

If I had to characterise Government's performance of *its* trusteeship of Turnbull's bequest I think I would choose the language of horseracing. 'Government's track record is solid but not outstanding. A conscientious starter with few expectations. Responsive under strong public stimulation. With experience is showing signs of developing a strong finishing run. Not among the front runners.'

The front runners were consistently elsewhere, among Turnbull's friends and acquaintances in business and scholarship, other collectors, and increasingly among the public at large. They had one thing in common, they shared Alexander Turnbull's faith in the importance of a New Zealand national collection. Their names from the great to the humble are recorded in the bookplates, the named collections, the named bequests, the special funds, the donation book and the annual report. The Mantell Collection, the Trimble Collection, the Shirtcliffe Endowment, the Sir Joseph Kinsey Collection, the Earp Collection, the Earp Bequest, the Percy Watts Rule Collection, the Von Haast Papers and the Von Haast Bequest, the Sir John Ilott Collection, the Alexander Coutts Bequest, the Fleck Bequest with the Fleck Special Fund for rare books and the H. B. Fleck Memorial Publications Fund which has made the publication of this biography possible. The Atkinson Collection, the Sir Harold Beauchamp gift, the Henry Wright Collection, the Mathew Cable Collection, the Field Collection; Sir Alexander Howard's Bequest, one of the latest, of £5,000 worth of sixteenth century books, mostly bibles, and in 1962 the first of a new kind of gift, the British Petroleum purchase of the Guy Scholefield papers as a gift to the library.

These are some of the thousands who have given books, manuscripts, pictures and money to build on Alexander Turnbull's nucleus. Together, government and private support has more than trebled the collection in 56 years.

Although I have no wish to under-emphasise the importance of money, or in any way to suggest to government and others that we don't need more, it has taken more than money to build this kind of library. Belief, belief in the importance and value of a comprehensive research collection has been necessary. And on that note it is appropriate that I should turn from the public which has given so generously, to the public's servants, the librarians, Alexander Turnbull's librarians.

Johannes Andersen, Clyde Taylor, John Cole, Graham Bagnall, men who with Turnbull shared John Milton's belief that books are not dead things but they are indeed man's truest immortality—that Shakespeare is more surely the substantial first folio than the shadowy man of Stratford. Men imbued with Turnbull's passion for collecting, each of whom has built his personality and his beliefs into the collections.

Alexander Horsburgh Turnbull, bookman, New Zealander, collector par excellence, would be proud of what his librarians have wrought. I