

ordeal at first, is the loss of so many of the blessed home charities, that were more to us than meats and drinks, and though so far from wishing to hinder the noble spirits we are linked to, we would urge them on, and strengthen their hands, yet the poor frail nervous body, sinks under hours and weeks and months of loneliness.<sup>14</sup>

In December 1844 St John's College was translated to Auckland and the Selwyns lived for a time at Parnell within half a mile of the Martins. Sarah's health had improved after the birth of a second son John in May 1844. During the following year she 'enjoyed quiet and her husband's society both of which are rare enjoyments to her'<sup>15</sup> at Otaki while Archdeacon Hadfield lay ill. Over the years she accompanied the Bishop on a number of journeys by land and sea in New Zealand and to the Melanesian Islands but she spent many long months watching and waiting for his return. Mary Ann Martin, who could measure her husband's absences in weeks, shared her loneliness as their friendship grew; Sarah wrote:

Dear Mrs Martin and I have much talking, much laughing and some reading together. . . She has an excellent understanding, and so cultivated a mind, such strong feeling and such a merry heart, that she can suit a grave, a wise, or a lively mood.<sup>16</sup>

In June 1846 the Bishop moved his family to St John's College at Bishop's Auckland (Tamaki). In addition to keeping things 'going forward at home' which included the supervision and training of the married Maori couples and their children living there, Sarah took charge of the primary school for children of the local working people, which involved the compiling of reading books: 'Lady Martin helped much in this, and indeed we flattered ourselves that our respective reading books were distinguished performances.'<sup>17</sup> They proof-read translations of parts of the Bible and a Maori Grammar by the Rev. R. Maunsell produced at the College Press—'A rare help in the language for me'.

The friends were joined by Caroline Abraham in August 1850. Sarah's hopes were high at the prospect of the arrival of the Abrahams,

—true yokefellows—people who take in a large idea. . .willing to give up something to carry it out—people sharing the work to whom one *can* talk—not as throwing words to a dead wall—people who will be ready to correct what is amiss in tone or practice, and not merely content themselves with abuse of what they do not like, as has been the case with many.<sup>18</sup>

But the measure of the support and relief that Dr Abraham and his wife gave to the toilworn Selwyns is reflected in Sarah's comment