

On a day of British national pride W. B. D. Mantell drew up this document which he felt worth preserving amongst his papers.<sup>1</sup> The motion has no place in the Journal of the House of Representatives, then deeply concerned with the imminent acceleration of open warfare between Maoris and settlers after the confrontation at Waitara, the question of Imperial responsibility for the cost of the war and, above all, with absolute loyalty to the Crown. The Notice of Motion may be regarded as light relief concocted by three witty Members of Parliament who shared mutual respect and a vital concern.

In fact, on June 19, before a Strangers' Gallery packed in unrewarded anticipation of lively debate,<sup>2</sup> Weld (the Native Minister) with Domett as supporter moved three far different resolutions:<sup>3</sup>

1. That the establishment within these Islands of a Sovereign authority, independent of the British Crown, is incompatible with the security of the Colonists, the civilisation of the Natives, and the welfare of both Races.
2. That it is the duty of the Colony cordially to second the measures taken by the Imperial Government for the assertion of Her Majesty's Sovereignty, and for securing a lasting peace.
3. That if, unhappily, negotiations should fail, this House, relying on the best practicable provision being made for the protection of life and property, does not shrink from the consequences of a resort to force.

Within a month the Ministry of Sir Edward Stafford had fallen and Mantell took Weld's place as Native Minister in Sir William Fox's Ministry. Mantell has been described as 'strongly, almost idiosyncratically independent, with an epigrammatic, caustic manner'<sup>4</sup> but Weld's respect for him at this time is warmly expressed in his 1865 letter to Mantell whose ill-health forced retirement: 'I hope . . . that you will think not without some pleasure of the time when we worked together, to use the old hackneyed *true* expression "For the good of Her Majesty's subjects of both races"'.<sup>5</sup>

#### REFERENCES

- 1 MS Papers 83 [Mantell family] : 270 (ATL).
- 2 *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian*, 29 June 1861, p. 3 col.f.
- 3 N.Z. Parliament. House of Representatives, *Journals of the House of Representatives*, 1861, p. 30.
- 4 A. G. Bagnall in *An encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (Wellington, 1966), v.2 p. 405.
- 5 MS Papers 83 [Mantell family] : 399 (ATL).