

subject but there are hints of a sketch-book in which other less hackneyed themes would be interesting to us today. The situation which caused Annie Butler and her relations to visit New Zealand was often repeated in the 19th century but few writers of her background and standpoint have left such a graceful and occasionally significant series of vignettes of their stay.

Edward Wakefield's *New Zealand after fifty years*, although written by a more famous name than *Glimpses* . . . is in every sense less worthy. The most common edition with its cover displaying a period stereotype of a moa and an Indian-like Maori in front of an equally distorted nikau with a tent-like structure in the background is as physically unattractive as its text. The purpose of the book, according to the introduction, was to give readers a 'correct idea' of New Zealand's origins and destiny. Hocken described it as 'A sketchy account of the Colony's present position'. However until Mr. J. H. Christie some years ago, when working in National Archives, drew my attention to the official file⁴ dealing with the financial involvement of the Government of the day in its publication, all aspects of this process were quite unknown to me.

Edward Wakefield (1845-1924) was a son of the ill-starred Felix, a brother of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. After being brought to New Zealand at the age of six with his parents he was in due time taken back to England to complete his education. In 1863 he returned to New Zealand to join the *Nelson Examiner* at the age of 18. After a brief apprenticeship he became a civil servant for about eight years under the patronage of Edward Stafford (an uncle by marriage) with whose support he returned to journalism in 1874 as editor of the *Timaru Herald*. Between 1875 and 1887 he represented Geraldine and later Selwyn in the House of Representatives for some nine years. Colonial Secretary for a whole six days in the short-lived 1884 Atkinson Ministry he seems to have possessed some of the less attractive Wakefield political virtues such as a certain deviousness without vision or real personal dedication. The writer has noted elsewhere Wakefield's ironic dismissal of the Rev. W. S. Green's epoch-making visit to the Alps on the doorstep of Timaru⁴ and his action over the book now on the table before us seems to show a quotient of insensitiveness to the country's public relations which ostensibly were his concern at the time.

The story in brief was that a book was intended for preparation jointly by Wakefield and a Count de Jouffroy D'Abbans for distribution initially in France at the Paris International Exhibition of 1889. The Count, a shadowy figure in Wellington Society in the 1880s during part of which period at least he appears to have been French Consul, would repay a little study but there is no reason to doubt either his capacity to produce such a work or his quite disinterested intention to do so and so to help a country in which he had passed some years.