

## SETTLEMENT OF CANTERBURY . . .

All the writers of the period enjoined simplicity and hard work on the emigrant to New Zealand. In a handbook published in 1848 it was stated: "Let the emigrant bear in mind that the mere possession of a formidable array of agricultural implements is not agriculture, but the industrious use of the spade and mattock is." The most successful wielders of the spade and mattock were the small farmers who had come out as labourers. The farming practised by these small cultivators was designed to meet local needs alone, with the result that time and energy were spent in many districts in producing crops which were not entirely suited to the local soil and climate. But until a more satisfactory division of labour could be found no other course was possible.

### Areas of Settlement

The settlements fell into six well-defined areas—North Auckland, Auckland, Wellington (with its offshoots at Wanganui and New Plymouth), Nelson, Akaroa, and Otago. Auckland, in spite of the advantages of being the capital, suffered from a shortage of readily available land, perhaps a lack of sufficient attention to farming, and land speculation. The New Zealand Company's settlements, Wellington, Nelson, New Plymouth, and Wanganui, faced similar difficulties and endeavoured to overcome them in much the same way. Disputes with the Maoris, disputes with the Government, excessive amounts of land sold to absentees, and general disillusionment were common to all, but by 1850 the beginning of extensive pastoral farming in the Wairarapa, Hawkes Bay, and on the Wairau Plains was giving them some economic stability. Otago's progress was also very slow at first, but it, too, progressed rapidly when the interior was opened up.

In character the settlements were vastly different, ranging from Auckland, with no formal schemes of emigration and land settlement and attracting mainly those who hoped to

profit by being first in the field, to Otago, where it was hoped to maintain a rigid system, with every immigrant selected not only for his industry and adaptability but because he held particular religious beliefs. The company's settlements at Wellington and Nelson occupied an intermediate stage, adhering to a definite land settlement policy, but not making any stipulations about the religion or morals of their immigrants.

The Canterbury Association demanded membership of the Church of England as well as a good character of prospective immigrants but beside the careful selection of immigrants the Canterbury settlement had the advantage of more careful preparation. The land was adequately surveyed, some attempt had been made to house the immigrants on their arrival, and the settlement was vigorously led. At no stage were there any fears for its survival.

### FOUNDING OF CANTERBURY

For the antecedents of the Canterbury settlement one must look first at the state of British society in the first half of the 19th century. The Industrial Revolution in the late 18th and early part of the 19th centuries changed Britain from a predominantly agricultural community to the urban one that it is today. During the 40's of last century the transition had reached its most painful stage, with new inventions enabling machine production to spread into fresh fields, railways revolutionising transport, and yet the accumulation of wealth seeming to benefit relatively few. Emigration became more than a vague possibility; it was an urgent necessity and, though the majority of emigrants between 1845 and 1855 went to America, large numbers went to the British colonies.

### Wakefield's Land Scheme

Edward Gibbon Wakefield's scheme for the sale of land at a high and sufficient price assisted emigration, and



Edward Gibbon Wakefield, photographed shortly before his death in Wellington in 1862 at the age of 66. The original photograph, which was taken by one of Wellington's earliest photographers, was used by Joseph Durham, R.A., as a model for the bust in the Colonial Office, a replica of which is in Parliament Buildings. A copy of the photograph is in the possession of the Wellington Public Library.

the granting of some form of self-government was proposed at a time when the Government regarded colonies more as a burden than an asset. Wakefield felt that the abundance of cheap land caused the working class to withdraw themselves from the labour market, and his high price was designed to prevent this. The emigration of "young marriageable persons" of both sexes would give some stability to new settlements, make colonial society more attractive, and also help to solve the problem of the redundant population in Britain.

He first publicly announced his interest in New Zealand in 1836 when giving evidence before a House of Lords Select Committee on the Disposal of Waste Land in the Colonies, as he then declared, "We are, I think, going to colonise New Zealand, though we be doing so in a most slovenly, scrambling and disgraceful fashion", and soon after, in June, 1837, the New Zealand Association was formed to induce the Government to assist in the colonisation of New Zealand and make some moves toward annexation. Viewed with suspicion by the Colonial Office, the association, and later the New Zealand Company, was involved in a long conflict with the Government, but finally forced its hand by dispatching the Tory to Port Nicholson in 1839, the main body of colonists leaving a few months later.

### Plans for a Church Settlement

After the founding of Wellington Wakefield was engrossed for some time in Canadian affairs, but he had already conceived the idea of a church settlement in New Zealand, the church to



A map showing the site of the Canterbury settlement which was published in the "Canterbury Papers" before settlement had begun. The estimated extent of plain land was 1,765,000 acres, wood land 237,100 acres, and mountain and hill land 397,900 acres, a total of 2,400,000 acres.