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New Zealand

George Augustus Selwyn (1809–1878) was the first Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, with Selwyn College, Cambridge later named in his honour. New Zealand was declared an independent British colony in 1841 and the Diocese of New Zealand was established in the same year. After graduating from St. John's College, Cambridge in 1831, Selwyn had been ordained priest in 1834 and consecrated as the first Bishop of New Zealand in 1841. This volume, first published in 1844 contains a series of journals and letters written by Selwyn during his first two years in New Zealand. He provides an intimate and detailed description of the organisation and society of the new colony and the growth of new settlements including Auckland and Wellington. He also describes the landscape and lives of the Maori in remote areas mostly untouched by colonisation, providing a fascinating account of the early history of colonial New Zealand.

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GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN



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NEW ZEALAND.

PART I.

Letters from the Bishop

TO

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL,

TOGETHER

WITH EXTRACTS

FROM HIS

VISITATION JOURNAL,

FROM JULY 1842, TO JANUARY 1843.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL;

SOLD BY

RIVINGTONS, HATCHARD, AND BURNS.

1844.

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P R E F A C E.



THE islands of New Zealand, the inhabitants of which are almost our exact antipodes, were first discovered by Tasman, the Dutch navigator, in 1642. The extent and character, however, of the islands (three in number) were not ascertained until the voyages of Captain Cook in 1769 and 1774. After that time the coasts were occasionally visited by persons engaged in the whale fishery, and some communication was held with the natives; but no permanent settlement in the islands appears to have been made by any Europeans until about the year 1815, when the Rev. S. Marsden, and some other Missionaries of the Church Missionary Society, passed over thither from Sydney, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the barbarous inhabitants of those islands.

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They established their first station in the Bay of Islands, which lies towards the north of the northern island: and it is impossible to speak with too much admiration and praise of the self-denial and zeal and patience with which they prosecuted their holy labours. This has been thankfully acknowledged by all persons interested in the welfare of New Zealand; and by no one more fully than by the present Bishop, who having occasion, while at Sydney, to make a public address on the subject, thus alluded to the labours of the first Christian Missionaries in his new Diocese:—

“The name of Samuel Marsden is indeed a memorable one in connexion with New Zealand. I cannot help thinking of the state of New Zealand now, and comparing it with that eventful night when, after trying for two years to get a vessel to take him there, but prevented by the savage character of the natives, Samuel Marsden at length succeeded, and, landing, slept there in safety, with the spears of the savages stuck around the stone on which, like Jacob, he had laid his head for a pillow; and it is to the exertions of Mr. Marsden and his companions that, under God, the difference is owing.”

Through the mission thus set on foot by the Church Missionary Society, a regular intercourse was established between this country

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and New Zealand. No British authority, however, was constituted there until the year 1835, when an officer was sent, acting in subordination to the Governor of New South Wales. In 1839 the New Zealand Company was formed, for the purpose of colonizing the islands, which in 1841 were declared to be an independent colony, with a Governor and other local authorities. Emigrants have been sent thither in large numbers, both by the Government and the Company; and at the making up of the last returns, it was calculated that there were 10,000 Europeans in the northern island.

Civilization has thus been rapidly advancing; and, at the same time, that far more important work (without which civilization would be of little value), the spread of the Gospel, has also, under God's good providence, been carried on with a success, unexampled, it is believed, in the history of later Christian Missions. The Clergy of the Church Missionary Society had, from the first establishment of the Mission, been prosecuting their holy work with unwearied zeal. They had found, indeed, many difficulties to contend with, especially from the migratory habits of the people; but even this was made,

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by God's goodness, to turn to the furtherance of the Gospel. The Missionary often mentioned it as a discouraging circumstance, that when he had had a few natives for some time under instruction, and was beginning to see the fruit of his labours, they suddenly left him for some other part of the country; but he afterwards learnt, we are told, "to see the hand of God herein, for these people taught others far and wide, where no Missionary had ever been."

Of the Clergymen engaged in the Mission on the Bishop's arrival, he writes thus:—

"I am much pleased with the Missionary Clergymen whom I have seen here. They seem to be very zealous and able Ministers; and I think myself happy in having under me a body of men in whom I shall see so much to commend and so little to reprove. The state of the Mission is really wonderfully good, considering the difficulties against which they have had to contend."

Since the establishment of the colony, the Rev. J. F. Churton has been acting as resident Chaplain at Auckland, being supported partly by the Government, and partly by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

Hitherto New Zealand, as being a dependency of New South Wales, had been under

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the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Bishop of Australia, who visited the islands at the end of the year 1838, held an Ordination and two Confirmations, and consecrated burial-grounds at Paihia and Kororarika. This connexion, however, ceased on the separation of the colony from that of New South Wales; and an application was immediately made to Government to constitute the islands of New Zealand into an independent Diocese.

This step had indeed been contemplated and desired from the first foundation of the colony. A Society, called the New Zealand Church Society, had been established almost for this express purpose; and the directors of the New Zealand Company had not only expressed themselves favourable to the design, but had voted considerable grants of money and land towards the accomplishment of the object.

The Bishop of London, in his letter of April 1840, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the subject of Additional Colonial Bishoprics, alluded to this feeling on the part of the Company, and mentioned New Zealand as one of the colonies in which a Bishopric ought to be established: and in the Declaration on the same subject issued by the Archbishops and Bishops,

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in the month of June in the following year, it was said,—“ In the first instance, we propose that an Episcopal See be established at the seat of Government in New Zealand, offers having been already made which appear to obviate all difficulty as to endowment.”

Shortly afterwards it was announced that the Government had acceded to this arrangement; and on the 17th of October, 1841, the Rev. George Augustus Selwyn, late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, was consecrated as the first Bishop of the new See. He sailed from Plymouth on the 26th of December, in the ship *Tomatin*, accompanied by Mrs. Selwyn, and their little boy, together with five Clergymen, and three Catechists, candidates for Holy Orders.

After a most happy and prosperous voyage, which the Almighty seemed to bless in a peculiar manner, the Bishop and his party reached Sydney on the 14th of April, 1842, and on the following Sunday public thanksgivings were offered up in the church of St. James for their safe arrival. After remaining a short time, in order to confer with the Bishop of Australia on the important matters connected with the new diocese, the Bishop again set sail

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for New Zealand, where he landed on the 30th of May.

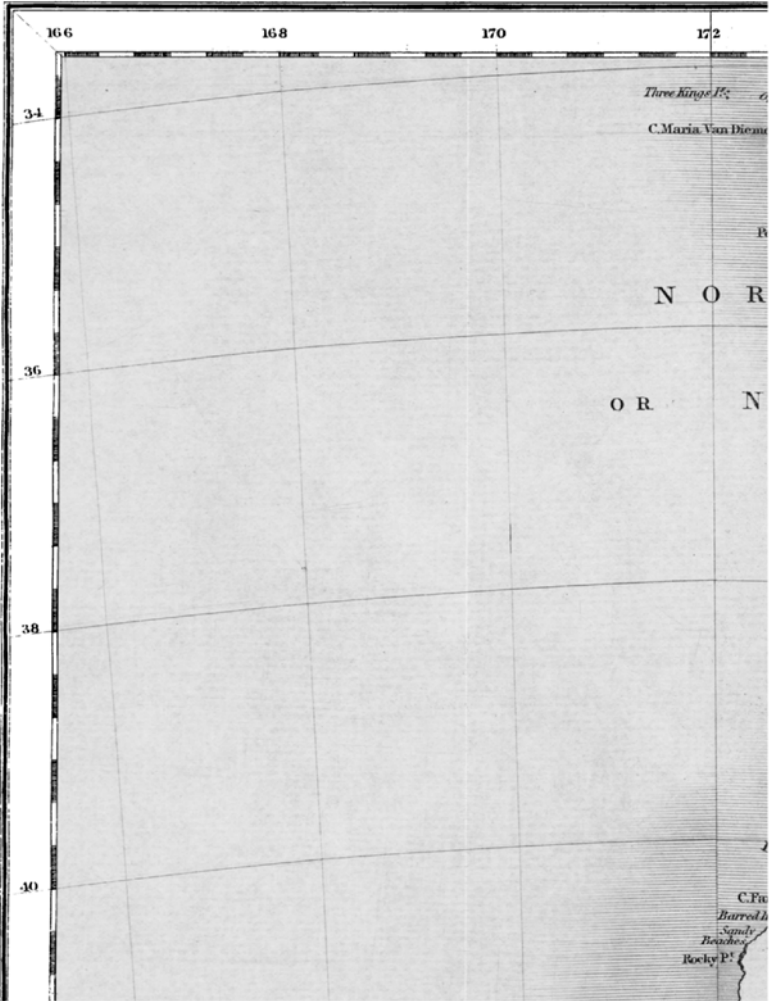
Much of the subsequent history of the Mission may be learnt from the Bishop's letters to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to which are added some extracts from his Journal of a tour of Visitation through the more important parts of the diocese, contained in a series of letters to his family, through whose kindness they are now allowed to be published.

It should be stated that both the Map which accompanies this volume, and Wyld's Map, to which the Bishop frequently alludes, were published before accurate information had been obtained as to the geography of many parts of New Zealand. Mr. Wyld is now about to publish a new edition of his Map.

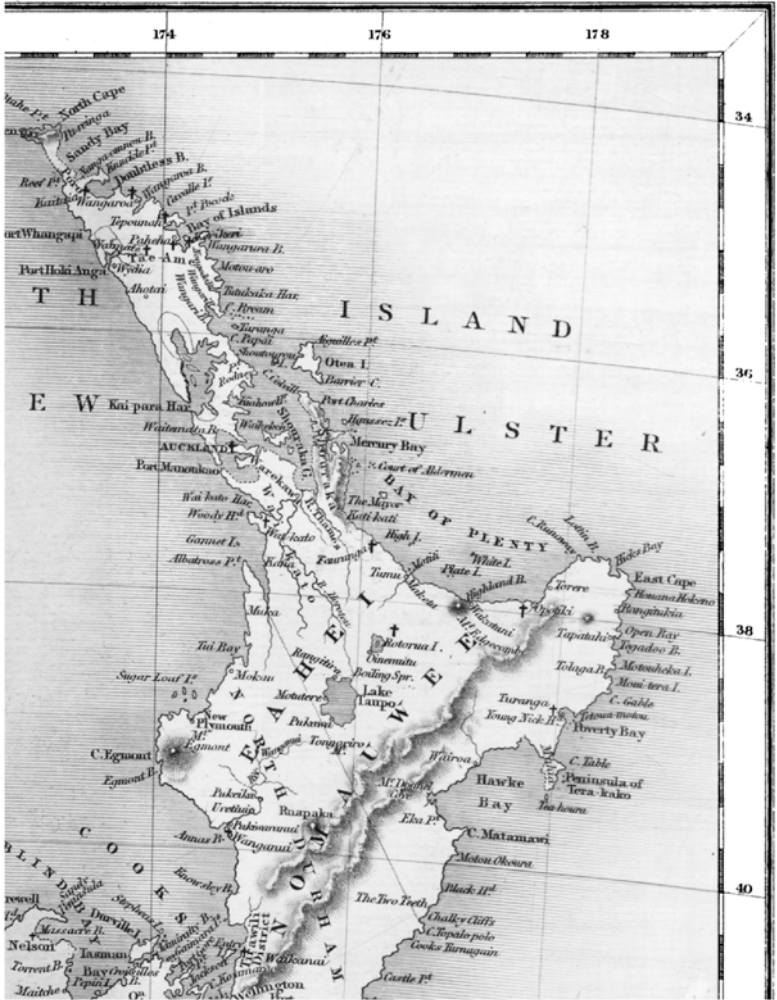
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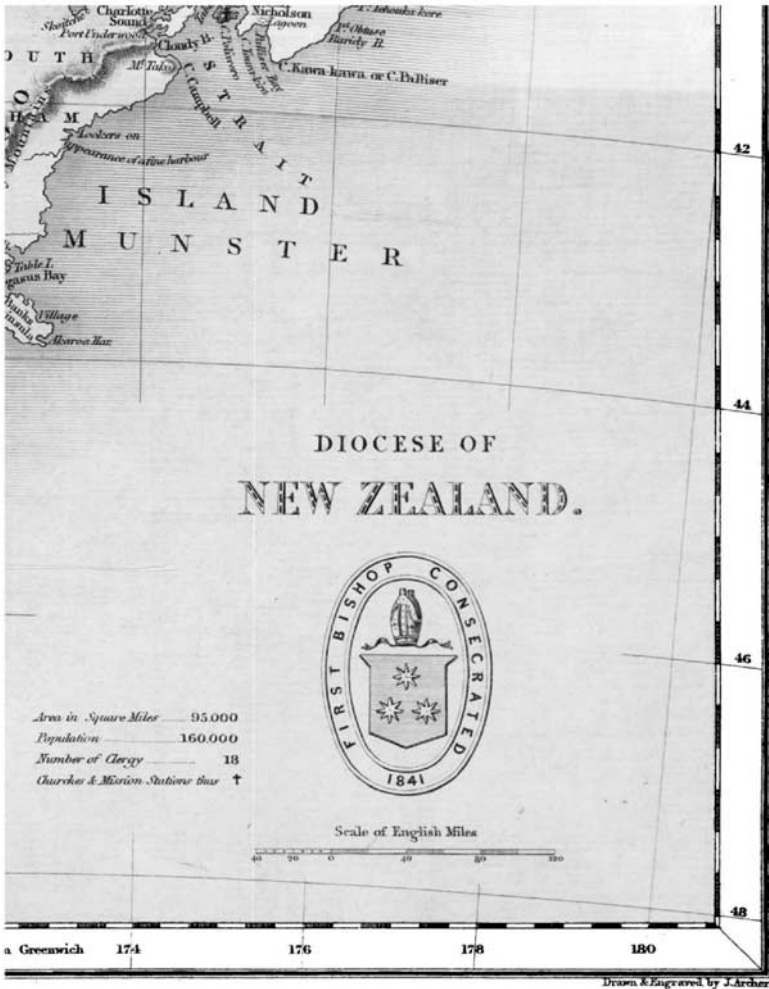
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