

THE BEQUEST OF PERCY WATTS RULE

WHEN Alfred H. Huth, one of the most magnificent book-collectors of modern times, made his will in 1903, he provided that the British Museum should have a selection of fifty books from his library. The result was recorded in a handsome volume published by the Museum in 1912, where the treasures were described. It was a noble tribute to a noble gesture.

It may be that Percy Watts Rule, distinguished architect of Timaru, whose untimely death occurred in May 1953, had this precedent in mind when he provided in his will that the Alexander Turnbull Library should receive a selection of twenty of his books, to be chosen by his daughter, Mrs. H. G. Norris, and the Librarian. In addition, however, he devised the whole of his "A. Edward Newton Collection".

The name of A. Edward Newton, of Philadelphia, has enjoyed an individual and robust repute in the higher circles of book-collecting in the past thirty years, for Newton was a millionaire book-collector, who knew what he was about, was an undeniable "character", and an engaging and competent writer to boot. Few more charming books on English book-collecting than his *Amenities of Book Collecting* have ever been published, and if Percy Watts Rule found himself admiring the American's writings and personality therein, it was perhaps that he recognized a kindred spirit and that his was merely a parallel line of development.

It had become a new path in book-collecting to assemble the not inconsiderable writings and "—ana" of Newton, and without much conscious intent at first, Watts Rule anon found that in following his interest he was accumulating quite a collection. This is now manifest in the scores of items now present in the Library under the name of Newton.

Apart from writing well and knowledgeably on his favourite study, Newton stressed sound principles in its pursuit, such as his insistence on original condition, and the significance of association and provenance. He was in the