

Persuasive as were his words, the House of Representatives rejected his suggestion. It was indeed hard to be described as a gambler and yet not allowed to make gambling safe for democracy, to be continually prevented from ensuring that when the State made a bet it was betting on a certainty. The provinces were at the root of all opposition; it was always the Provincial Governments which prevented him from hedging or laying off for the sake of safety and security. Nothing satisfactory would ever be accomplished as long as they existed, so he brought their existence to an end by abolishing them altogether.

Wearied by frustration and with his health failing, Vogel retired from active politics and went to England for a term as High Commissioner. While there he explained to the English in a letter to *The Times* how the famine problem in India might be solved; and in another letter to the *Standard*, how the British Empire should be federated; but all this while his thoughts were continually returning to the country of his adoption. New Zealand, meanwhile, had fallen upon

evil days. An economic depression, which the succeeding Governments had failed to cope with, had settled on the land. When, by a curious coincidence, Vogel returned in 1884 on what he announced as a short visit, just when the political turmoil was at its height, he was acclaimed as a saviour by the people of New Zealand, who had forgotten that he was a gambler but who remembered only too well those glorious pictures of future prosperity he had been wont to paint for them. Vogel was very infirm in these days but his mind was still full of plans. Forming a Government in collaboration with Robert Stout, he began the task of raising the country from its despondency and inertia.

In some respects Vogel's plan for the regeneration of New Zealand in 1884 was very like the Public Works and Immigration Policy of 1870—minus the immigration. The trunk railway, still in a sadly disjointed condition, was to be completed, and another line constructed to connect Canterbury with the west coast. With the export of gold greatly decreased, the price of wheat fallen to an unprofitable level, and the frozen-meat trade still in its infancy, the country's prosperity was dependent to an extraordinary degree on the price of wool. To trust so entirely to the fortune of a single product seemed to Vogel not only dangerous but unenterprising. He proposed, therefore, that the Government should lend its support to the initiation of other enterprises, and its prestige to the finding of markets for them. Why should not the teeming millions of India be persuaded to become carnivorous and live upon frozen meat? Why should not the rapidly growing dairy industry be stimulated by the manufacture of ghee, or clarified butter, for export to the same country? Brazil might be induced to take woollen fabrics produced in newly created local factories, and the islands of Oceania should be taught to look upon New Zealand as the workshop of the Pacific. Vogel made inquiries about the production of tobacco and silk, and renewed his interest in the preservation of State forests. An iron furnace was already working, with but little success, on the black iron-sand of Manukau Heads,



Sir Julius Vogel.