

deemed essential. I then called on Cassell & Co. . . . and they . . . agreed . . . 30 plates—and in a very attractive form. I at once signed the Contract, and went to work, for Cassells made it a condition that I should see the book through the press myself . . . This I have done. You know my capacity for work of old, but it has been taxed to the utmost here . . . I hope to have the pleasure of sending you an advance copy in a week or two. I now write mainly to explain the delay, which vexed me extremely, but which was quite unavoidable. . . . I may say that I have done the whole thing out of my own resources, which are scanty enough, and have laid out more than £400 in the preparation and publication of the book; so that the £125 which the Government agreed to pay me for 1,000 copies is a matter of great importance . . .’<sup>6</sup>

Wakefield concluded by citing the U.S. periodicals for which he was writing articles on New Zealand and claimed to ‘have already taught the Americans more about New Zealand than they ever knew before.’ He looked forward to seeing Bell in London ‘about the end of the month’.

Less than four weeks later, early in October 1889 the book appeared—according to Wakefield ‘with great éclat.’ He expressed obvious anxiety that the copy which he was sending would meet with Bell’s approval. The few errors in Maori names would be corrected ‘on the plates’ and Bell ‘would readily see’ that the author had ‘purposely and studiously avoided the handbook or encyclopaedic style . . . I hope you will like the pictures. The selection may seem eccentric, but it is not without design, the object being to give a general idea of the condition of the Colony by suggestive illustrations, rather than to illustrate particular passages in the letter press’. If Bell approved he was asked to send authority to Cassells, New York to print the promised 1,000.

It was clear from Bell’s draft telegram that the Government were to get the 2s 6d. edition copies exactly as the copy supplied ‘only corrected in literals and printed on lighter paper and bound handsomely in paper instead of cloth.’ Perhaps the most significant revelation was Wakefield’s statement that he had himself drawn the design on the cover.<sup>7</sup> In his acknowledgment by letter Bell could not say ‘that I am not disappointed with the book’ but that mere disappointment would not justify him from withholding his formal approval. He nevertheless insisted on seeing a specimen copy before the whole was printed so that he could see the paper and binding and ‘especially how the illustrations are to be produced.’ He asked about progress on the French edition. ‘The Count told me in Paris that he was daily expecting to see or hear from you; but now the Exhibition is closed, and the object of the arrangement is therefore frustrated.’<sup>8</sup> In a letter to the Minister, recapitulating the sorry history of Wakefield’s journalistic excesses, Bell said that the Count’s ver-