

ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY

Report by the Chief Librarian, J. E. Traue

This report marks the first full year of occupancy of the second floor at 44 The Terrace, the temporary headquarters of the Library until the National Library Building is completed towards the end of the decade. The new premises, despite some inadequacies, have functioned well and are providing a higher standard of accommodation for staff and stock than the old building in Bowen Street. However, little progress has been made towards the solution of the library's overall accommodation problems. The growth rate of the collections, stimulated by the added responsibilities assigned to Turnbull after the creation of the National Library in 1965, is still accelerating and this year may well set a record. Some additional accommodation has been made available at Gateway House in Dixon Street, to which the Photograph Section and microfilm unit have been shifted from the local government Building on The Terrace, but more will be required before the occupancy of the National Library Building. It appears inevitable that the fragmentation of the collections, at present divided between The Terrace, the Colonial Motor Company building in Courtenay Place, the Turnbull house on Bowen Street, Gateway House, and miscellaneous basements, will continue with all its consequences for staff and users.

The Bowen Street building is currently being used for storage but it is hoped that a wider use for the building as a display and exhibition centre will be possible. The continuing interest of the Wellington City Council in the preservation of the building is greatly appreciated.

The increasing growth of the collections reflects the widening reputation of the Alexander Turnbull Library as the national collection of research materials relating to New Zealand. Two particular matters demand recognition. First, the longer-term effects of the extended collecting expedition undertaken by the Chief Librarian last year in the United Kingdom are now showing. A steady flow of gifts and offers for purchase has been stimulated by the visit and one bequest of £5,000 worth of sixteenth century books is directly attributable to Mr Bagnall's presence in London. Heartened by this success a collecting expedition to Australia and further visits to the United Kingdom are planned. Second, the special grant of \$45,000 from the Government to assist in making three purchases that would otherwise have been beyond the library's resources is welcome recognition of the national importance of Turnbull's collections. Three major collections became available within months of each other, the Chazal watercolours of the Duperrey expedition which visited New Zealand in 1824; a group of original water-