

Turnbull Library with some five hundred letters. The friends used Maori nicknames; Mantell was Matara, Geraldine was Manu, and Cooke was Ku. A number of Mantell's replies to his fair pursuer in 1856-9 are headed from 'Ku's office'.

As for Jane Welsh Carlyle, the witty, possessive, neurotic little woman whom Thomas had married, she and John George Cooke struck up a close friendship. Its course may be traced in her letters, or more conveniently in Hanson's *Necessary Evil*. Jane was soon 'Yours Affectionately' to Cooke; she comforted him for a whole week in December 1858 when his mother died. He is described as 'very attentive and sympathetic' to her,¹⁴ squiring her to the station, offering flowers, advice about servants, and Scottish 'First-Foot Gifts' at New Year.¹⁵ Probably his finest hour was in 1864, when Jane returned to Cheyne Row after an almost mortal illness. Here is her account of their reunion.

'As soon as I was in the drawing-room George Cooke came . . . Now this George Cooke is a man between thirty and forty; tall, strong, silent, sincere: has been a sailor, a soldier, a New Zealand settler, a "man about town", and a stockbroker! The last man on earth one would have expected to make one "a scene". But, lo! what happened? I stood up to welcome him, and he took me in his arms, and kissed me two or three times, and then he sank into a chair and - burst into tears! and sobbed and cried like any schoolboy. Mercifully I was not affected by his agitation.'¹⁶

She was then 63, and he was 45; even allowing for her over-emphasis, that makes a fine Victorian tableau.

Jane Carlyle died in 1866; in 1867, Cooke's friend Crosbie Ward, who had visited London in 1863, was there once more, acting as Agent for Canterbury. He died, however, in December, and the next year his widow married Cooke. She already had two children; there was a third in the second marriage.¹⁷

Surviving letters in the Turnbull Library give occasional glimpses of Cooke's life in London at this time. There is mention of 'a jolly evening at Henry Petre's', with such names noted as Charles Clifford, Nathaniel Levin, Charles Hursthouse, and George Duppa.¹⁸ In 1863, there is a nice conflation of colonial and literary associations, when Cooke reports to Mantell that 'Trelawny was greatly pleased with the "Pakeha and Maori" book, Old New Zealand. Who wrote it? Those who know Trelawny's *Adventures of a Younger Son* will understand why Maning's story so pleased the old 'Pirate'.

And so time passed on. Geraldine Jewsbury kept Walter Mantell in New Zealand informed of the progress of the Cooke marriage, its new arrivals, the loss of a baby son, Mrs Cooke's health, etc. He did not find it easy at first to be 'tied to his hearth and home', having been 'so much of a Mormon in some respects'.¹⁹