

Not unexpectedly, the course of life in the new Utopia did not run altogether smooth. The *Clarion* settlers arrived with the hope that they would be given a government grant of land which they would work, improve, and use industrially as well as agriculturally.¹¹ The first lot – three women and thirty-eight men – on the *Kumara* arriving in Wellington on 30 September 1900, were immediately disillusioned about their dream of a co-operative enterprise. Though written up in the press, and honoured at a reception arranged by the Socialist Church in Christchurch,¹² they were nevertheless left to fend for themselves and take what jobs were offering. Most of those on the second ship, the *Wakanui*, which also brought Ranstead and his family, were sent to Auckland to work on the main trunk railway between Poro-o-tarua and Kawa Kawa.¹³ The idea of a co-operative settlement was not forgotten for some time, but did eventually die without having been implemented.

The *Clarion* settlers kept in touch throughout the country, however, and in 1901 were instrumental in forming the NZ Socialist Party, from which the Labour Party evolved.¹⁴ But William Ranstead's active participation in the affairs of the *Clarion* settlers diminished after their arrival in New Zealand, and his papers are more concerned with *Clarion* activities in England prior to 1900, than with later New Zealand developments. Much of the earlier material has not been touched on here – the correspondence from the period when Ranstead organised the Shoebblack lectures at Toynbee Hall; photographs, documents and letters associated with the National *Clarion* Cycling Club, the *Clarion* Newspaper Company Ltd., the Socialist Soup Van – but the aim has simply been to suggest something of the content of one recently acquired group of papers.¹⁵

Margaret Scott

NOTES

¹ *Clarion*. 6 January 1900.

² *Clarion*. 24 March 1900.

³ All errors of spelling and grammar in these letters have been preserved.

⁴ *Clarion*. 24 March 1900.

⁵ The Federative Home was based on its founder's conviction that human beings were not by nature equipped to live alone or in isolated family groups, and that such living was also highly uneconomical. Life in the Federative Home attempted to combine a strongly social setting with individual freedom: an interesting social experiment whose ultimate impracticability was not immediately evident.

⁶ As noted in the Nov. 1967 issue of the *Turnbull Library Record* (p 33, 35) a large mass of Professor Bickerton's manuscript papers came to the Library last year.

⁷ Mr J. Mackay, Chief Clerk of the Labour Department. *Auckland Star*. 24 August 1901.

⁸ Their many published books form part of the Library's William Ranstead Collection.