

ment as Chairman of Trustees of the National Library of New Zealand he resigned.

From the pencil annotations in his hand on the front endpapers of many of his books his active period of collecting was during the 1920s when he concentrated on the development of his Pacific holdings. The main body of his collection which he sold at auction in 1951 may not have been a distinguished corpus on the scale of Webster or Fox, for, as a practical man, Ilott was more frequently concerned with the title and text than condition. It was, nevertheless the most extensive offering of Pacific books sold in New Zealand in forty years and contained a few titles still not in Turnbull. The Library, however, was able to acquire a little later some 23 early printed books which were indicative of his range of interest. This acquisition was later dwarfed by his most generous donation in 1958 of five illuminated manuscripts and other associated items (*Turnbull Library Record* No. 14 March 1960). One of these has subsequently been identified as a Carmelite Book of Hours (*Turnbull Library Record* (n.s.) Vol. 4 No. 1 May 1971) of outstanding rarity and scholarly significance.

The writer's first acquaintance with John Ilott was as the newly appointed Treasurer of the Polynesian Society in 1938 a role which had been thrust upon him by the Society's slightly older Secretary, C. R. H. Taylor. John Ilott was a long-standing member of Council and during the war years when its membership dwindled to John Ilott, W. R. B. Oliver, Morris Jones, J. C. Andersen as Editor and A.G.B. by then combined Secretary-Treasurer, the latter was many times grateful for the perceptive, swift efficiency with which business was conducted and for Mr Ilott's skill in coping both with the aspirations of the editor and the opposing dourness of the Director of the Dominion Museum. Later, as Chairman of the Trustees of the National Library and particularly as Chairman of the Trustees Committee for the A.T.L. his long-standing view that no order paper need take more than 60 minutes of a busy man's time did create a few problems in the presentation and consideration of essential documents within the allotted span. Honours (Knighted in 1954 and Hon. LL.D. (Victoria University of Wellington in 1964)) were far from inducing any wish to sit back.

It was as Chairman of the above last-named bodies that he remains most clearly in the memories of many although then past his peak. It should be remembered that he took on these quite demanding tasks at the age of 82 and only after he had satisfied himself as a life-long friend of the Library and the loyal founder of the Friends that the formation of the National Library was in the best long-term interest of all parties. In both positions and particularly in the Turnbull Committee