

In the Turnbull Library the bases for some studies in twentieth century science are being laid. Antarctic scientific exploration is one area. Records are extant of the British Antarctic Expedition (MS 1907, qMS 1908, qMS 1908-09, MS 1907-09) and later expeditions (e.g. Micro MS 754, MS Papers 880/1-2, MS Papers 405 and the A. S. Helm Papers on the Ross Sea Committee and Trans-Antarctic Expedition). Aviation is represented in some items (MS Papers 240, M. W. Buckley and MS Papers 419, H. M. Mackay's papers). Medical studies and records are another area where more preservation should be attempted to supplement the holdings of, for example, R. B. Bakewell on medical conditions in the New Zealand contingent to the Boer War (MS 1892-1908) and the diary of the versatile, remarkable Agnes Bennett as a medical officer in the First World War (included in Bennett Papers MS Papers 1346). Dr Agnes Bennett, indeed, exemplifies in the collection housed in the Turnbull the immense scope and creativity of a woman in science and society.

When the daunting yet necessary task of attempting a critical study in depth of New Zealand contributions to Polynesian anthropology is undertaken the extensive Turnbull papers of J. C. Andersen (e.g. MS Papers 148), P. Buck (e.g. MS Papers 775, Micro MS 599), Elsdon Best (e.g. MS Papers 72, MS 1899- and qMS 1901-31) and the records of the Polynesian Society 1845-1940 (MS Papers 1187) and its editor S. P. Smith will provide a vital fundament. The earlier story can undoubtedly be studied in the papers of missionaries and other scientists (e.g. A. Hamilton, MS Papers 1256, Correspondence with prominent scientists, 1861-1910). If anyone proposes studying the conservation movement and wild life protection in New Zealand a start might be made with W. L. Buller's letterbook (1892-94) to Ballance and Seddon on Little Barrier and Resolution Islands as bird sanctuaries (qMS 1892-94) or by examining Buchanan's, Cockayne's and others' earlier reports and correspondence as well as more recent materials (qMS ca.1947 and MS Papers 1069). MS 1867 contains descriptions by Albert Kilminster of the early Wellington bush environs. Under MS Papers 444 are the records (1922-71) of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

However widely we interpret the possibilities of scientific life in twentieth century New Zealand there is evidence throughout of some rich and varied thinking. MS Papers 904 contain records of the first Town Planning Conference in Wellington in 1919 and qMS 1909-1919 the Rhodes Scholarships Applications. The modern meteorological historian would find scope in S. L. Muller's early observations for Blenheim, the Wairau and Nelson (MS 1861-91 and MS 1862-90), from a Raoul Island diary of 1908-11 (qMS 1908-11) and the Martin family station diaries of 1879-85 (Micro MS 487).