

hope that he will forgive us if in our quest for excellence in some fields we have neglected others dear to his heart. The John Milton collection, Turnbull's other great collection alongside the New Zealand collection, has not received the support it deserves. We hope to do better.

I have on other occasions attempted to define the essence of this extraordinary institution. I have likened it to a pyramid, a man-made artifact, built with loving care, book by book, manuscript by manuscript, by picture, sketch, map, plan, photograph, to provide an eminence to enable the scholar and the citizen to see a wider horizon, even a new country. I have called it the collective memory of a nation. I have called it a burning glass, a lens to enable us to focus on our past.

But on this occasion I think it best to leave the definition to its founder, Alexander Turnbull.

'Those who come after us will be discriminating enough, I feel sure, to blow away the mists . . . that obscure the real history of the Dominion and to bring into view the men who really worked with their hands and risked their lives for the good of their country. My books and manuscripts I hope will assist future searchers after the truth.'