



eColenso

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William Wildman

Planning was well under way for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee on 29 January 1890, and on 25 January the *NZ Herald* carried this,

A very interesting exhibit attracted crowds to Mr. Wildman's window yesterday. It was only a dirty old book, but most likely its owner (Mr. Kidd) would require its weight in gold before he would part with such a rare curiosity. It was an original and complete copy of the Government Gazette for the year 1842 and the portion that is now specially interesting is a Government proclamation to the effect that the second anniversary of the establishment of the colony is to be observed by a general holiday on the 29th January, signed, "by His Excellency's command," by Willoughby Shortland. Mr. Wildman has also shown us an advance copy of a most interesting and appropriate souvenir of the Jubilee, to be issued in time for the 29th by the Government. It is a graphic account of the signing of the famous treaty of Waitangi by an eye-witness, Mr. William Colenso, who is still alive and well. It is on the cards that Mr. Colenso may be a visitor to Auckland during the Jubilee week. We hope then to have the opportunity of gathering from his own lips, for the benefit of our readers, many interesting details of his reminiscences of the stirring times of fifty years ago.

William Wildman was in partnership with Alfred Kidd in a bookselling business in Victoria Arcade, Auckland, and was a member of the Queen's Statue Committee after the Jubilee.

Colenso, of course, never accepted such invitations, but took the opportunity of taking a swipe at Wellington and marketing his new book. On 31 January the *Herald* reported,

Mr. W. Wildman having telegraphed to Mr. W. Colenso, of Hawke's Bay, inviting him to come to Auckland at the time of the Jubilee, received in reply the following interesting letter: —

Napier, January 24, 1890

Dear Mr. Wildman,

I can scarcely tell you in a few words how very greatly your kind telegram of yesterday affected me on receipt thereof. It was so unexpected and so very generous on your part. As I don't benefit by the town delivery of letters I did not receive it until late this day, and then by chance; but I replied by wire (briefly) as you wished.

The chief causes of my not accepting your invitation are: my chronic rheumatism (often severe), my age (nearly 80) preventing my undertaking the long and rough overland journey, and my being always such a great sufferer at sea from mal-de-mer; at the same time my general health is fair if I keep quietly within my old gearings.

For many reasons I should like to be there with you at Auckland on this occasion: (1) From my having both witnessed and assisted at the creation of the colony in the Bay of Islands (Auckland Province) in 1840; and (2) from my wish to add my testimony (that of a living witness) to that fact against the vainglorious and intolerable assumption of Wellington,—which to me, from my intimate actual knowledge of the past, and of the hundreds of whites located at the North, in and about the Bay of Islands, with our respectable merchants, stores, hotels, bank, churches, shipping and extensive trade, is worse than

preposterous. I could say a good deal on this head but I forbear.

The Government undertook to publish my authentic account of "the signing of the treaty of Waitangi" (written entirely at the time, and also corroborated by Mr. Busby, then the late British Resident), and as I read the proofs (revise) a fortnight ago I hope you may have some copies with you by the Jubilee day.

I venture to think that not a few Aucklanders (by this term I mean of the whole province) will find it interesting, as well as historical and correct.

I much regret, however, the Government declining to publish with it my two appendices pertaining to the formation of the colony (on the score of not wishing to enlarge the little book). The first of those two was of public matters prior to 1840; the second of matters closely following the same—viz., in that year, until the seat of Government was removed to Auckland. These, however, may yet be published by me.

Heartily wishing you every possible success—without a flaw! and trusting that much future good (though it may be for the present hidden from view) may follow this Jubilee year and commemoration to Auckland and to her whole province, and to the colony at large.

I am &c.

WM. COLENZO

P.S. Be very sure to send me an Auckland paper containing a full account of your doings.

There is no mention in Colenso's diaries of his having received such an account, nor of the priceless "two appendices" to his Treaty book.

He did, however, write a long letter to his friend the printing historian Coupland Harding on 31 December of the same year (1890), replying to a series of questions about early printing in New Zealand, and especially addressing issues about who had been the first printer—Yates or himself.

Towards the end he wrote a paragraph that hints Wildman had been corresponding with Harding and had not wanted Colenso to know about it...

I hope you may be interested in all I have written on this subject. Seeing you were under that promise to Wildman, you could not well divulge that matter to me: but W. should not so have acted towards me—for we were in pretty large correspondence and I believe I gave him a book for his old Maori shelf.—

On 27 July 1894 Colenso entered this in his diary,

*Evg. at V. a Mr. Wildman from Auckland on his way to Wellington (by train tomorrow) kindly called, & spent ¼ hour—
"for auld lang syne."—*

"A" Mr. Wildman? Had he forgotten the earlier communication?

He told Harding about it on 4 September,

*I omitted (however) telling you of 2 calls I had: one, a Mr. Wildman formerly a printer, from Auckland, a tall stout man, who looked in one evg., twilight, but would not stay long
"fearing to break his neck! in going down the zig-zag way"!!*

Wildman died in 1897. He had been a lifelong sufferer from asthma.

20 August 1862 in the House

Colenso was tidying up his parlour and wrote to Coupland Harding on 25 August 1896,

A curious coincidence happened last week: I had been engaged in clearing the wreck! such a lot!! papers, bundles, plants, books, mss., &c. &c, from parlour, & my eye lit on an old "Order p.", 1862, of that very same day date, 20th Augt., & on looking into it, I found notice of an important Motion of mine (and just as much needed now!)—all my compeers (save Stafford) therein mentioned are dead!

The Parliamentary Library's collection of Order Papers begins in 1868. Order papers before that date were not retained or were not in a form resembling that which we know as Order Papers today.

The *Journal of the House of Representatives*, however, has a description of the day in question, 20 August 1862 (see overleaf).

Hansard reported that Mr. Speaker took the chair at 5 o'clock... Then Mr. Colenso spoke—on the Maori Lexicon.

Mr Colenso asked the Colonial Treasurer, whether, now that the revenues of the colony have so largely and unexpectedly increased, the government will be pleased to act upon the resolution of this house of 13 August, 1861—namely, "That it is highly desirable, as soon as the finances of the colony will permit, that a sum of money be devoted for the purpose of commencing a standard library dictionary or lexicon of the Maori language," which Lexicon is now the more required in support of His Excellency Sir George Grey's scheme of Native policy? He believed, or, rather, he hoped, the Government would consent to place a sufficient sum on the estimates to meet the purpose he had in view; but whether that

NOTICES OF MOTION AND ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Wednesday, 20th August, 1862.

1. Mr. STAFFORD to ask the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Whether the Government intends to move in this Session for any Select Committee to take evidence and report upon the question of erecting and maintaining Light-houses for facilitating the navigation of the Coasts of New Zealand; and what provision the Government proposes to make, generally, for that purpose.
2. Mr. COLENSO to ask the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Whether—now that the Revenues of the Colony have so largely and unexpectedly increased—the Government will be pleased to act upon the Resolution of this House, of August 13, 1861, viz. :—
 “That it is highly desirable, as soon as the finances of the Colony will permit, that a sum of money be devoted for the purpose of commencing a Standard Library Dictionary or Lexicon of the Maori language,”
 which Lexicon is now the more required in support of His Excellency Sir G. Grey’s scheme of Native Policy.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

1. Mr. DICK to move, That it is the opinion of this House that the interests of the Colony require the removal of the seat of Government to Wellington.
2. Mr. ATRINSON to move, That the Petition of the Provincial Council and Superintendent of Taranaki, to His Excellency the Governor, be considered in Committee of Supply.
3. Mr. FOX to move, That before proceeding further with the business of the Session, it is expedient that this House should have more information as to the composition of the Ministry, particularly in reference to the offices of Colonial Treasurer, Attorney-General, and Postmaster-General. And also, That full information should be given to it by the Government as to the particular plan or scheme on which it is proposed to establish frontier settlements, for which purpose the Government has intimated its intention of asking this House to authorize the raising of a loan of One Million Pounds sterling.
4. Mr. WELD to move, For copies of all correspondence regarding the abduction by certain Natives of the half-caste child of Thomas Page.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

1. Report of the Select Committee on trial of Minor Civil Cases, and the Law of Debtor and Creditor.
2. Report of the Select Committee on the Marine Boards Bill.
3. Protection of certain Animals Act Amendment Bill—to be further considered in Committee.
4. Adjourned Debate on the Question, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, on the subject of the Despatch of the Secretary of State, dated 26th May, 1862.
5. Land Revenue Appropriation Act Amendment Bill—second reading.
6. Resident Magistrates’ Jurisdiction Extension Bill—second reading.
7. Trustees Relief Bill—consideration of Amendments by the Legislative Council.
8. Nominated Superintendents Bill—second reading—Adjourned Debate on the Question, That the Bill be read a second time this day six months.
9. The Committee of Supply.
10. The Committee of Ways and Means.

amount be in a small annual vote or a lump sum would be forward the Government to determine. He had stated last year in his place in the House that he thought they should do something to save a record of the Polynesian language – of the New Zealand dialect – while it could be saved – a language which was spoken throughout a large area, from the Sandwich Islands, several degrees north of the equator, to New Zealand, and to Easter Island, near the South American shores. And, certainly, if it was desirable philologically to save such a language, this Island, this colony – being the largest, most wealthy, and most civilised – should undertake the work. They had heard much concerning the intellectuality of the Maori. What, he asked, would so greatly conduce to lead on the aspiring Maori student seeking to become acquainted with the English language – remembering their very retentive memories – than a good Maori-English lexicon? Again, such would be found a most efficient auxiliary and furthering Sir George Grey’s scheme of Native policy, aiding his many new European offices and Resident Magistrates’ Courts; although such a work could not possibly be available, he (Mr. Colenso) regretted to say, for some considerable time. Hence he had thought it unfortunate that it was not agreed upon, and so begun, last year. He hoped the Government and the House would be liberal in the matter; and he took this opportunity, as he should not have another, of informing the Colonial Treasurer that he would very gladly offer him his ideas on the subject before he left Wellington, if the Colonial Treasurer would accept them.

Mr. DILLON BELL replied that it would not be necessary to place a sum for the purpose on this year’s estimates. There would be plenty of money for the purpose this year, as well as for the improvement of the *Maori Messenger*, out of the votes for Native purposes.

The Parliamentary portraits



The Third NZ Parliament, 1861. Colenso is third from the bottom, on the left (Ref: 1/1-003162-F. Alexander Turnbull Library)



Above left: William Colenso MHR in 1861 (detail from shield at left. The image, reversed in the original ambrotype, has been corrected, the tie lappet to right)

Right: the Crombie ambrotype (Ref: 1/4-003097-F. Alexander Turnbull Library)

Left: the portrait published in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, 1907.

These three have been taken in the same clothes, with the same chair—were they taken on the same day?

If so, they were all taken by John Nicol Crombie during the first session of the 3rd NZ Parliament, between 3 June and 7 September 1861.

Indeed, the Te Ara biography of Crombie states his subjects included “portraits of the members of the House of Representatives in 1861”.

Other photographs were taken in 1865 and Colenso referred to them in these letters...

... to von Haast, 24 April 1868,

... I was much gratified with receipt of ... your photograph, so very kindly enclosed.... As you expressed a wish for mine, I enclose one—such as it is! (Done at Wellington, in '65, for General Assembly, in hurry on leaving, & in a gale of wind & rain.)

... and to JD Hooker 15 June 1883,

You ask for mine [photograph]: at present I can only send you a small and old one taken (like your own) nearly 20 years ago, – i.e. at Wellington, in '65, when there at the Genl. Assembly as M.P. for this place, – but I have a larger one for you, taken 2 years back here (negative since burnt in a fire), & this I shall send you soon.

The 1881 photograph is still at Kew and was published in *eColenso* February 2014 p3. The 1865 is referred to in a letter to Coupland Harding of 13 January 1891,

Could you Enq. for me... if in *your track*—to & from Office—of Wrigglesworth & Binns,—if they still have my photo to Carte—taken in '65? & if so, to send me 2 doz. Copies. I had some from them a *few years ago*: 3rd time I think.

... and on 2 March,

I recd. the 2 dz. Cartes from Wrigglesworth, of my old photos. (I think this lot must be the 4th.!)

JD Wrigglesworth began a photography business in Willis Street, Wellington in 1863. He was joined by GH Swan (later to move to Napier) in that year and FC Binns in Christchurch in 1871. Thus in 1865 the firm was Swan & Wrigglesworth.

The only known photograph of Colenso that would fit is that provisionally dated 1868 (Alexander Turnbull Library Reference: 1/2-005028-F: below); the photographer is not mentioned in the National Library catalogue, but the props (chair, tablecloth, curtain, panelling) match those used for the portraits of other Members of the House of Representatives—Sir John Richardson, William Rolleston, James

Crowe Richmond, Henry Sewell and others—whose portraits are known to be by Wrigglesworth. They also match Wrigglesworth portraits known to be dated 1865 (see overleaf).

The Third New Zealand Parliament's fifth session went from 26 July to 30 October 1865 in Wellington.



◀ I think it likely Swan & Wrigglesworth, Wellington, took the Colenso portrait at left between 26 July and 30 October 1865, along with those of the other Members (Ref: 1/2-005028-F Alexander Turnbull Library).



Known portraits by Wigglesworth in the Alexander Turnbull Library collection

Clockwise from top left,

James Crowe Richmond MHR resigned August 1865, photo. c. 1865: ATL, Ref: 1/2-031822-F;

William Rolleston MHR resigned June 1865, photo. 1863–1890: ATL, Ref: PA2-1949;

Unidentified man, photo. 1865: ATL, Ref: PA2-1747: a clearer view of the room: curtain, tablecloth, chair, pressed metal wainscot.

Unidentified Maori man (but surely Karaitiana Takamoana?), photo. 1865: ATL, Ref: PA2-1719;

Henry Sewell MHR in 1865, photo. c. 1872: ATL, Ref: PA1-0-735-07-2;

Sir John Richardson MHR in 1865, photo. 1863–1900: ATL, Ref: PA2-1950.



The four Members of the House of Representatives at left are posed similarly to Colenso, same room, same chair, same curtain—same tablecloth in three. Same year?

Same ill-fitting jacket??

When was this portrait taken? And by whom?



The photograph at left is in the MTG Hawke's Bay collections, where it is labelled "A half-length carte de visite (CDV) style studio portrait photograph, photographer unknown; date unknown."

Peter Wells wrote that it was "The first known photograph of William Colenso... sitting with his deacon's lappet visible and his arms emphatically crossed." His stance is very like that in the well known 1858 daguerreotype taken by John Nicol Crombie. ▶

Crombie was born in Glasgow in 1827 and emigrated to Australia in 1852. In 1855 he arrived in Auckland where he opened a photographic studio in Shortland Street.

Daguerreotype Portraiture.

J. N. CROMBIE begs to inform those parties whose commissions he was obliged to postpone, that having now received an ample supply of material, he is in a position to serve them to any extent.

He was a successful marketer and businessman who claimed that during his first 15 months in Auckland he took over 1,000 portraits.

From September 1856 to September 1858 Crombie toured the "Southern Provinces", advertising in Canterbury, Nelson and Napier newspapers. ▶
The 1858 daguerreotype of Colenso may have been made on that trip.

In 1859 Crombie moved premises to Queen Street.



PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITURE.

J. N. CROMBIE,

Photographer by appointment to
His Excellency the Governor of
New Zealand.

(Late of Melbourne, Auckland,
Canterbury, and Nelson.)

BEGS to announce to the Settlers of the Ahuriri District that he intends being at Napier about the end of May, when he will have the honor of submitting to the public, specimens of Photographic Portraiture, that are universally acknowledged to be unsurpassed.

Royal Photographic Gallery,
Trafalgar St. Nelson,
April 22, 1858.



When Colenso was at St John's in 1843 he was sketched by William Bainbridge (◀ detail at left). He had a good head of short hair and only a light beard & moustache; no photographs show him thus (and many modern depictions show him in those days as he looked much later).

When Crombie made the 1858 daguerreotype Colenso's hair was receding from his forehead, but it reached his shoulders and his beard covered his shirtfront and lappets (detail at right ▶). When Coupland Harding met him at a book auction in 1861 Colenso still had "dark and abundant hair, which at that time flowed in heavy curls upon his shoulders, completely framing his countenance and giving him a singularly venerable appearance."



The CDV shows Colenso with short (but already very much receding) hair and a shorter beard than in the 1858 portrait. The CDV appears to have been copied from a daguerreotype or an ambrotype (the coat is buttoned with right side over left, the long lappet is to the left, his arms are folded left over right—a mirror image of reality, typical of daguerreotypes and ambrotypes. The *Daily Southern Cross* nicely wrote of Crombie's "clever reflections of the community"). Almost certainly the CDV is a photographic copy of a daguerreotype portrait.

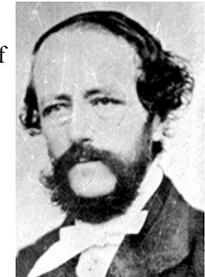
Harding wrote, "Mr. Colenso was a notable figure in all the Parliaments he attended, and I still remember the criticisms of an Auckland scribe who had been strongly impressed by his grave and imposing figure, and specially by his flowing locks. *A year or two afterwards he cut them off, and the portrait taken in 1855 might easily be taken to represent him as he appeared ten years later.*"*



Ten years later than 1855 was 1865, when Colenso had short hair in the Swan & Wrigglesworth portrait on page 7 (detail upper right).

There is no portrait known to be dated 1855, but if we reverse the Hawke's Bay CDV (▶) his appearance "might easily be taken to represent him" as he looked in the 1865 portrait.

I suggest the CDV is an image of the portrait taken in 1855—mentioned by Harding, the original daguerreotype now lost.



* My italics—see page 12 for the Auckland scribe's remarks.



The Parliamentary photographs of 1861 are reproduced on page 6 and indeed show the dark and abundant hair. A cartoon, possibly by Augustus Koch about 1861, shows Colenso with arms again folded (right over left here, left over right in the mirror-image daguerreotype and ambrotype), beard & hair long, hair receding (◀ detail at left).

Cartes des visites were popularised by Parisian photographer Adolph Disderi as late as 1854, so the Hawke's Bay CDV should have been taken after that.

In 1855 Colenso was living alone at Waitangi, buying land in Napier, working his way back into society. Who then made the daguerreotype from which the CDV was taken?

In 1855 there was no photographer in Napier but JN Crombie had just set up and was already (he was advertising by August) taking daguerrotypes in Auckland. *This CDV looks like a Crombie: the similarity to the 1858 daguerreotype is too much to be coincidental. If so it was almost certainly that taken in 1855.*

Did he go to Auckland that year? No Colenso diaries for 1855 have survived.

Did he go to visit Latty, who was staying with Dr and Mrs Kinder and attending school in Parnell? He knew of Latty's school friend (see January *eColenso*) so there must have been at least letters between father and son. Elizabeth and Frances had left Auckland in 1854 to join the Ashwells at Taupiri. All three had left for London by the time Colenso joined the House of Representatives in Auckland in 1861.

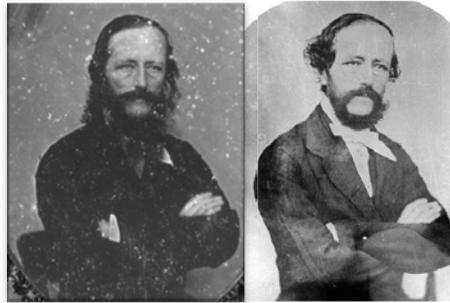
He would hardly have gone to Auckland to attend his sixty-year-old father-in-law's clearing sale advertised in the *Daily Southern Cross* on 25 December 1855.... (far right ►)

A *Daily Southern Cross* report in June 1855 mentioned his name (but did not say he was present) at an Auckland Supreme Court civil sitting involving the land whose purchase by

his old friend James Busby he had witnessed.

Possibly he attended the Supreme Court in his own defence: he wrote of those difficult 1850s in an 1887 letter to his son Wiremu, "it would require many words to give you a correct outline of the many strange and false charges I have had to meet, and to bear. One was, that ... I was unfit to be the trustee of my own 2 children, (and this last abominable story was even sworn to! in the Supreme Court at Auckland)".

So it appears he cropped his hair and trimmed his beard for the 1855 camera and donned his suit, fresh from storage, creases showing. He would not have been the first and certainly not the last, to tidy himself up to make a good impression in court (or with his son's headmaster).



...or were these just "before and after" shots?

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE SALE.

M R. H A N S A R D

Will sell by Public Auction, three days after the arrival of "William Denny," at the residence of W. T. Fairburn, Esq.

ALL the Excellent FURNITURE thereof, consisting of—

LOO, DINING, & PEMBROKE TABLES
Secrtaire Book Case
Lounging Chair, with horse-hair cushions
Rocking Chair, Ottoman. Chinese Workbox
Sofa, Fender, Irons, &c.

Bedstead and Hangings
Feather Bed
Chest of Drawers and Dressing Case
Toilet Glasses, &c.

American Cooking Stove and Apparatus
Kitchen Dresser
Meat Safe (Zinc)

China, Glass, Earthenware
Carpet, Rugs, Matting, &c.
Large Store Chest

Gardening and other Tools
&c. &c.

Stone Jars
Native War Implements
Ivory Handled Knives and Forks
Telescope, Large Folding Screen
Boot Rack
Silver Watch.

The Favourite Saddle Horse "JACK," Saddle, Bridles, &c.

N. B. The first house on the right hand side above the Windmill.

The House to let, apply to Mr. HANSARD.

An eye not deficient in fire... an air of mysterious originality...

Coupland Harding wrote, "I still remember the criticisms of an Auckland scribe who had been strongly impressed by his grave and imposing figure, and specially by his flowing locks."

The *Daily Southern Cross* of 6 September 1861 commented on the House of Representatives, meeting in Auckland, "We shall endeavour to give a sketch of the House during the past month, and seek to produce those lights and shadows which reporters fail to convey in their formal reports of speeches merely".

After a round of satirical comment on several members, the editorialist went on to discuss the contribution of "the hon. member for Marsden, Mr John Monro, who only spoke twice in the session."

And then this.... ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶

Everything in nature has its contrast, and the silent member for Marsden has his antithesis in the loquacious representative of Napier. Mr COLENSO arrived late in the session, and attracted considerable attention from certain personal peculiarities, which gave character rather than otherwise, to an unquestionably handsome exterior. His black flowing beard, closely shaven chin, and carefully trimmed moustache, when combined with regular features and an eye not deficient in fire, fixed attention on his face, and the precisely arranged ringlets of dark hair that touched his shoulders added to the white cravat and ample skirted suitout which he wore, gave an air of mysterious originality to the man, that would lead a stranger at first sight to conclude he was the apostle or high priest of some new found and romantic creed. He was silent for the first day, watching the forms of the house, and no doubt hon members concluded they had acquired, in the mysterious looking member, a counsellor as wise as ANTHOPHEL. But on the second day he spoke,—and the illusion was dispelled. From that time till the present moment the hon member for Napier has talked on every subject before the house, and as frequently as the forms of the house would enable him. His unconscious innocence of this fact was manifested on a late occasion, when he gravely assured his fellow representatives that he had "come to an understanding within himself that he would speak on no subject which he did not understand." Roars of laughter greeted this confession, but the hon gentleman proceeded, nevertheless, to deliver a harangue having little or no relation to the question in debate. Few hon. members have made greater shipwreck of very considerable talents than Mr. COLENSO, for the decided hits he has made have been buried for ever under the pyramid of words on trifling topics he has reared above them.

PARLIAMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHS,

Colonist, Volume IX, Issue 838, 10 November 1865, Page 6

“A Flaneur in the Gallery” has written for the New Zealander some clever sketches of members of the House of Representatives. “Flaneur” is a good observer, a free and ready, writer, and depicts, with a few touches and with ease and wit, the faults and fables, the points and merits of the men on whom he focuses the lens of the camera. Here are his portraitures, which surpass anything of the kind that has been written from Wellington during the late session. We should mention that the photographs were taken during the existence of the Weld Ministry, and as both that Ministry and the Parliament have closed their career, we collect here these sharp lined photographs for the benefit of an admiring posterity.... “Flaneur” writes thus :—

Chance took me to Wellington, that Empire City of dullness, the want of occupation took me into the gallery of the House of Representatives, and the same cause induced me in my leisure time to scribble the following observations of what I saw from there....

(sketches of many members follow—then....)

... Mr. William Colenso, of Napier, who makes it a standing rule to speak upon every question, and upon every amendment to every question, and if amendments to amendments were allowed, would speak upon them too, but they not being allowed he takes it out in committee, and does not let a single clause of any bill pass by him unnoticed. But he is greatest of all in Maori translations, and not a single one has come before the House yet, from that unfortunate Treaty of Waitangi downwards, that he has not found fault with. It must be positively shameful, the set of ignoramuses who put, themselves up for Maori scholars in this country, if we are to trust Mr. Colenso's judgment on their works; for wherever you hear a thin harsh voice proceeding from near the fire-place, on the Speaker's right, you may be sure that the member for Napier is “pitching in” to some unlucky translator.

(Flâneur: A man who saunters around observing society [OED]).

Colenso in the House: the Masters and Servants Bill

Coupland Harding wrote in his eulogy on Colenso,

I must not be understood to disparage his work in the Assembly, much of which was of a solid and substantial kind, such as more popular men could have done. He had a keen eye for flaws in a Bill or in an argument. He was a very advanced Liberal as the times went; but would not be recognised by the Party who claim the title to-day. One of his most notable speeches was on the Masters and Servants Bill of an old Canterbury veteran, who had seen service in India, and whose ideas had been largely shaped thereby. Possibly the Labour leaders of to-day never heard of that Bill. Their fury if they could read it would be worth contemplating. It received unmeasured condemnation from Mr. Colenso, sustained a signal defeat, and was never again heard of [1].

Henning [2] has traversed the history of the application of Master and Servant legislation in New Zealand. For a time New South Wales legislation applied, and it sought “the better regulation of Servants Laborers and Work People”. Absence from service, refusal or neglect to work, and the return or quitting of work before completion could lead to imprisonment without bail for up to six months’ hard labour, with forfeiture of wages due or owing. There was a monetary penalty for those found employing runaway workers; the payment by workers of double the loss to their masters of property spoiled, destroyed or lost by them and the imprisonment of workers for up to six months in the event of a delay or an inability to pay.

For many good decent liberal reasons New Zealand did not attempt to enact masters and servants legislation until 1864, when the Member for Christchurch John Cracroft Wilson introduced a bill, necessary at the time, he contended, because “works of great magnitude would

soon be entered into”. Its supporters wanted more equity for masters against servants who breached contracts, which were viewed as generally one-sided (ie, favouring servants); imprisonment of servants would rectify the imbalance.

The *Journal of the House of Representatives* recorded,

Mr. Colenso.... thought, if legislation was required in this matter, this Bill was not framed to meet the desired end. This Bill bore too much on the labourer, and left the master at freedom; it made the servant amenable to the law for the most trifling faults, and under it he might be prosecuted for slamming a door, or for retaining his hat on his head in a room. In clause 5, he found that, contrary to the ruling of nearly all the legal authorities, it was determined that an oral engagement should be binding. In clause 20 he found that terms of engagement might last or be applicable for five years. Now, he could not think that such contracts were likely to be entered into in this colony. The Bill, in his opinion, was far too stringent for the present requirements of the country.

The Bill was narrowly defeated. Henning concludes,

New Zealand was not without those who sought and used master and servant law against servants, labourers and other workers. But on balance the colony’s legislative programme and overall practice in relation to this law and the liberty of workers were very clearly at the progressive end of the spectrum. Indeed, these are triumphs to be remembered, at the very least, alongside the early settlers’ first minimum wage and their much-vaunted eight-hour days.

References

1. Harding RC 1899. William Colenso: some personal reminiscences. The Press 27 February.
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JMW Turner: *Mount's Bay and Penzance Harbour* 1811. Cornwall and Devon sketchbook. Tate Gallery.
Sketched during Turner's tour of Cornwall in the year William Colenso was born in Penzance
and the Duke of Wellington was winning in Cuidad Rodrigo.

F u r g n g 2 c d Bp n
Wgn, do so AYOR.



*PUZZLED BY THE NEW PATOIS,
COLENZO DECIDES TO WRITE
HIS LETTERS IN LONGHAND .*

23 Upper Place
Kensington
Dec 14. 1864

My dear Mr Lubbock
I find that I am engaged
to dine with Mr. Heywood on
Monday next - so that I cannot
accept your kind invitation
for that day. Very truly yours,
J. W. Natal

The Bishop of Natal signature

Bishop Natal in London... &c

Another letter from John William Colenso, dated 14 December 1864, from 23 Sussex Place in London, was auctioned recently on eBay (see January 2015 *eColenso*).

My dear Mr Lubbock, I find that I am engaged to dine with Mr. Heywood on Monday next—so that I cannot accept your kind invitation for that day. Very truly yours, J.W. Natal.

“Mr Heywood” may have been the publisher John Heywood.

The Right Honourable John Lubbock, 1st Baron Avebury 1834–1913, known as Sir John Lubbock, was a banker, Liberal politician, philanthropist, scientist and polymath. He lived near Charles Darwin, learned a great deal from him and made significant contributions himself in archaeology, ethnography, and several branches of biology. He helped establish archaeology as a scientific discipline, and was influential in nineteenth-century debates about evolutionary theory.

In 1862, John William Colenso published *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined*. He used mathematics and population dynamics, including examinations of food supply and transportation, to show that the first five books of the Bible were faulty and unreliable. Many within the Church of England were outraged. In May 1862 Colenso sailed to England seeking support. JD Hooker arranged a meeting between Lubbock and Colenso at Kew and for a time Lubbock publicly supported Colenso.

In 1864 at age 30, Lubbock became one of the founding members of the elite X Club, a dining club composed of nine gentlemen (George Busk, Edward Frankland, Thomas Archer Hirst, Joseph Dalton Hooker, Thomas Henry Huxley, John Lubbock, Herbert Spencer, William Spottiswoode, and John Tyndall) to promote the theories of natural selection and academic liberalism [see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/X_Club]. The members of the X Club gave their support to Colenso in his appeal to the Privy Council against a finding of heresy.

Hooker mentioned Colenso several times in his letters to Darwin...

6 March 1863.... I have promised to go to Lubbock's on the 25th to meet Colenso!

16 February 1864.... I am very glad of the settlement of the Williams* case by the Privy Council—and shall subscribe to the Colenso defence fund in principle: but am not quite sure about Colenso himself—he ought to go further. My hope is that after the trial he will go out ... & then retire—his holding his Bishopric in Natal can only breed intolerable confusion & do his cause mischief: & as to his going out to convert Zulus, why, he has Xtians here to convert, & the Zulus are only worth a thought:—He might come back with great glory & set up in England as a Tutor abandoning his title & mitre. I have seen a good deal of him & consider him sanguine & unsafe....

7–8 April 1865.... Yesterday we had one of our “Small Club” dinners in Albermarle Street, Lubbock, Huxley, Spottiswood, Spenser, Busk & self, with Colenso & HB Wilson* as guests, & a very pleasant evening it was: though I must confess I cannot go along with Colenso—his incessant prattling about his own affairs is quite wearisome: he really is in some respects a very weak man. In first coming in, he asked the name of our club—I said it has none—he replied, “I would call it the Zulu Club” & so on.—then he told us that they have withheld his salary, &c. I thought Wilson a very superior man....

However, Hooker wrote again to Darwin on 31 May 1870: “I am going to send my Willy to Mr La Touche in Salop—a friend of Symonds' & Bentham's, who has brought up young Colenso, & who will have Frank Lyell. I fancy that some of my friends will think I am putting my son into a nest of young adders!—”

This was Rev. James Dignes la Touche's school in Stokesay, near Ludlow, Shropshire—the same that JW Colenso's sons attended.

La Touche's specialty was geology, but

Geology was not his only scientific study; it was but one of many. In 1875 he contributed a paper to the Meteorological Society (a result of a visit to Natal, where he went in 1874 to assist Bishop Colenso); he kept a rain-gauge and other meteorological instruments; through his astronomical work he became acquainted with Sir William Herschel. He studied microscopical petrology, making rock-sections with a machine of his own designing and examining them under the microscope until his eyesight became affected, when he turned his attention to the practical study of electricity, constructing the necessary apparatus himself. In Natural History his favourite studies were entomology and botany; he was expert in dissecting insects, and he made a complete collection of the plants of his neighbourhood. It may be that his taste for botany and love of flowers were acquired from his intimate friend Sir Joseph Hooker. He had considerable archaeological knowledge, as his “Guide to Stokesay Castle” attests, and at the time of his death he had just completed a history of his parish intended for publication.... he appears to have inherited an intense desire, with the needful ability, to help those around him to acquire useful knowledge and to become expert artisans. He not only taught daily in his parish schools such subjects as Latin, French, mathematics, land-surveying, and shorthand, but he also had a room built which he fitted up with carpenter's bench, lathe, and a chemical laboratory, where he gave practical instruction in various useful arts, including bookbinding. His fame as a tutor was worldwide, and amongst his private pupils were sons of Bishop Colenso, of Professor Max Muller, and of Sir Joseph Hooker, and two nephews of Sir Charles Lyell.*

*[<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=5182772&jid=GEO&volumeld=6&issueId=05&aid=5182768>].

* Henry Bristow Wilson and Rowland Williams had both been found guilty of heresy and both won their appeals to the Privy Council.... Hooker appears racist in his comments on Colenso.