorded that in October 1921 the Librarian was advised that the Minister had approved 'an annual expenditure not exceeding £500 per annum' on the purchase of books and publications for the Library. Something, nevertheless, seems to have happened to this authority which clearly was not available for most of the period of these notes. (Librarian to Under-Secretary, 5 October 1921). Possibly it withered in the first small depression some months later.

There were, however, occasional unexpected dividends. At the end of the year Messrs Wright Stephenson 'who are clearing out their premises' sent up thirty cases of books and some 400 bound volumes of newspapers, a residue from the 1916 take-over of W. & G. Turnbull and Company's premises. With today's hind-sight we would have loved to be present at the clearing out of Messrs Wright Stephenson's premises. Not merely the archives of an important firm of stock and station agents might have been rescued but the records of Turnbull and Company themselves, now well lost to research except for dim indirect light in the files of solicitors and the occasional government archive. There might even have been some of A.H.T.'s own correspondence, perhaps the 1901-18 half, which according to legend brother Robert left in a tram, although with closer study one may feel that Robert's loss may not have been accidental.

But it was more than time to open the Library. Members and the general public had been wanting to know almost for years when they were to see the national treasures. Mr W. T. Jennings, the member for Waitomo, was a persistent questioner. In November 1918²⁰ he asked whether members would have an opportunity of visiting the Library. The Minister said because of 'want of staff' it was proposed to ask members to defer their visits until the next session. 'At present it is absolutely closed.' Mr Jennings tried again in September 1919.²¹ 'What is the position of the closed Turnbull Library . . .?' He was told that 3,000 Pacific area volumes had been classified, accessioned and arranged and 4,000 remained to be dealt with. However, the Minister agreed that parties of members could now inspect the collection. Mr Jennings, from his remarks in the Supply debate,²² availed himself of the opportunity. On 18 September the Honourable D. Buddo asked what provision was being made to keep up-to-date reference works on New Zealand and Australia.²³ Mr Wilson's suggested reply was that 'It is intended to secure the necessary works of a reference nature relating to Australia and New Zealand'. Neither probably understood what was meant by the term reference work but in this mandate for equivocation the policy of restraint was confirmed.

The second anniversary of Turnbull's death, 28 June 1920, was chosen