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STAFFORD,

G.C.M.G.

A Memoir.

By EDWARD WAKEFIELD.

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From my earliest childhood, in England, I had heard Edward Stafford constantly spoken of as a beloved and respected member of our family, he having married my cousin, Emily, only child of my uncle, Colonel William Wakefield, the Founder of New Zealand, who, to our young minds, always appeared one of the greatest of heroes. We also understood, in a vague way, that Mr. Stafford was the guardian or trustee of property in New Zealand which was to belong to us in course of time. When, therefore, we went to New Zealand in 1851, among the earliest of the Canterbury settlers, we all looked eagerly forward to seeing Mr. Stafford. On arrival, however, we realised that Nelson, where he lived, was a long way from Port Lyttelton, and we soon had quite enough to think of in struggling against the hardships and dangers that beset the pioneers in Canterbury. Moreover, owing to a dispute about land titles, it was found necessary that my father should return to England, leaving us children under the care

of my eldest sister, Constance, and my grown-up brothers, amid wild surroundings, at a spot which was to become the future city of Christchurch. On my father's return he went direct to Nelson, and formed an affectionate intimacy with the Staffords. It was on that trip that he took out the red deer which have since grown into perhaps the most splendid herds in the world. These deer, which came from Richmond Park as a gift from Lord John Russell, the Ranger, to my father, were kept in the Stafford racing stables until they had recovered from the effects of the voyage, and were then driven into the hills by a party of horsemen.

It was then decided, in family council, that my father should re-visit Canterbury, and send my sister, Josephine, to stay with the Staffords, and then, after settling my other sisters under the care of my uncles, Edward Gibbon and Daniel, and my aunt, Angela, at Wellington, should again sail for England with my brother Oliver and myself. It was very difficult at that time to get passages, owing to the gold rush in Australia, and eventually we were obliged to go to Nelson and there take ship for Melbourne. We received a hearty welcome from the Staffords, with whom Josephine was now almost on the footing of a daughter.

They were then living in the old Hospital on the Waimea Road, a rather imposing brick house, built, I believe, by the New Zealand Company soon after the foundation of the Settlement. It stood in a plantation of very large blue gums and wattles, and there were fine stables, containing beautiful racehorses, and a pony, on which Mr. Stafford taught my brother and me to ride. He was, in fact, kindness itself to us boys, and with his high, white forehead and silky black hair

and beard I thought him the handsomest man I had ever seen.

Nelson was a small place then, but there were already enough families of the upper class to make a very pleasant society. One of the greatest delights of our life there was to picnic in the bush which covered the country a few miles out. Those were real picnics, at which each family brought their own particular contribution to the feast. In about a month the "Spray," a brig of only fifty or sixty tons, arrived from Melbourne, and as soon as she had discharged her cargo and reloaded we bade a sad farewell to our dear ones, and sailed away on a stormy and perilous voyage lasting thirty-five days before we entered Port Phillip Heads. After a further delay of a month at Melbourne we got a ship for London. Immediately on arrival, the Crimean War being then in progress, my father was appointed Colonel Commandant of the Army Works Corps, and left for Balaclava to make the railway to Sebastopol. It was not until the close of the war that my sisters were able to join us in England. Then followed the Indian Mutiny, in connection with which my father was again employed on special service; and so for the time being our interests in New Zealand were overlaid by other cares and anxieties.

The year 1854 was a memorable one in the annals of New Zealand, for it saw the end of the rigid, obstructive, exasperating rule of the Colonial Office, and the beginning of the enlightened system of Representative Government which Edward Gibbon Wakefield had designed for it from the first. The difficulties of getting rid of the old régime and establishing the new were still very great. Two attempts to form a Ministry

failed hopelessly, and it was not until June, 1856, that a stable Government was formed by Mr. Stafford as Colonial Secretary and Premier. His colleagues were chosen from among leading settlers of the highest character and attainments in all parts of the Colony, and such was the confidence they inspired that they remained in office for five years.

The task which Mr. Stafford undertook had no parallel in the history of the Empire. The geographical features of the country, stretching 1,500 miles from north to south, and separated as to its parts by mountain ranges and tempestuous seas, made it impossible to administer its local affairs successfully from a single centre. This problem was solved by the creation of seven Provinces, afterwards increased to nine, each of which was to be governed by a Superintendent, representing the supreme authority, and a Provincial Council, elected by the people. Over these there stood the General Government, consisting of the Governor, a Legislative Council or Upper House, and House of Representatives popularly elected. Cumbersome and complicated as it seemed, this Federal system worked with admirable smoothness from the first, mainly owing to the patience, tact, and indefatigable industry, and, above all, the political genius and high ideals of Mr. Stafford and his faithful adherents. It was he who laid the foundations of that method of government which in such essentials as Justice, Education, Property, Finance, and even Public Works, set a model for all other self-governing Colonies, and, as to its main features, has endured until now.

The wonderful progress made by the country under the new dispensation is strikingly shown by the fact that

in 1859 Mr. Stafford brought forward a project for a regular mail service between New Zealand and the Mother Country viâ Panama; a proposal so ambitious that it fairly took away the breath of the Imperial Post Office and other Departments concerned, who unanimously condemned it as impracticable. Nothing daunted, Mr. Stafford went to London, and there clearly demonstrated not only the right of his Government to have their own mail service, but the soundness of his particular plan. During his stay in England on this business I saw a good deal of him, for my father often took my brother Oliver and myself to visit him, and he always treated us with lavish hospitality at his hotel, and showed us kindness in other ways. My father and he were in frequent consultation about our family affairs, especially regarding our property in Canterbury, of which Mr. Stafford was still trustee. His urgent advice to my father was to return to the Colony as soon as his engagements would permit, and he did all he could to inspire us boys with the ambition of a career in a new country. At the end of the year he was recalled by serious news of a fierce revolt of the natives in Taranaki, arising out of the disputed ownership of a tract of land known as the Waitara Block. Mr. Stafford had always been on the best possible terms with the Maoris, and his ruling principle in dealing with them was that they, being the original owners of the soil, should never be forced to part with an acre of it against their will. At the same time, he laid it down clearly that, when the Maori title in any land had been voluntarily relinquished by cession to the Crown, or by lawful sale to individuals, the rights of the new owners should be rigorously upheld by the Courts and enforced by the Government.

When he took office in 1856 his first step was to terminate all those miserable disputes which, under the Colonial Office rule, had embroiled successive Governors, supported by a large force of Imperial troops, in bloody conflicts with many of the warlike tribes of the North Island; and during his administration there had not been a shot fired in anger.

On his arrival at Auckland Mr. Stafford found his Government definitely committed to a war policy, the insurgent natives in Taranaki having been joined by powerful tribes from the Waikato, and the rebel movement having spread far and wide throughout the island. The British forces had already been greatly strengthened by drafts from India and Australia, and several regiments, with a corresponding force of artillery and commissariat equipment, were on the way. In all this constituted an army of some ten thousand men, and arrangements had been made for adding to these an equal number of Colonial levies, Militia, Volunteers, and armed Constabulary.

Mr. Stafford recognised at once that the natives had been entirely in the wrong in the Waitara dispute, and that the entry of the Waikatos into the conflict was quite indefensible. He saw that his colleagues could not with honour or safety have declined such a challenge, and he threw himself with all his vigour into the prosecution of the war. Then, however, arose a question which had long before demanded solution. That question was whether the Colonial Government or the Military Authorities should direct the policy and decide the objects of the campaign. All that the Government wanted was to stamp out the rebellion as soon as possible, and prevent any repetition of it once and for all. For that reason they insisted on a com-

prehensive plan of attack at all strategic points, and a resolute and sustained offensive by all the available forces. The Military Authorities, who still had a large share of political power, took quite a different view of the situation. Their plan was to remain on the defensive as long as possible, and only to adopt the offensive when they were attacked, or where they were in danger of being cut off by Maori tactics. In plain words, they were not in a hurry to end the war. Why should they be? They drew a handsome Colonial allowance, in addition to their regular pay; they lived in a beautiful country with perhaps the finest climate in the world, where the cost of living was exceedingly low, where every necessary and comfort abounded, where there was plenty of sport, and where they enjoyed a privileged position in a very agreeable society, and last, but not least, where on retirement or discharge every officer was entitled to a free grant of 400 acres of land, and the rank and file to 40 acres. What army would have wished to hasten their withdrawal from such delectable quarters? This divergence of policy naturally caused constant friction between the Headquarters Staff and the Government, with deplorable waste of money and loss of life, and it was Mr. Stafford's fixed determination to terminate it as soon as possible, no matter at what risk of trouble with the Imperial Government, who, of course, supported the military. It was this determination which, as fate would have it, engaged his mind and labours at a later stage during the most strenuous years of his life.

By the month of May, 1861, the war had been so far successfully prosecuted from the point of view of the Headquarters staff that a truce was patched up, and

a deceptive peace reigned over the land. When Parliament met in that month the Government fully realised that their position had been seriously shaken by the events of the preceding year. They had, in fact, most unjustly incurred widespread unpopularity, which ought to have been directed against the military, by the muddled and indecisive conduct of the war. In the month of June a Vote of Censure was carried in the House of Representatives, on the motion of Mr. William Fox, the Stafford Ministry resigned, and a Fox Ministry succeeded them. Mr. Fox was a Durham man—a solicitor by profession, a scholar of distinction, and a pugnacious politician. He came to New Zealand with the first settlers, in 1839, and was private secretary to Colonel William Wakefield, the founder. He was most noted by his extreme opinions on temperance and pacifism, and had published a book in England called "The War in New Zealand," in which he warmly took the side of the military against the Government, whom he blamed for all the trouble with the natives which had ever arisen. His policy now was to leave the whole conduct of military affairs, which included native affairs, to the General Commanding the Forces, and to keep the natives quiet by every sort of conciliation and indulgence—in short, a peace-at-any-price policy, which was wittily styled the Sugar-and-Blanket Policy. This was too much, however, for the majority of the House of Representatives, who were already beginning to see events in their true light, and in the following Session the Fox Ministry were expelled from office on a motion by Mr. Alfred Domett, expressly affirming that the sole conduct of native affairs should be in the hands of the responsible Government.

Mr. Alfred Domett was one of the most romantic and engaging figures among the leading men of the Colony. He was a highly cultivated man of a decidedly poetic temperament, and a friend of Browning, who refers to him in his works under the name of Waring. He went to New Zealand with Captain Arthur Wakefield's expedition to Blind Bay, and it was on his inspiration that the capital of the new settlement was named Nelson, the main streets having such names as Trafalgar, Nile, Hardy, and others commemorative of Nelson's victories and comrades. On the opposite side of Blind Bay he afterwards laid out the town of Collingwood, called after Nelson's Rear Admiral, among the street names of which are to be found such highly suggestive ones as Maintopsail Street and Union Jack Street. From a very early time he applied himself to a study of the natives, and formed very wise judgments of the proper way to treat them. He was an incomparable official, but never either knew or cared much about politics. It followed naturally on the formation of the Domett Ministry, that in February, 1863, the control of native affairs was finally relinquished by the Imperial Government, and taken over by the Government of New Zealand. That was the one great achievement of Mr. Domett as a politician, and it was enough of itself to give him an honoured place in the history of the Colony. The necessity for this change was markedly shown by the alarming state of the country as the hollowness of the Truce of 1861 became more and more manifest. In May, 1863, the rebellion which had never been really suppressed, suddenly broke out at Tataraimaka in Taranaki, and soon spread through all the disaffected districts, culminating in the Waikato War of July,

1863. The Domett Ministry found themselves in such straits that they resigned in October. They were succeeded by a Ministry under Mr. Frederick Whittaker, the leading lawyer in Auckland, a man of great political sagacity, with Mr. Fox as Native Minister.

This was the situation of public affairs when my father arrived at Nelson from England with my sister Josephine, my brother Oliver and myself. We found that Mr. Stafford was still Superintendent of the Province of Nelson and member of the House of Representatives for the City of Nelson, and that he was away at Auckland attending the Session of Parliament. Having been left a widower in 1857, Mr. Stafford married, on 5th December, 1859, Miss Mary Bartley, daughter of the Honourable Thomas Bartley, Speaker of the Legislative Council, perhaps the grandest and most venerated figure in the public life of the Colony. We found the family living in a beautifully situated house, overlooking the Port, two or three miles from Nelson, which had been built by Captain Arthur Wakefield when Agent of the New Zealand Company. It had been arranged that we should take up our abode on a farm at Stoke, eight miles from Nelson on the Waimea Road, which belonged to William and Naomi Songar, a childless couple, who had both been servants of my aunt, Katharine Torless, wife of the Rev. Charles Torless, at the Vicarage of Stoke-by-Nayland, in Suffolk, which had been the home of my very early childhood. These worthy folk were still devotedly attached to our family, and we led an idyllic life amid lovely surroundings, helping in the farm work, and especially in the erection of a fine new house of blue stone, which

was to replace the humble, though very comfortable, tenement which they had built of sods twenty years before. My father had a great idea of settling here, but an opportunity having occurred soon afterwards for him to buy a very nice property close to Nelson, we made our permanent home there. My brother Oliver soon left us to join some friends of the family who had a sheep run in the Province of Marlborough, and I presently joined the staff of the "Nelson Examiner," a high-class newspaper, edited by Mr. James Crowe Richmond, a distinguished public man, who was afterwards to be very closely connected with Mr. Stafford. On Mr. Stafford's return from Auckland we were heartily welcomed by him and his, and he at once showed the kindliest possible interest in our welfare and our future, especially he took great pains to make me acquainted with the political questions of the day, and, though rather amused by my youthful efforts as a writer in the "Examiner," he encouraged me to persevere, and gave me many useful hints towards acquiring a good journalistic style. There was certainly plenty to write about, for the war in the North Island was raging furiously. Every mail brought us news of terrible conflicts, often at places where there had never been any trouble before. Sometimes fortune favoured the British, sometimes the natives; but never was there any decisive result. Blunder followed blunder, culminating in the amazing Battle of the Gate Pa, April, 1864, where, deceived by a ruse of the natives, one British regiment fired upon another, and both fired upon the Naval Brigade, with fearful losses to all three, including the two Colonels and the Naval Captain. Even peaceful little Nelson did not escape the terrors of war. Every man between

sixteen and fifty was compelled to join either the Militia or the Volunteers, and from daylight to dark the green places of the city rang with the shout of the sergeant-major and the thud of rifle butts. Many of the finest of the youth of the Province were drafted to the North Island to face death in a cause in which they had no interest, against a foe with whom they had no quarrel. The policy of the Whittaker-Fox Ministry had proved such a hideous failure that they dared not meet Parliament, but resigned during the recess. A very gallant gentleman now took up the unenviable task of restoring the Government to something like sanity. This was Mr. Frederick Aloysius Weld, a member of the proud old Roman Catholic family, the Welds of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire, a true knight of chivalry if ever there was one. He gathered round him a sparse group of brave spirits like himself, who cared nothing for their own interests, personal or political, if only they could save their country from the ruin that threatened it. Mr. Weld announced in the plainest possible words that his was the Self-Reliant Policy, which meant that he was determined to get rid of the British Army to the last man, and to let the Colonists themselves settle their differences with their native fellow-subjects. The honour of this noble act will always remain with Mr. Weld; but it is fair to say that it was, in essentials, the same policy which Mr. Stafford had advocated and striven for. Mr. Weld lost not a moment in communicating his resolve to the Imperial Government in a stirring memorandum, despatched through the Governor. This naturally caused a tremendous sensation, and public opinion was sharply divided, the North Island clamourously denouncing the withdrawal of the Army, while

the South Island backed the Self-Reliant Policy with all their might and main. There even arose a very formidable movement towards the separation of the two islands, with a distinct Government and Parliament possessing full political powers for the South.

It can hardly be doubted that this would actually have taken place if Mr. Weld's policy had been rejected. The Governor, Sir George Grey, on the advice of his Ministers, now struck a stroke which was worth all the sugar and blankets in the world. He issued a Proclamation confiscating to the Crown the whole of the lands of the tribes in arms against Her Majesty, with provisions for restoring the whole, or such parts as might be deemed advisable, to such tribes or smaller groups of natives as should come in and submit to the law. This had an immediate effect, for the love of their tribal lands is the strongest sentiment in the breast of every Maori, and the authority of the greatest chiefs and warriors became a shadow when the possession of the land was gone.

Another very remarkable event occurred at this juncture. It was decided to remove the seat of Government from Auckland to "some place in Cook Strait." The avowed reason for this was that Auckland was too far from the centre of the Islands, but another very forcible reason was that the whole influence of Auckland —political, commercial, and social—was solid for the retention of the British Army and for the continuance of its war policy. Those words "some place in Cook Strait" meant that the new seat of Government must be at Wellington, Nelson, or Blenheim (the capital of the Province of Marlborough), and independent commissioners, lent for the purpose by the Governnent of Victoria—the foremost Colony of Australia—were ap-

pointed to make the decision. Nelson had at least a sporting chance of being chosen on account of its beautiful situation, lovely climate, and fertile soil.

Mr. Stafford, however, and many other leading settlers in Nelson, were strongly against it, on the grounds that there was no space for a great city to expand, that the harbour was quite inadequate, and that there were no local traditions to give the authority and dignity which the seat of Government should possess. This settled the question, and Wellington was unanimously selected. The transfer of the capital to Wellington from Auckland was successfully achieved by February, 1865, when Governor Grey and his staff took up their abode in the picturesquely situated little house which Colonel William Wakefield brought in parts from England in 1839, still surrounded by olive trees and myrtles, which were souvenirs of his renowned services in the War of Succession in Spain. About this time Mr. Stafford spoke seriously to me about my future plans, as there appeared to be only a very poor prospect for a junior on the staff of the "Nelson Examiner." He advised me to go at once to Wellington, and apply for Government employment, and he offered to write in my favour to Mr. Weld, who was a dear friend as well as a political ally of his. I stood not on the order of my going, but went. Within a fortnight I was offered the post of clerk of the Native Land Claims Court, a branch of the Crown Lands Department, of which Mr. Alfred Domett was now the chief, he having retired from political life when the Whittaker-Fox Ministry took office. I at once called on Mr. Weld, who was living at the newly purchased ministerial residence on the Tinakori Road, previously

belonging to Mr. Nathaniel Levin. Mr. and Mrs. Weld received me most kindly, and admitted me to their family circle. On my presenting myself at the office on the appointed day, Mr. Domett treated me as one of Captain Arthur Wakefield's belongings, and at once placed me on a pleasant footing as a new member of the staff. I found the office work very easy and uninteresting, requiring nothing more than mechanical accuracy. In a short time, however, Mr. Domett offered me an opportunity of helping him with some important correspondence of a highly confidential nature, and in this I succeeded so well that he entrusted all that branch of the business of the Court to me. This gave me such an insight into Native Affairs and the Land Laws as I could not have gained in any other way. By this means I learnt more in three months than I could have learnt in three years in any routine Department. I was also brought into personal contact with many men whom it was very useful for me to know and to be favourably known to. One of these was the Governor, Sir George Grey, whom I had never seen since I was a boy during his first Government in the "fifties." He took a great interest in me, and on all my frequent official visits to Government House showed me a courtesy and confidence that were most valuable to me.

The Weld Ministry had by this time taken strong steps towards carrying out the Self-Reliant Policy, by substituting Colonial Forces for Imperial Forces in active operations. A great deal of severe fighting was still going on in many parts of the Island, but the character of the conflict had completely changed. The Confiscated Land Act had done its work, and some of the most powerful of the chiefs had surrendered with

their tribes, and the acts of rebellion and murder were now mainly directed against missionaires, officials, and civilians, towards whom a strange fanatical sect, calling themselves Hauhaus, had conceived an insane hatred. On the 2nd of September Governor Grey was able to issue a proclamation declaring that the war, which had lasted for five years, was at an end. When Parliament met parties were very closely divided, the pro-Military feeling still running very strongly. On the 12th of October a resolution adverse to the Government policy was only defeated by the casting vote of the Speaker, and Mr. Weld, feeling that he could not command a working majority, resigned. Mr. Stafford then formed a Ministry, who, while firm on the Self-Reliant Policy, was more acceptable to the House on other questions of the day. Mr. Weld was well known to be anxious to retire from New Zealand public life, and was not long afterwards appointed Governor of West Australia—subsequently of Singapore and Ceylon. Mr. Stafford, well aware of the tremendous burden of responsibility that he had undertaken, was in a peculiar difficulty, because he had not yet been able to obtain as colleagues the men he most wanted, in order to carry out his work with confidence. He therefore took the unusual course of retaining in his own hands the offices of Colonial Secretary, Colonial Treasurer, and Postmaster General. This threw upon him a strain of work which it was almost impossible for any one man to bear. A few days after the rising of Parliament, Mr. Domett told me that he had had a long talk with the Prime Minister about me, and especially as to my secretarial capacity and fitness for a position of trust. Mr. Domett said that he had happily been able to satisfy him fully on both these points, and that Mr. Stafford had thereupon

decided to appoint me Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. This had never before been a separate post, the duties, if any, having been included in those of the Secretary of the Cabinet, held by the Under Secretary for the Colony, Mr. William Gisborne. I had not then seen Mr. Stafford since he came to Wellington for the Session, but I had heard him invariably spoken of by the officials as a strict disciplinarian and an extremely severe taskmaster. Mr. Domett, however, in bidding me farewell, told me I had nothing to fear if I were perfectly straightforward in all my dealings with Mr. Stafford, and never swerved from the path of duty. On leaving Mr. Domett I went straight to the Prime Minister's office, to gain access to which I had to pass through the Under Secretary's room, and I felt rather doubtful as to what might happen there, for I knew Mr. Gisborne held very strong ideas as to the importance of his position, and I did not know how he might view the proposed new appointment of Private Secretary. Mr. Gisborne, who had always been on most friendly terms with me, at once settled the point by telling me that Mr. Stafford had consulted him, and that he was very glad indeed to hear of my appointment, which, he said, would save him a great deal of trouble. He promised to help me in every way. I found Mr. Stafford a very different man from the easy-going country gentleman and sportsman whom I had known at Nelson. He looked thin and careworn as he sat at a long table amidst despatch-boxes and piles of official papers, and he gazed at me with a peculiar glare, as if he did not recognise me. When I offered my hand he recovered himself, and greeted me cordially, and, pushing away the work he was engaged upon, he entered

upon a very grave explanation of the duties of my position. He told me I had nothing to do with his three Ministerial offices, the work of which passed through the hands of the several Under Secretaries; but he said there was a mass of correspondence and business entirely outside those Ministries which could only be dealt with by himself, or by agents in whom he had implicit trust. He proposed to place the whole of this in my hands, if I felt equal to the responsibility. I told him of my talk with Mr. Domett, and said I was ready to put myself at his disposal. It was now long past office hours, and there was no likelihood of our being interrupted. Without more ado he unlocked a large leather-covered despatch-box with the Royal Arms on the lid, and, taking from it a file of letters, he asked me to give my close attention to their contents. As I did so, my eyes and my ears opened wide, for what I heard was very surprising indeed. He then told me in clear and earnest tones what his decision on the subject matter of the documents was, and asked me whether I thought I could write a letter conveying that decision in an effective way. I said nothing, but sitting down on the opposite side of the table at the writing place which had been prepared for me, I set to work with a beating heart, while he buried himself again in his own preoccupation. I had the great advantage then of writing a hand as clear as print, and almost as rapid as speech, and in less than half an hour I had filled two pages of official foolscap and completed the letter ready for his signature. I waited until he looked up from his work and passed his hand wearily over his forehead. I then handed the letter across the table, and watched him anxiously. He read my letter critically from end to end, then fixed a piercing gaze

on me, as if he would look me through and through; then read it again, the lines of his face moving with something like the shadow of a smile as he neared the close. He then signed the letter and handed it back to me without a word. I felt that I was safely over the fence, and would soon get into my stride. We got through half a dozen other letters in the same way without a single hitch, and after I had copied them into my copying book and closed them up ready for the post, he franked the envelopes by writing his name in the corner, and locked up the copying book in his despatch-box. It was then just upon seven o'clock, and he got up with an air of relief, and suggested that I should go home to dinner with him at the Ministerial Residence. He was alone at the time, and we dined very comfortably in a small room overlooking the garden, and sat late talking. Mr. Stafford's conversation was delightful, and ran freely over every topic under the sun except the public affairs of New Zealand. He asked me where I was living, and seemed pleased to learn that I had taken rooms on the Tinakori Road, only a short walk from where we were sitting. It was not until parting at the door that he again referred to business, and then only to ask me to be at the office punctually at ten the next morning, and gave me suggestions as to what I might do before he arrived at eleven. It was midnight before I got into bed, and though, on the one hand, I felt that an immense weight had been taken off my mind, on the other, I was conscious of difficulties ahead that might well have awed the heart of a much older and more experienced man, whereas I was only twenty, and had never been in such a situation in my life before.

The two great things which Mr. Stafford had to effect in order to carry out the Self-Relying Policy were: Firstly, to get rid of the Imperial troops; and, secondly, to clean up the mess which their presence in the Colony had caused. By the middle of 1866 the withdrawal of the troops was already well advanced, and was made easier by one or two unexpected incidents. The 70th Regiment, which was to have come from India to New Zealand, had been delayed on the voyage, and when the transport conveying them was signalled at Wellington, the Governor ordered her to proceed to Melbourne, so that the troops never landed in the Colony at all. More amusing was the fate of the 50th. A large body of Maori prisoners, who were supposed to be a particularly fierce lot of savages, had been placed on board a huge hulk anchored in the middle of Wellington harbour, as a precaution against their escaping. To make them doubly secure a Captain and Lieutenant and a full company of the 50th Regiment had been placed on the hulk as a guard. All this, of course, was done by the Imperial Military Authorities, who still had the power to do such things. One night there was a tremendous south-easterly gale, such as often sweeps across Welllington harbour with almost irresistible force, accompanied by thunder and lightning and torrents of rain. When daylight came, and the gallant 50th went to look after the safety of their prisoners, not a single one of them was found, except a half-witted old hag, said to be over a hundred years old, who stood up and shrieked imprecations at the officers, of which neither of them could understand a word. The hulk had been in her day a timber ship, and had in her bows large portholes, with bolts inside, through which the baulks of timber used to be pushed

in loading. The Maoris, who observe everything, had no doubt taken careful note of these directly they were put on board, and on the first stormy night they seized the opportunity so plainly suggested, Grannie remaining behind to bolt the portholes and express her own opinion of Her Majesty's Forces as gaolers. Two or three bodies were found bruised on the rocks at Petone, six miles from the hulk; but all the rest of the fugitives landed safely and found their way back to their tribes.

The 50th Regiment had been called the "Blind Half Hundredth" ever since they returned from Abercrombie's Expedition to Egypt in 1801, suffering badly from ophthalmia, and to their old epithet were now added those of "Deaf and Silly." The 50th left for England a fortnight later, but their legend still lives in New Zealand. The mess to be cleared up was a very different story. This consisted of the almost incredible corruption, extravagance, waste, and shameless fraud by which the Colony was being sucked dry by the Commissariat and other military finance departments, over whom the Government had so far had no control at all. Things had been allowed to get into such a state that almost any claim for money, no matter how outrageous, if countersigned by a Commissariat officer, senior or junior, actually constituted an order to the Treasury to pay. This system—if such it could be called—had been in progress for years, and had naturally grown bolder and more infamous the longer it was unquestioned and unchecked. Ever since Mr. Stafford took office claims for payment for alleged services or supplies, countersigned in numerous cases by mere lads, who were nothing but Commissaries' clerks, had been pouring in from contractors, purveyors, merchants, tradesmen, horse dealers, farmers, general dealers, and all

sorts of nondescript camp followers and parasites of an army who had got completely out of business habits. The New Zealand Government had, in the first instance, borrowed £3,000,000 in London for the expenses of the war, and the idea of the military seemed to be that they might play ducks and drakes with this exactly as they pleased, while the Government were left to carry on the administration upon a rapidly decreasing revenue. As the time was now approaching for the source of all this plunder to be dried up, the rush to grab the last remnants of it became more and more voracious. In the previous Session Mr. Stafford had passed an Act setting up an official called the Comptroller-General, who was to be entirely independent of Parliament and of the Executive Government, and supreme over both the Audit Department and the Treasury as regarded payments out of public funds, but he had not yet been able to get this Act into full working order. Pending that, he issued a peremptory order that no money should be paid on the countersignature of a Commissariat officer of any rank unless by Treasury warrant after strict examination. This brought all such claims under his direct supervision, and it had a curious and immediate effect. A very large number of the claims proved to be sheer frauds, and were abandoned without a murmur. A great many others, if not wholly fraudulent, were found to be very inaccurate and dishonest, and were easily settled for half or a third of the amount claimed. There remained a considerable number of very large claims, mainly from Army contractors, substantial and well-known men backed by considerable influence. These were announced to be held over for special investigation—that is to say, under the new Comptrol Act. Mr.

Stafford's difficulty with regard to bringing that Act into force was that of getting hold of the right man for Comptroller General, for everything turned upon that. There were obvious objections to getting a man from England; on the other hand, to finding a suitable one in the Colony seemed almost equally hopeless. The one man above all others whom Mr. Stafford wanted was James Edward Fitzgerald, Member for Christchurch, who had for some years been Superintendent of Canterbury. He was one of Edward Gibbon Wakefield's most notable captures when forming the Canterbury Association in London in 1850, a scion of one of the noblest families in Ireland, and a perfect type of a high-bred Irish gentleman, with a natural gift for public affairs, and a quite exceptional strength of character. He had been Native Minister in Mr. Weld's Cabinet, but had refused to join Mr. Stafford, owing to a sense of loyalty to Mr. Weld, and this, unfortunately, though in reality a misunderstanding, had caused a decided coolness between them. To have offered this high post to Mr. Fitzgerald, who was the very soul of honour and intensely proud of his independence, might have led to very bitter consequences, exactly the reverse of what Mr. Stafford hoped for. In this dilemma I was able to be useful. Mrs. Fitzgerald, who was the best of women and very clear-headed, with great influence over her husband, had been a friend of my boyhood, and had a great liking for me. To her I managed to convey what was in Mr. Stafford's mind, leaving it to her to act on it as she thought most prudent. I had the satisfaction before many days were over to see Mr. Fitzgerald walk into the office, shake hands with Mr. Stafford, and sit down in friendly consultation with him. A week later he was

gazetted Comptroller General, to the unbounded satisfaction of all who had the best interests of the Colony at heart. Not only were the Government at once relieved from the incubus of Commissariat claims, but reforms were instituted which regulated and purified the whole of the Public Services from top to bottom, thus obviating the necessity of further borrowing or further taxation, either of which would have meant bankruptcy or ruin, and opening before the Colony a wide path of revived progress and prosperity. In short, Mr. Stafford and Mr. Fitzgerald working together meant the salvation of New Zealand from the financial consequences of the war. During the remainder of 1866 and the greater part of 1867 the pacification of the Natives proceeded with unbroken success, and in October of the latter year came the crowning triumph of statesmanship, the passing of the Maori Representation Act, under which four native chiefs were elected to the House of Representatives, and two were at the same time nominated by the Crown to the Legislative Council for life, with the title of "Honourable." Thenceforward the union of the two races was complete, and there were no more loyal subjects of the Queen than the brave and noble-hearted Maoris, who since then have served the Empire so well on many a stricken field.

In the following year, nevertheless, there occurred one of the unhappiest and most terrible incidents in the whole history of British rule in New Zealand. In the early part of 1866 a body of about 200 Waikato natives under a minor chief, Te Kooti, had been captured in fair fight, and, not being considered seriously to blame for their revolt, had been sent to the Chatham Islands, a Dependency 300 miles east of New Zealand,

there to remain as prisoners on parole, for two years, under a sergeant of Militia and twenty-five men. They had honourably kept their parole, doing useful work and giving no trouble at all. At the end of the two years—that is to say, in May 1868—Te Kooti asked that he and his people should be allowed to return to the Waikato; but through a fatal blunder, for which Mr. Rolleston, Under Secretary for Native Affairs, was solely responsible, this request was ignored, without any explanations or assurances on the part of the Government. Mr. Rolleston was a high-minded and well-intentioned public man, who rendered good service to the Colony in other capacities, but he did not know the native character, and he had unfortunately an arbitrary and obstinate temper. Te Kooti, believing that he had been betrayed and that the Government had no intention of keeping faith with him, raised a revolt without a moment's warning, and his men, being armed with axes used in wood cutting, fell upon the guard and overpowered them, killing the sergeant and all who offered resistance. They then seized the schooner, "Rifleman," lying in the harbour, and compelled the captain to transport them all to New Zealand. After a fair voyage they made the land at Poverty Bay, on the east coast of the Province of Auckland, where there was a small settlement, under a Resident Magistrate and a handful of Militia officers with their families, in all about forty persons. The news of the revolt at the Chatham Islands had reached Wellington by steamer, long before the "Rifleman," under sail, had completed her voyage, and the Government, knowing whereabouts she would be likely to make the land, had despatched Colonel Whitmore, the Commanding Officer of the Colonial Forces, with a picked body of troops to

intercept them before they could get into the interior. Some word of the approach of this expedition was, no doubt, conveyed to the natives immediately on their arrival, and they, believing that they would meet with short shrift at Colonel Whitmore's hands, determined on a desperate course. They had armed themselves to the teeth from the guard-room at the Chatham Islands, and upon the Resident Magistrate ordering them to lay down their arms and submit to his authority, they shot him dead, by orders of Te Kooti, and then slaughtered every man, woman, and child in the settlement, except one boy, a son of the Captain of Militia, who escaped into the bush, and, after an arduous journey all alone, succeeded in communicating with Colonel Whitmore. After the destruction of the settlement the natives entrenched themselves in a strongly situated Pa, called Ngatapa, where they were closely invested by Colonel Whitmore's forces. Te Kooti made an exceedingly stout resistance, while Colonel Whitmore sapped steadily up to the foot of the Pa ; but the natives were so weakened by starvation and exposure that when the assault was made most of them were killed, Te Kooti and a remnant of his followers contriving to scale the cliffs and escape. Years afterwards Te Kooti gave himself up, and was pardoned, because it was felt that, in the first instance, the fault had not been entirely on his side. The Poverty Bay massacre was a grievous blow to Mr. Stafford, and though he was in no way to blame for it, he suffered heavily in popularity and prestige. It cast a shadow over the whole of his second Administration, and both his political opponents and his personal enemies, of whom by this time he had plenty, did not fail to take unscrupulous advantage of it.

After the Session of 1866 Mr. Stafford found himself able to reconstruct his Ministry, with Mr. William Fitzherbert as Colonial Treasurer, Mr. James Crowe Richmond as Native Minister, and Major Richardson as Postmaster General. This relieved him of a crushing weight of work, and greatly eased the situation for myself. My health, in fact, was completely broken down by over-work and anxiety, and I had been compelled to take to my bed for some weeks. During this illness Mr. Stafford came to see me every day, and treated me with the kindliest care. On being sufficiently recovered to return to the office, I was indeed proud to find that he had not allowed anyone to fill my place, but had done the whole of the work himself, or held it over for me. He now made me the joyful announcement that he had decided on a trip to Auckland on public service, and that I was to go with him. We went first to New Plymouth, where we visited the historic Waitara Block, the cause of the war, and made the acquaintance of the Richmonds, the Carringtons, the Atkinsons, and other families famous in the history of the Colony. On arriving in Auckland we took up our quarters at Government House, which had been untenanted since the removal of the Seat of Government in 1865. It was a very fine old house, built of solid oak in England in 1840, and brought out in parts by Captain Hobson, the first Governor. Mr. Stafford was greatly attached to Auckland, where he had spent many of the best years of his life, and he managed to get together a few devoted old servants, by whose help he was able to render hospitalities on a modest scale to some of the leading residents of a previous generation, such as Lady Wynyard, widow of an early Lieutenant Governor, and others in whose company he found com-

plete relaxation. The 2nd Battalion of the 18th Royal Irish were still stationed at the old Fort, and Colonel Elliot and his officers were frequent guests at Government House, as we were at their Mess. It was with sorrow that Mr. Stafford found he was regarded with much disfavour by the Auckland public on account of the Self-Relying Policy, and was the object of much malicious misrepresentation by the newspapers. This showed itself in many paltry ways. Finding that the trees in the beautiful grounds of Government House, which he himself had planted many years before, had been neglected and allowed to grow into a mere jungle, destroying the lawns and shutting in the views of the house, he got some men to work under his own eye, for he was a highly skilled forester, and soon restored the plantations to their proper state. The moment this work was begun it was denounced in the papers as a spiteful act of vandalism, done on purpose to injure the amenities of Auckland. When it was finished, however, everyone was obliged to admit that it was a vast improvement, and that Government House had been restored to its pristine freshness. A trifle like that showed what the feeling was, and there were many much more serious indications of it. Mr. Stafford was presently joined by Mr. Richmond, the Native Minister, and these two, in friendly counsel with Mr. John Williamson, the Superintendent of Auckland, settled a great many vexatious questions, and removed many causes of discontent which had risen, or been prolonged, during the troublous years since 1865. In other ways Mr. Stafford proved his sincere concern for the best interests of the City and Province. Upon this there was a distinct rally in his favour, and cordial relations again prevailed. Mr. Stafford was never a

popularity hunter, but he hated being misunderstood, or suspected of injustice. Sir George Grey being in residence at the island of Kawau, the earthly paradise which he had created for himself off the Auckland coast, invited us to spend a few days with him, and I there had one of the most delightful experiences of my life, for no one knew better than Sir George Grey how to bring the right people together, or how to entertain them with almost regal hospitality. In such a company Mr. Stafford let himself go quite freely, and was to be seen at his very best. On our way South, I persuaded Mr. Stafford to allow the steamer to go a little out of its course in order that we might see White Island, that strange submerged volcano which is one of the wonders of the world. It is very dangerous of approach at times, because the dark green lake in the middle of the crater is always boiling and bubbling, and may at any time spout vast volumes of boiling water, mud, rocks, and every kind of volcanic material to a height of hundreds, or even thousands, of feet. When we were there it was fairly quiescent, and I ventured to land, and, with the help of the boat's crew, brought off a magnificent specimen of pure sulphur, which had been formed under my eyes, weighing over a hundredweight. Mr. Stafford was greatly pleased by this exploit, and by his wish my prize was placed in the Museum at Wellington. At Napier we were met by the Government Agent, Mr. Donald Maclean, afterwards Sir Donald Maclean, a famous Native Minister, and were entertained by a large party of the Hawke's Bay magnates. We then returned to Wellington, wonderfully revived in both body and mind, and at once settled down to the mass of business which had accumulated in our absence. There were still a

good many very ugly incidents occurring in isolated parts of the native districts, and though these were mainly of the fanatical order, and had little or no political significance, they involved the loss of many valuable lives, and caused the Government incessant anxiety and hard work.

Such was the situation at the end of January, 1868, when, to add to Mr. Stafford's cares and perplexities, already grave enough, there came a most unexpected event. Without the slightest warning Sir George Grey was informed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that his term of office as Governor was at an end, and that his successor, Sir George Bowen, Governor of Queensland, would shortly arrive to take his place. This meant neither more nor less than that Sir George Grey, one of the greatest of the servants of the Crown in any part of the world, had been thrown to the wolves of the War Office and the Commissariat as a punishment for the support he had given to Mr. Weld and Mr. Stafford, especially the latter, in carrying through the Self-Reliant Policy. This harsh and unjust act was all the more malicious because the Duke of Edinburgh was about to visit the Colony in H.M.S. "Galatea," on his famous Empire tour, and it was well known that Sir George Grey had laid himself out to receive him on a princely scale. Sir George Grey determined to leave for England as soon as he could make his arrangements, and to challenge the Secretary of State in Parliament. Mr. Stafford did everything in his power to do honour to the retiring Governor, and to express in unmistakable terms the anger and disgust of the people of New Zealand at the way in which he had been treated. Sir George Bowen arrived on February 5, and it did not take

Mr. Stafford long to discern that the new Governor had been prejudiced against him by the Colonial Office. Sir George Bowen was about as unfit a man as possible to be chosen for Governor of a Colony in the state in which he found New Zealand. He was a great scholar, and at Oxford had been a friend of Gladstone, who had appointed him President of the University of the Ionian Islands—at that time a British Protectorate—and from that quiet retreat he had actually been made first Governor of Queensland, which had just been separated from New South Wales. He was a weak man, with a great idea of the importance of his position, and a singular love of display, exactly the opposite, in this respect, of both Sir George Grey and Mr. Stafford. The Governor is not supposed to have anything whatever to do with politics, but there are many indirect and subtle ways in which Government House—that is to say, the Staff and the "Set"—can exercise very powerful influence, and it was soon seen which party were to be in favour.

Mr. Fox had recently returned from an absence of some years in Europe, and had come back more pugnaciously disposed than ever against Mr. Stafford, and all his principles and methods. He had been returned unopposed for Wanganui, where there happened to be a vacancy, and had already become leader of the Opposition in combination with Mr. Vogel, a prominent and very ambitious politician in Otago, who had suddenly come into the front rank of New Zealand public men known to be antagonistic to Mr. Stafford's policy of rigid economy in expenditure and prudence in finance. The Duke of Edinburgh arrived on April 12, 1869, and instead of being received by Sir George Grey with simple dignity at his own expense, as had

been planned, was received by Sir George Bowen with a degree of military parade and lavish scattering of public money which made the whole affair more ridiculous than impressive, and was certainly not at all gratifying to the Duke himself.

On the meeting of Parliament in June Mr. Fox at once challenged the Stafford Ministry on a vote of want of confidence, almost entirely on the ground of the depressed state of the Colony, following the long struggle with the Maoris since 1861. Both he and Mr. Vogel held out golden promises of the prosperity which would follow if they were allowed to institute great schemes of public works and material progress. To a war-weary House this seemed very tempting, and the Stafford Ministry were defeated by a narrow majority. Mr. Stafford at once resigned, but before doing so he placed on indisputable record the fact that he had restored peace to a distracted Colony, that he had rescued it from financial ruin, and that he handed it over to his successors wholly free from debt, save a small remnant of the £3,000,000 loan which was being steadily paid off by a Sinking Fund, and with taxation so light that it was scarcely felt at all. On June 28 Mr. Fox formed a Ministry, with Mr. Vogel as Colonial Treasurer, and other colleagues known mainly for their animosity against Sir George Grey and Mr. Stafford. The retiring Ministers formed a strong Opposition, as far as debating power was concerned, but offered no factious resistance to the Fox-Vogel Government, even helping them to carry some important Measures of public utility which they could not have carried by themselves. At the same time they strenuously resisted an audacious attempt on the part of Mr. Fox to persuade General Sir Trevor Chute

to countermand the orders for the embarkation of the remaining British troops, and on February 24, 1870, the last detachment of the Imperial forces took their departure. When Parliament met in June, Mr. Vogel brought forward his Public Works and Immigration Policy, by which he proposed to borrow £10,000,000 at once, to be ultimately increased to £70,000,000, by a succession of loans, to be spent on a vast system of railways, roads, bridges, water-races on goldfields, and every other description of public works that might be demanded by different localities or political groups, vast numbers of immigrants to be imported at the public expense to provide the requisite labour. Mr. Stafford and his party, who represented the most substantial classes in the country, as distinguished from the speculative and irresponsible classes, offered a reasoned, though not a violent opposition to this grandiose scheme. They contended that it would, on the one hand, involve enormous waste of money and necessitate crushing taxation, and would, on the other hand, lower the general character of the population, which it had been the special object and pride of the Founders and the Pioneers of the Colony to keep at the highest possible level, and they urged that it would be better policy for the construction of railways which had already made an excellent beginning under the Provincial Governments, to be proceeded with on a scale corresponding to the general recovery of the Colony.

When the change of Ministry took place in June, 1869, it was arranged with Mr. Stafford's approval that I should remain with Mr. Fox as Private Secretary and Secretary of the Cabinet, for a long enough time, at all events, to complete many important matters

of confidential business then in my hands. Mr. Fox was very glad to have me with him on account of his old attachment to my uncle, Colonel Wakefield, and because he knew I was an untiring worker, and would certainly save him a great deal of trouble. He treated me exceedingly kindly, and gave me his confidence unreservedly. In course of time, however, Mr. Vogel, the Colonial Treasurer, made no disguise of his jealousy and suspicion of me, and this made my position so difficult that I asked Mr. Fox to relieve me of it. At first he was very unwilling, but on my making the situation quite clear to him he agreed, and I was appointed to a responsible post in the newly established Excise Department at Dunedin. I found the work there interesting, and I soon made a great many valuable friends in that very energetic community. Mr. Stafford came to Dunedin twice during my stay there, on business, I think, connected with sheep farming properties which he held in partnership with Mr. Dillon Bell. On each of these visits he spent a good deal of time with me, and I had the pleasure of bringing him into touch with my circle of friends, among whom he had many supporters and admirers. About the middle of the year 1872 I was recalled to Wellington to attend to some particular business, and witnessed the fall of the Fox Ministry on September 6. Mr. Stafford then formed a Ministry, and I again acted as Private Secretary and Secretary of the Cabinet. A month later there was another change of Ministry, the Hon. George Waterhouse becoming Prime Minister. He was a great friend of mine, but, as he sat in the Legislative Council and had no intention of remaining in office for long, he did not need my services as Private Secretary. I was therefore appointed Resident Magistrate

and Collector of Customs at the Chatham Islands, but was eventually sent on to Auckland to take up a post which had become vacant there. For some time before this Mr. Stafford had severed his political connection with Nelson, where he considered he had been badly treated by his former supporters, and had been elected for Timaru, in South Canterbury, a part of the country on which he had conferred great benefits during his second Administration, especially in giving the people there powers to build a breakwater and make a harbour. After I had been at Auckland for some months and was getting very tired of a routine office, I saw an advertisement in the "New Zealand Herald" for an editor for the "Timaru Herald," a country paper of good standing which had been edited with great ability by Mr. Gerald Fitzgerald, a brother of the Comptroller General. I applied for this position, and received a telegram from the proprietor, saying, "May I refer to Stafford?" I replied, "Certainly, that is what I wished." By the next mail I received the appointment, and at once obtained three months' leave, to which I was entitled, and went to Timaru, retiring altogether from the Civil Service at the end of my leave. The "Timaru Herald" was then a bi-weekly paper, but I immediately brought it out as a daily, and it speedily grew into a large circulation as a powerful organ of political opinion. It was a strong supporter of Mr. Stafford, and he wrote to me, heartily congratulating me on my success as "able editor."

Between 1872 and 1875 there were three or four changes of Ministry, in which Mr. Stafford took no part, he having taken a trip to England on his private affairs. In 1875 there was a General Election on the question of the Abolition of the Provinces. By this

time the electoral district of Timaru had been divided owing to increased population, and a new district, called Geraldine, had been created out of its rural parts. At the General Election I offered myself as a candidate for Geraldine, knowing I had scarcely a chance of success, but wishing to make my début in political life. I was quite unknown to the electors, except as editor to the "Timaru Herald," but I was informed that if I could get the support of one Julius Mendelson, a wealthy merchant and grain buyer, he would be of great help to me. At our first interview Mendelson was coldly polite, and declined to give me any assistance. A few days later his manner was entirely changed, and he promised to vote for me, and back me in the election in every possible way. I asked him what had happened in the interval. He replied, "I have had a letter from Mr. Stafford, and that is quite enough for me." His support was so effective that I was returned the first Member for Geraldine.

In the ensuing Session, when I took my seat in the House, Mr. Stafford was delighted to have me with him, and it was arranged that I should sit next him. One of his friends said that he was like an old hen with one chick, and I was very glad to be the chick, for I could not have had a wiser guide or more experienced adviser on all Parliamentary matters. When I was Private Secretary I always occupied a seat behind the Speaker's chair while the House was sitting, so that I was thoroughly familiar with the forms and procedure, but when I became a Member I found I had a great deal to learn of what went on outside the House, especially regarding party politics, and it was in this respect that Mr. Stafford's kindly counsel was invaluable to me, and saved me from many

blunders which I would have fallen into without it. Although nominally in Opposition, Mr. Stafford was always on good terms with the Government, for he had no mean or selfish ambitions or interests of his own to serve, and he was much more interested in promoting good legislation than in getting the better of political adversaries. He rejoiced in the excitement of debate, being himself by far the finest speaker in the House at that time, and he laid himself out to make me an effective debater, too. When I was going to make my first attempt, he said to me just before I rose to speak, "Stick to the point, and do not speak long." I spoke for about a quarter of an hour, and when I sat down he said, "Capital! You will soon get the ear of the House, and may become a great power in it in course of time if you keep up to that standard." After that he always coached me carefully when I was going to take part in any important debate, and it gave him great satisfaction when I was accepted eventually as one of the leading Parliamentary speakers. Mr. Stafford had a great friend, Mr. E. C. J. Stevens, one of the Members for Christchurch, who was also a personal friend of mine, and we three always sat together, worked together, and voted together, and we came in time to have a considerable following, and to exercise a good deal of influence. Mr. Stevens was no great speaker, being exceedingly nervous when on his legs, but he had a rare knowledge of politics, and especially finance, and he was the author of many of the most important and beneficial Acts that ever passed the New Zealand Parliament. Among these was the famous Land Transfer Act, which was subsequently adopted almost unchanged by the Imperial Parliament at Westminster.

It had been foreseen that the immediate effect of the Public Works and Immigration Policy, with its vast expenditure of borrowed money, would be to send up the value of land wherever the railways were extended, and, in fact, there followed such wild speculation that fortunes were often made in a few days by buying Crown Lands in localities where the likelihood of a railway being constructed was not publicly known, and then re-selling them as soon as the railway contracts were announced. Everybody seemed to have gone mad on land buying, and the banks vied with one another in their encouragement of this kind of gambling by making almost unlimited advances at high interest. Enormous sums were transmitted from Great Britain to enable this risky business to be carried on, one or two of the Scottish Banks in particular going far beyond reasonable lengths in this respect. This was exactly what Mr. Stafford and his supporters had predicted when Mr. Vogel first proposed his policy in 1870; at the same time warning the Government that the inevitable reaction would cause widespread ruin and distress. They had allowed ten years, speaking broadly, for these results to ensue; but actually within six years the reaction had set in, and all who had the best interests of the Colony at heart were filled with anxiety as to what was coming. Mr. Stafford used every effort to prevail on the Government to check the squandering of borrowed money, and especially to refuse to carry out railway extension, under political pressure, into localities where there was no real prospect of its proving profitable. He also urged them very strongly to place their borrowing transactions in London on a business-like footing, and, above all, not to incur charges for interest on the loans beyond what

the general revenue of the country could provide for. He emphatically condemned the dangerous practice of treating the proceeds of land sales as ordinary revenue, whereas, in fact, it was truly in the nature of capital, and should be devoted solely to roads and other necessary local improvements, as directed by law. Early in 1876 it became known that Dr. Featherstone, who had acted as Agent-General for New Zealand in London for over six years, must shortly retire owing to failing health, and it was fully recognised that the office had become so much more important since the Loan Policy was adopted, that it would require an entirely different sort of administration. The Government of which Mr. Vogel was now the head, had approached Mr. Stafford with a view to obtaining his services as Agent General, in order to carry out this reconstruction, and after much consideration he had consented, from a high sense of public duty, to undertake what he knew to be an extremely difficult task. It thus became definitely settled that he was to succeed Dr. Featherstone, and he had made all his plans accordingly. Those in his confidence were aware, too, that, looking farther ahead, he had a design for entering the House of Commons, and acting, in a sense, as the representative of the Colony there. In June, 1876, came the news of Dr. Featherstone's death, and Mr. Stafford naturally supposed that he would be called upon to leave for London, in fulfilment of his arrangement with the Government. Instead of that, Mr. Vogel astonished the House by announcing that he had decided on resigning the Premiership and assuming the office of Agent-General himself. Mr. Vogel and his colleagues made all sorts of apologies to Mr. Stafford for this breach of faith, endeavouring to assure him

that Mr. Vogel's tenure of the office would be only temporary, and that the original intention would very soon be given effect to. Mr. Stafford, however, was too deeply offended to listen to any such excuses, and from that time forward he never held any relations of any kind with Mr. Vogel or the members of his Ministry, and he began to make preparations for withdrawing altogether from the public affairs of New Zealand, in which he could no longer see any prospect of rendering useful service. Some very strange things, however, were to happen before that could come about. The Vogel Ministry were succeeded by a weak Administration under Major Atkinson, a Taranaki Member, who had formerly been a strong opponent of the Public Works Policy, but now took office with the professed desire so to direct that Policy as to avert its worst consequences from the Colony. Mr. Stafford supported them in this course, though he had not much hope of their success. Another factor was by now beginning to be ominously disturbing. About the time when the Abolition of the Provinces was seen to be inevitable, owing to the operation of the Public Works and Immigration Policy, Sir George Grey had returned from England, where he had failed, rather ignominiously, either to gain a seat in Parliament or to get any sort of satisfaction from the Colonial Office for the shameful manner in which he had been dismissed from the Governorship of New Zealand. He had come back a thoroughly soured man, and having been elected Superintendent of the Province of Auckland and a Member of the House of Representatives, had determined to take an active part in opposing Abolition. Although Mr. Stafford differed from him on that point, he nevertheless was inclined to welcome Sir George Grey's

entry into the political life of the Colony, believing that he would bring into it a new dignity and distinction, owing to his personal prestige and the high positions he had held in the service of the Empire. It was a bitter disappointment to Mr. Stafford, therefore, when Sir George Grey was seen to have allied himself with some of the most notorious demagogues in the country, and to have started upon a campaign of class warfare by exciting the passions of the lower orders and the discontented masses against the established order of things. Sir George had gone from one end of the Colony to the other, addressing great public meetings with unrivalled eloquence, and haranguing mobs of unemployed and irresponsibles with such violence that his old friends were seriously alarmed for his mental balance. Deplorable as his conduct was from their point of view, there could be no denying its success as a political movement. He fairly carried the people away by his speeches, and in the House he speedily gathered around him all the irreconcilables and malcontents, and even a good many of the speculators and moneyed men, who seemed to see in his agitation a prospect of furthering their own selfish interests. Mr. Stafford found himself in a very painful position, for though he remained on terms of personal friendship with Sir George Grey, he felt it to be his clear duty to offer strenuous opposition to his political excesses. I followed Mr. Stafford in this, and though I still regarded Sir George Grey almost with affection, I became one of his severest critics in debate. This was the situation, when, in October 1877, Mr. Larnach, one of Sir George Grey's wealthy supporters, succeeded in carrying a vote of want of confidence in the Atkinson Ministry. Sir George Bowen had by now been suc-

ceeded by the Marquis of Normanby as Governor, and that nobleman, on the advice of Mr. Larnach, sent for Sir George Grey, and commanded him to form a Ministry. Lord Normanby was a singularly fine character, and a man of great experience in Diplomacy and Administration, and it was hoped that he would be able to exercise a restraining influence upon Sir George Grey. To the surprise of everybody, however, except perhaps the ring of demagogues who had him under their influence, Sir George treated the grand old Marquis with an acerbity which amounted to positive insult, and forced him to accept as Advisers several men who were totally unfit for any such position. Sir George paid me the somewhat doubtful compliment of asking me to accept the Ministry of Lands. I replied very frankly that whilst I should have been proud to serve under him in respectable company, nothing would induce me to sit on the Ministerial Bench with some of the men whom he had already chosen. Mr. Stafford entirely approved of this decision.

The Grey Ministry were, in fact, the worst that had ever held office in New Zealand, and it was soon realised that Sir George Grey himself had not the smallest control over the most dangerous elements in his Cabinet. Sir George Grey had taken the office of Colonial Treasurer, and, aided and abetted by worse men than himself, he speedily brought the finances of the Colony into ruinous confusion, but by the use of most unscrupulous expedients the Grey Ministry contrived to hold their majority together until the end of the session. During the recess that followed they threw aside all disguise, and their proceedings became nothing short of a scandalous disgrace to the Colony and the Empire, very gravely threatening the credit of New

Zealand in the London money market. The payment of interest on the loans was deliberately left unprovided for, and if the Bank of England had not come to the rescue, there would have been a terrible crash, with far-reaching consequences. In this crisis Lord Normanby, who was advanced in years and unsuited by temperament to handle such a situation, was transferred to the Governorship of Victoria, and replaced by Sir Hercules Robinson, admittedly the strongest man in the service of the Colonial Office. Sir George Grey then found himself compelled to observe at least the decencies of Responsible Government, and on more than one occasion the new Governor positively refused to act upon his advice, or that of the more reckless among his colleagues. When Parliament met in 1879 the Grey Ministry had made themselves so obviously impossible, that they were instantly expelled from office by the severest vote of censure ever passed upon any Ministry within the British Empire. They were succeeded by a strong and capable Ministry under the Hon. John Hall, who successfully stemmed the tide of ruin which appeared to be overwhelming the Colony, and administered its affairs with wisdom and decorum for three years. Sir George Grey and his ragged regiment sank into insignificance, Mr. Stafford lending his powerful support to the Hall Ministry, until the day arrived when he saw his way to retire from public life with honour, and to transfer his activities to the Mother Country. The distinction of K.C.M.G. was conferred upon him on his arrival. He had previously been offered the Governorship of Queensland and Madras respectively, but had declined them both from motives which did him the utmost credit, and in 1887 he was raised to the dignity of G.C.M.G. When the order of

St. Michael and St. George, originally created for distinguished service in Malta and the Ionian Islands, was extended to the Colonial Service, Mr. Stafford was one of those who opposed the change, and personally declined to accept the C.M.G. while several of the Canadian Ministers who had been appointed to the higher grades without their consent, went so far as to insist on their being struck off the Roll of the Order. In course of time many men of very high standing, including several members of the Royal Family having accepted the Order, the feeling against it passed away, and Mr. Stafford's acceptance of it in 1879 was generally regarded as marking the close of the controversy.

When I arrived in London early in 1890 after a long stay in the United States, I was delighted to find Sir Edward Stafford well and happy in the bosom of his family, for he was before all things, domestic, and enjoying the attachment and respect of a very wide circle of friends, for he had a genius for friendship and for society. He had long before abandoned all idea of entering into political life in England, and had applied his activities mainly to business of the higher financial order. It thus came about that in course of time, at his instance, I was dispatched to New York as the representative of the British and United States Agency, Ltd., of which he was Chairman and Lord George Campbell and Sir Edward Thornton were Directors. In the following year when I had just got the Agency into regular working, with very good prospects, largely through the excellent introductions given me by Sir Edward Thornton, who had been British Ambassador at Washington for six years, I received a cable instructing me to close the Agency, and wind up the business on the best terms I could. This I suc-

ceeded in doing without loss or discredit, and at once returned to London. There I was met by Lord George Campbell, who told me that a financial crisis was impending which necessitated the withdrawal of capital from outside enterprises. Then followed the dark days of the Baring failure, the difficulties of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency, and the downfall of many other Companies and Houses, through too venturesome speculations in Argentina. Sir Edward Stafford and several of his closest associates felt the shock of this disturbance very severely, and were for the time being placed in an extremely difficult position. Sir Edward Stafford, however, boldly faced his responsibilities, never swerving for a moment to the right or to the left from the clear path of duty, and it was in great measure through his cool-headed common sense, that some of the great Banks intervened, and the clouds passed away, the Argentine proving after all to be an excellent field for investment on the largest scale. When it was all over he stood higher than ever in the opinion of the financial world, and of all ranks of society in England. The struggle had been a severe one, and he withdrew as far as possible from the cares and anxieties which others were only too willing to press upon him. The evening of his life was tranquil and dignified, and when the end came in 1901, the record he left behind him was the best consolation that those who loved him could have had. Looking back through the mists of all those years since first I met him, I see before me the figure of a great and good man, invariably upheld by high endeavour, inspired in public as in private life by the very soul of honour, just, generous, placable, magnanimous—and totally devoid of jealousy, rancour or vindictiveness. His

bitterest enemy never accused him of harbouring malice or wreaking a grudge, and many a one who had every reason to dread his wrath, came to know him as a merciful and forgiving friend. The value of his work for the Empire has never been recognised as it deserved, but, in New Zealand in particular, it may be said of him in the words of Wren's epitaph in St. Paul's, "If you seek his monument look round you."

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