

Walter away. Throughout Gideon Mantell's journal there is the flavour of the bitterness and unhappiness which his son's perceived betrayal had created.²⁹ Charles Lyell tried to cheer him up by touting New Zealand's promise. 'Your son's New Zealand emigration must have been a cruel disappointment to your hopes & plans which appeared to be so reasonable of eventually transferring to him a good practice at Clapham,' he wrote soon after Walter's departure. 'But,' he continued in a hopeful vein, 'I trust that he will either become a great landed proprietor at the Antipodes or return in time to allow the transfer to take place. I am very sanguine myself about New Zealand & I think it will outdo even Van Diemen's Land which in thirty years after its first colonization not only built steam vessels but sent off a colony to Port Phillip on the mainland.'³⁰

Mantell came out with no fixed career in mind; he intended to look around and to find jobs to do until he had decided where to pitch his future. Jerningham Wakefield who accompanied his uncle in the establishment of the first of the New Zealand Company's settlements at Port Nicholson quotes a newspaper article of 9 March 1842 which describes Mantell 'stuffing an old potato-sack amongst the reeds of the dilapidated hut he occupies as Postmaster to prevent the wind from blowing the letters off the table on which he had assorted them for delivery.'³¹ Through his father, however, he had received introductions as well as instructions for the collection of natural history specimens and information for his father's professional colleagues back home. And in particular, having learned from his father of Owen's interest in the Moa, 'he endeavoured to obtain further information on this interesting topic.'³²

In the first extant letter of the interesting and informative series which he wrote to his father, he mentioned that he had seen Governor FitzRoy who had received recommendations from both Sir Roderick Murchison and Charles Darwin, FitzRoy's shipmate and companion during the *Beagle* voyage; but FitzRoy had given him little encouragement for government employment. However Walter promised to do whatever he could to get the information on the natural history of New Zealand on which both had instructed him. Then he added a practical suggestion which would satisfy the collectors back home who were eager to add New Zealand's novelties to their collections: 'Why do not the Marquis of Northampton and some others of the rich 'savans' of England subscribe to fit out an exploration in this interesting country. Say ten of them at from £15 to £20 each per annum for which they would receive Moa's bones and all the other discoveries of their employees.' While he thought that the expenses would be fairly large, perhaps £200, he would take on the task himself even though he