

the difficulties which Gideon's 'runaway son' had caused his father. Gideon's journal chronicles an anxiety bordering on hostility at the emigration of the son in whom he had invested so much hope for the attainment of a social success which he himself felt a failure to achieve. Five years after Walter's arrival in the Colony, his father was still confiding his disappointment and despair to his journal. On 29 March 1845 he notes in reaction to a 'very unsatisfactory' letter that Walter 'is evidently doing nothing that can be of any ultimate benefit to himself.' Six months later: 'he is penniless, and without any prospect of profitable employment—all is over.... Will not do to think of it, for I know not how to rescue him;' and following the receipt of another letter: 'Nothing could be more deplorable than his present state.'³⁵

The new discovery changed all of that. Having received Walter's long letter on 1 September and before the bones themselves had arrived, Mantell announced in the *Athenaeum* of 27 September 1847 his son's accomplishment and the fact that the whole collection of the more than 700 bones including skulls, eggshells and previously unknown mandibles was on its way to England. Its arrival on 13 December 1847 met, if it did not exceed, all expectations. One senses that transfer of excitement first in Walter's description of his discovery as an offering from son to father and then the father's pride as he reaped something of the benefit of his son's fortune. A week after their arrival, he writes in his journal: 'Walter's collection of Moa's bones has been seen by Prof. Owen who considers it very marvellous.'³⁶ And with barely concealed excitement he writes to Walter on 18 January 1848: 'Prof. Owen has been hard at work upon them; & last Tuesday read before the Zoological Society descriptions of the skulls & mandibles' the variety of which made possible a more precise classification, to one genus of which he gave the name *Notornis* 'with the specific name of Mantelli, in honor of your discoveries.'³⁷ Owen, he writes

intends to give successive memoirs on all the novelties it contains, as fast as his time will permit. The next is to comprise the egg shells, sterna, etc. We have now sorted the collection & named & appropriated every specimen, except the vertebrae & pelvis which will be our next task. Mr. Lyell, the Dean of Westminster (Dr. Buckland) & many other savans have been here to see the collection which is spread out on tables in my dining room; and every one is astonished.... The collection will be far more valuable when properly arranged. I then intend to apply in the first place to the Trustees of the British Museum, and offer the choicest series: for they would not buy the whole, as they have already a large collection of the gigantic species of the Moa. Then I shall apply to other public bodies for other series, for Prof. Owen thinks four or five good series may be made out.... There is so much interest in the collection that I could write a volume upon the subject, but time is not at my command now.... My great desire is to make this collection a means of promoting your interest with