

THE VOGEL PAPERS

The private papers of Sir Julius Vogel are held in two separate collections in Wellington; the *Vogel Family Papers* in the Alexander Turnbull Library, and the *Vogel Letters and Newspaper Writings* in the General Assembly Library.¹ Between them they contain a wealth of material on Vogel's private life and on his activities as an international businessman in the 1880s. Their political content is rather disappointing, however, particularly as far as New Zealand historians are concerned. Very little of the manuscript material relates to either of the main aspects of Vogel's political career; his first period of office between 1869 and 1876, or his coalition ministry with Stout from 1884 to 1887. But the collection in the General Assembly Library does contain a considerable amount of political correspondence covering the years between 1876 and 1881, when Vogel was New Zealand's Agent-General in London, and much of the material in his business papers reflects the close connection between his business and political interests in both New Zealand and Western Australia in the 1880s.

The *Vogel Family Papers* contain upwards of five hundred letters and other miscellaneous material which is largely of a personal nature, with letters to and from Vogel, his wife, children, and sister forming the basis of the collection. Although some of the letters Vogel wrote to his wife are of political interest, the main value of the correspondence is in the impression it gives of the family life that lay behind his political career. It brings out above all the extremely loving and affectionate relationship that existed between Vogel and his wife and children. He was a man who normally addressed his wife in terms such as 'My own darling, darling, lovey, Polly', and referred to her as his 'own darling, darling, little woman', and could conclude a letter of admonition to his twelve-year-old son with the words, 'I will say no more my lovely, loved boy, your fond father . . .' Vogel's letters to his family also underline the seriousness of his state of health from the late 1870s onwards, and the ever-present threat of an early death and worry over financial security for his family that resulted from it. Another aspect of the character of an extremely complex man is demonstrated by the frequent references to his bets and winnings on horse races and at cards in his correspondence with his wife.

The *Vogel Letters and Newspaper Writings* is a much larger and more important collection, which is of considerable value to New Zealand historians in spite of the deficiencies that have been mentioned above.² The material it contains can be divided into several groups of varying degrees of usefulness to the research worker. These are set out below.

1. *Vogel's life and career up to 1876*

This is the most disappointing section of the Vogel Papers. The material