

THE POLITICS OF MĀORI EDUCATION: HISTORY, POLICIES, CONFLICTS, AND COMPROMISES

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Abstract This paper examines policy changes made in Māori schools by an almost exclusively Pakeha group of officials who sought to determine the future shape and direction of these schools. As we review the controversies surrounding Māori education policy we will note the dominant social traits, principles, assumptions, and aspirations that underpinned the establishment and growth of a new community. We will then survey major developments in Māori education during the period 1816-1879; account for the increasing attempts by colonial education authorities to introduce a more 'relevant' practical/agricultural curriculum for the Māori schools; and discuss Māori resistance to such 'adapted' schooling provisions. Finally, we will reflect upon the degree of mismatch between official Māori schooling policy and Māori schooling reality, and then compare this with the changing social, economic, and vocational contexts in which the schools were being located.

The transfer of control of the Māori schools [to the education boards] marks the end of an important chapter in the educational history of our country. Since their establishment the Māori schools have been a unique feature of the New Zealand education system. Situated mainly in isolated predominantly Māori areas, they provided education for both the Māori and European children living in the district. But with the urbanisation of the Māori race that has been taking place over the last two decades, they have come to provide education for only 1 in 9 of the Māori pupils attending primary schools ... The transfer is purely administrative ... [and] will bring benefits to all primary schools with significant rolls.¹

MISSIONARY SCHOOLING AND THE EVANGELICAL CURRICULUM

Between 1816 and 1840 Māori were educated formally by missionaries - notably Thomas Kendall, William Hall, and John King - under the auspices of the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS). The Society's brief to the missionaries was simplicity itself: to proselytise the natives,² an objective consistent with contemporary British missionary practice³. Under the supervision of the Rev. Samuel Marsden, then senior chaplain to the convict colony of New South Wales, Kendall opened the first CMS school at Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands on 12 August 1816.⁴ Soon, missions representing different religious denominations were in competition for converts; the Wesleyans and the Roman Catholics being equally desirous of emphasising the importance of Christianity.⁵

Marsden dominated the early years of the CMS, and it was his methods and ideas that the first missionaries followed slavishly. Marsden maintained that there were essentially two aspects to the missionaries' task: to introduce the natives to 'western civilisation', after which it was expected that Christianity would be adopted promptly.⁶ The mission schools were expected to facilitate the 'conversion' of the Māori; they made it possible for Māori to access the Bible. Schooling was intended to encourage Māori to permit their children to come under the missionaries' influence and thus learn the English language.⁷

But theory and practice were far apart. In attempting to convert Māori to Christianity, missionaries were hindered by their unfamiliarity with the Māori language. Kendall's school foundered because this language was not available in writing, so Kendall taught reading and writing only as his own knowledge of the language developed. Consequently, he urged the missionaries to spend more time studying the language and producing texts with which to teach the Māori.⁸ Although Kendall produced his own Māori Grammar and Dictionary it was not until 1827 that the Rev. Henry Williams, Kendall's successor in 1823, had published a short language text.⁹ The impact of these books can hardly be overestimated.¹⁰ With Colenso's printing press in operation in Paihia from 1835 there was a rapid increase in literacy among Māori.¹¹ Those who had learned to read and write (in Māori) at the mission schools willingly passed on their knowledge to others eager to learn.¹² Many missionaries, to their surprise, discovered that when they visited the more remote parts of New Zealand many Māori could read and write already.¹³ By the late 1830s hundreds of Māori throughout New Zealand had learned to read and write in Māori.¹⁴ Those Māori in attendance at mission schools received instruction also in Arithmetic, Needlework, and Domestic employment for girls, and Carpentry and Fieldwork (Agriculture) for boys.¹⁵

Despite the missionaries' success in promoting literacy among Māori, conflict over their aims ensued.¹⁶ Many Māori leaders had consented to the introduction of Christianity in the belief that their tribes would acquire those skills, knowledge, and material goods that had made Britain a 'superior nation'. The missionaries, however, had equated Christianity with salvation and the 'protection' of the Māori,¹⁷ and had attempted to teach practical subjects of little or no use or interest to Māori. Boot making, for example, was taught but was irrelevant to a people who did not wear shoes.

Enthusiasm for the missionaries and their teachings soon began to wane.¹⁸ The missionary societies failed to develop a distinctive Māori education philosophy appropriate to a rapidly changing society. The political, social and economic changes following the missionaries and new settlers' arrival had been substantial, as were their consequences for Māori.¹⁹ With colonisation beginning in the 1840s English, rather than Māori, became the language for survival in the new world. Literacy, for Māori, made possible their advancement, albeit in an increasingly European society. In short, the materialistic supremacy of the new settlers demonstrated the 'superiority' of their culture in wealth and economic power that the Māori were wishing to access.²⁰

THE CROWN COLONY PERIOD: 1840-1852

While the missionaries had wanted to delay colonisation until such time as 'civilisation' was attained and the Māori were better able to cope with the influx of migrants to New Zealand, the colonisers were anxious for mass settlement to commence soon.²¹ By the late 1830s official British policy towards New Zealand had switched from one of non-intervention to one of formal colonisation.²² The 'tide of colonisation', it was thought, was 'inevitable' and could not be stemmed forever.²³ Accepting responsibility for both their own subjects and the Māori, the Colonial Office in London undertook to protect Māori and to introduce a system of self-government for British settlers. This undertaking was based on the assumption that the growth in British settlement would be so rapid that New Zealand was soon destined to become a British settler colony.²⁴ A discernible policy shift had occurred; no longer was the Colonial Office considering a Māori New Zealand in which a space would be created for British settlers but a settler New Zealand in which a place had to be found for the Māori.²⁵

Once the Colonial Office had made the decision to intervene formally in New Zealand Captain William Hobson, as Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand, was instructed to secure sovereignty for Britain; preferably by treaty and, above all else, by peaceful means.²⁶ Three cardinal principles were to be kept in mind: the legal status of New Zealand; humanitarian concern for Māori welfare; and the need to persuade (and assure) Māori that further British involvement would be in their best interests.²⁷ Underpinning this was the unequivocal belief that colonisation and Māori interests would be reconciled, possibly enhanced, if handled competently.

With the Treaty of Waitangi signed by almost every Māori chief throughout New Zealand on 6 February 1840,²⁸ the way was cleared then for New Zealand to be granted the formal status of a colony. In November that year the imperial government separated New Zealand from the temporary jurisdiction of New South Wales and, by Royal Charter, New Zealand became a fully fledged British colony.²⁹ After the signing of the Treaty and the emergence of New Zealand as a Crown Colony, the government became anxious to extend the work begun by the missionaries. In keeping with the requirements of an emerging nation state government policy on Māori education became demonstrably assimilationist - the European culture was to be imposed upon and adopted by Māori in New Zealand.³⁰ The strength of the assimilationist doctrine is depicted clearly in Instructions sent by the British Colonial Secretary, Lord John Russell, to Governor Hobson in December 1840. Russell declared that "The education of youth among the aborigines is of course indispensable to the success of any measures for their ultimate advancement in social arts, and in the scale of political existence".³¹

The assimilation ideology was refined further by Governor Robert FitzRoy who succeeded Hobson briefly on 26 December 1843. Growing Māori discontent with the conditions of life under British colonial rule, coupled with mounting dissatisfaction at not receiving the benefits expected under the Treaty of Waitangi, led FitzRoy to propose *An Ordinance for appointing a Board of Trustees for the Management of Property to be set apart for the Education and Advancement of the Native Race* (known also as the *Native Trust Ordinance*) on 29 June 1844.³² The perceived

advantages of an assimilationist policy were outlined in the preamble to the Ordinance:

... whereas great disasters have fallen upon uncivilized nations on being brought into contact with Colonists from the nations of Europe, and in undertaking the colonization of New Zealand Her Majesty's Government have recognized the duty of endeavouring by all practicable means to avert the like disasters from the Native people of these Islands, which object may best be attained by assimilating as speedily as possible the habits and usages of the Native to those of the European population.³³

The Ordinance allowed land endowments and financial assistance to be given to the three principal denominations (Anglican, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic), to extend their native school endeavours. Having established the principle of nominating grants for educational purposes, the Ordinance allowed the Trustees to allocate sites for building schools, to set up such schools, to appoint and pay teachers, and regulate all aspects of school life.³⁴ Regarding the course of instruction, the Trustees were instructed to oversee

... the establishment and maintenance of schools for the instruction of the native people in the English language, and for a systematic course of industrial and moral training in English usages and English arts, and in providing for the relief of the sick, and generally in such a way as may be most conducive to the bodily and spiritual welfare of the native race, and to their advancement in the scale of social and political existence.³⁵

The Ordinance, however, failed to excite interest in either Māori or European communities, and in fact was not gazetted.³⁶ The reason for its not being gazetted is attributed directly to the perilous state of the colony's economy. Faced with an inadequate Parliamentary grant of £7,500 and the British Treasury's refusal to advance additional funds, FitzRoy issued £15,000 worth of debentures. But this act only compounded the financial problems. By 1844 the colony's assets were £2,773 and its liabilities £24,000.³⁷ The British government, not surprisingly, seriously doubted FitzRoy's ability to conduct a successful native policy, and he was replaced by George Grey in November 1845.

Despite the straitened economic circumstances a significant number of 5-15 year old children were attending day schools. In 1845, for example, the Church Missionary Society boasted 22 mission stations with 283 schools and a combined roll of 15431 pupils. The numbers attending the Wesleyan Mission Schools in 1845, however, were much lower; there were 4989 scholars enrolled at 20 mission schools.³⁸ The missionaries' educational achievements in New Zealand had indeed been quite remarkable, measured by these data.

Upon assuming office as Governor, George Grey was issued with Instructions from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Edward Stanley, that largely dictated the native policies that he was to pursue subsequently. Grey thought that New Zealand should become a politically unified colony, not merely a loose federation of racial and settler groups.³⁹ He was firmly convinced that

providing the 'right' kind of education for Māori would ensure that they would become 'civilised' and form an integral part of New Zealand society. Grey's education policy, accordingly, was directed toward the 'amalgamation' (i.e. assimilation) of the European and Māori races, thereby creating 'one society'.⁴⁰

The Education Ordinance, 1847

Concerned that a growing sense of Māori nationalism was frustrating the missionaries' educational efforts by the late 1840s⁴¹ Grey enacted legislation to enable the government to support the missionary work undertaken amongst the Māori, and to foster both Bishop Selwyn (the Anglican Bishop of New Zealand) and Grey's belief that the most expedient way to civilise the natives was to place their children in boarding rather than day mission schools, thus removing them from the "barbaric" and "demoralising influence of the Māori villages".⁴² Although the *Education Ordinance* was not restricted to the education of Māori children - it was 'An Ordinance for Promoting the Education of Youth in the Colony of New Zealand' - in practice, however, education provided under the Ordinance was almost entirely for Māori. Such an outcome was clearly within the scope of Grey's official Instructions.⁴³ But Grey knew that any measures designed exclusively to promote Māori education would be unpopular with the settlers. After proposing to "apply the provisions of the Ordinance chiefly to the education of Māori and half-caste children", he agreed to "extend their operation to children of European parents".⁴⁴

Grey's Ordinance authorised the disbursement of public funds - not more than one-twentieth of the estimated revenue of the colony - to establish and maintain schools, provided always that those schools taught English, included religious education and industrial training in their curricula, and were managed by a religious body which would receive this state aid. For the purposes of supervision, the Governor was authorised to appoint inspectors who were to inspect the schools annually and provide reports to the Legislative Council.⁴⁵ The inspectors' reports were to contain a description of the school; details of the funds which supported it; attendance data; the teachers' salaries; the annual cost of educating each pupil; the discipline and management of scholars; and a precise description of industrial instruction undertaken.⁴⁵

Practical reasons influenced Grey's decision to adopt the measures outlined in the Ordinance. Time and cost were factors that he could not ignore.⁴⁷ Rather than embarking upon the herculean task of designing a completely new national system of education, Grey chose to support a workable system of native schooling through existing education agencies. This mirrored the practice prevailing in England, where schooling remained primarily the responsibility of non-state organisations.⁴⁸ Grey also recognised that the schools could not be financially self-supporting and, inspired by a vision of a society wherein Māori and European would be amalgamated, he saw no alternative but to make government funds available for educational purposes.

The arguments for including English, religious instruction, and industrial training in the school curriculum were both simple and expedient. A knowledge of the English language, Grey claimed, would permit Māori and European to mix more easily and to communicate with and understand each other.⁴⁹ Furthermore,

the common assumption that European culture was 'superior' and capable of raising Māori to a higher level of civilisation was to be realised through the teaching of English. Learning the English language was associated with the acquisition of European culture.⁵⁰

Grey's support for religious instruction was founded on the premise that it was an essential element in rescuing and uplifting the Māori race. He believed that it was expedient to begin with religious instruction and to add other curriculum requirements rather than to commence with secular schooling and then add religious instruction. An additional reason for Grey including religious instruction was that without it few, if any, denominations would have been prepared to continue promoting the educational welfare of the Māori. Grey felt secure in the knowledge that the Anglicans, Wesleyans, and Roman Catholics were operating schools in which religious instruction was being taught successfully alongside English and industrial training.⁵¹

Industrial training, the third subject in the Ordinance's core curriculum, included those practical skills, trades, and domestic arts regarded as being indispensable in a European society. Activities such as rope making, agriculture, sewing, and carpentry fell within the province of 'industrial training'.⁵² Consistent with British Colonial Office policy special emphasis was placed on agriculture, for it was confidently expected that this would provide the means by which schools would become self-supporting.⁵³

Reactions to the Ordinance

The immediate post-Ordinance years were marked by sustained resistance to its enactment, the appointment of a special Committee on Education, the preparation of a draft Education Bill to supplant the Ordinance, and the compilation and tabling of a 'Minute of Protest' against Grey's Ordinance. All of this occurred between October 1847 and July 1849.

The Education Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council and became law on 7 October 1847. The new legislation, predictably, was welcomed by those religious bodies and missionaries who had been engaged in schooling the Māori.⁵⁴ But criticism was soon forthcoming, not only from those who opposed granting state aid to denominational (sectarian) schools but also from European settlers who saw that the Ordinance was unable to enhance their children's access to schooling.⁵⁵ The operation of the Ordinance, in fact, was practically suspended in southern New Zealand until October 1851, owing to the New Munster (Southern) Legislative Council's refusal to appropriate money to aid education within its territory under the *Education Ordinance* provisions.⁵⁶ In the meantime the Ordinance assisted schooling in northern (New Ulster) rather than southern New Zealand.

The Nelson settlers, in particular, were incensed because the Ordinance prohibited aid to the non-denominational (secular) schools of the Nelson School Society because they were not administered by the head of a religious body. The less efficient and unpopular church schools, ironically, were eligible technically to apply for aid under the terms of the Ordinance.⁵⁷ Nelsonians viewed Grey's Ordinance as affording "[incontrovertible] evidence of political deception and collusion with religious interests".⁵⁸ In the first place, Nelson had received no

representation on the Legislative Council when the Ordinance was being debated. Grey had also not informed Nelson of his intention to design educational legislation.⁵⁹ Such an exclusion from the political decision-making process led several Nelson colonists to associate the Ordinance with deliberate scheming on Grey's part, and to suggest alternative educational arrangements.⁶⁰

One prominent critic of the Ordinance was William Fox, the resident agent for the New Zealand Company in Nelson. Writing in the *Nelson Examiner* in November 1847, Fox raised questions about who should be educated and by whom, the nature of religious instruction, and the way in which such instruction should be administered.⁶¹ In denouncing the Education Ordinance Fox argued that *all* youth, irrespective of race, class or creed, should be educated; that school attendance should be compulsory; that the state should fund the full cost of education; that the state should offer both secular and religious instruction - the latter was to be "free from every taint of sectarianism and not entrusted to ecclesiastics" - and that the administration of education should be "local and representative".⁶² In short, Fox envisaged a community schooling system in preference to having numerous small, inefficient, denominational schools competing for a limited supply of fee-paying scholars.⁶³

Opposition to the Ordinance was not confined solely to the Nelson community, however. A leading article on education published in *The Southern Cross* in Auckland on 10 June 1848 stated that the Ordinance was "ill-adapted to the circumstances of the Colony".⁶⁴ The writer was especially critical of the unavailability of government funding for secular schools and of the attempt to "combine in one plan the education of children of both European and native races". The article concluded that while the "principle of amalgamation was attractive in theory", in practice it would be "absurd to imagine that European parents would at present send their children to the same school with natives..."⁶⁵

The New Munster Legislative Council, for its part, steadfastly opposed the Ordinance and refused to advance any money to church schools. It did not support a separate schooling system for European, Māori, or half-caste children; rather, it endorsed the principle of aiding native education, provided that Europeans were catered for also.⁶⁶ The Council's commitment to a *universal* instead of a denominational schooling policy was articulated in June 1849 when it urged Grey to amend the Ordinance to fund lay schools in addition to those church schools receiving aid already. But Grey refused to accede to the Council's request.⁶⁷

Not content to let the matter rest, the New Munster Legislative Council appointed a special Committee on Education to investigate and issue recommendations regarding education in the province. The Committee's report was sent to the Council on 8 June 1849, and was gazetted 12 days later.⁶⁸ Underpinning the report's 15 recommendations were three major principles: that it was the duty of government to provide its subjects with the means of education; that Europeans were entitled to educational assistance, not just the Māori race; and that education should, in part, be religious - i.e. in schools there should be a common core of non-denominational religious teaching lasting for only six months of each school year.⁶⁹

In connection with the first principle, the Committee argued that all children aged between six and ten years ought to attend school compulsorily for at least

six months of every year.⁷⁰ Concerning the second principle, the Committee supported European schooling with its proposal that "one half of the sum to be voted or applied out of the general revenue for the purpose of education shall be set apart for the exclusive benefit of the Māori population", with the other half being allocated to European education.⁷¹ While not suggesting that Europeans receive more aid than Māoris, the committee did regard segregated education as being desirable for both races. On the third major principle the Committee reported that it would be unwise to separate intellectual and religious training; it recommended that children's religious instruction be such "as the peculiar religious tenets of their parents will allow".⁷² Religious education, specifically, was to exclude "instruction in the peculiar or distinguishing doctrines of any denomination of Christianity".⁷³ The Committee recommended, finally, that the Lieutenant-Governor of New Munster (Edward Eyre) be requested to introduce an education bill embodying the Committee's resolutions.⁷⁴

The partisan *Nelson Examiner*, predictably, congratulated the Committee for its report and welcomed the idea of an education bill being designed along non-sectarian lines.⁷⁵ But Lieutenant-Governor Eyre, Grey's representative in the New Munster Province, flatly refused to endorse the Committee's recommendation to modify the Education Ordinance. Eyre's position was a minority one since the majority of the Council had voted (by ten votes to two) to adopt the Committee's report.⁷⁶ Undeterred by this show of support, Eyre decreed that the matter was now one for the General Legislature to consider, that a "uniformity of legislation" should exist throughout New Zealand, and that public opinion needed to be gauged before any amendments to the law could be considered.⁷⁷ Unmoved by this line of argument, Henry Seymour (Chairman of the Committee on Education and a New Munster Legislative Council member) presented a draft bill that called upon Eyre to set aside one-twentieth of New Munster's revenue for educational purposes.⁷⁸ Such a proposal was entirely consistent with existing practice under the Ordinance. A more distinctive feature of Seymour's bill, however, was its revival of the Education Committee's earlier proposal that the sum of money to be appropriated for education be divided into two grants - one for Māori and the other for Europeans.⁷⁹ Eyre's refusal to countenance any changes to the Ordinance meant that the bill lapsed.

The New Munster Legislative Council was not prepared to let the matter rest. Within days of Eyre's rejection of Seymour's bill, the Council restated its views in a comprehensive and forthright "minute of protest" on education.⁸⁰ Written by Alfred Domett (Colonial Secretary) and countersigned by Daniel Wakefield (Attorney-General), Henry Seymour and David Monro (both Council members), the minute boldly attacked the Education Ordinance on both practical and ideological grounds. Arguing that the Ordinance "does not and cannot secure the greatest practicable diffusion of education", Domett declared that "it was the duty of the Government to provide education". Such education had to be universal and provided at the public expense.⁸¹ Domett reasoned further that a country with few financial resources and a thinly scattered population could afford universal education only by imposing a general tax and securing an economic distribution of schools. As long as the state gave support only to private denominational ventures, as it did under the Ordinance, Domett

maintained that it was unfair to expect the public to contribute toward their upkeep.⁸²

For Domett the procedure was clear. If the goal of universal education was to be achieved then the full resources of the state would need to be employed. A strong case for compulsory school attendance was thus made, linked to the introduction of an adequately funded (via local education taxes and government revenue) non-denominational schooling system.⁸³ Underpinning this stance was Domett's overriding concern that Ordinance-aided sectarian schooling was certainly morally repugnant, if not evil. "By placing the mighty machinery of education exclusively in the hands of ecclesiastics", he wrote, "the Ordinance affords opportunities...for the renewal of priestcraft, and the gradual subjection of the human mind to its influence".⁸⁴ There was something strangely ironic about this proposal which sought to substitute one type of authoritarianism for another. Domett's objection to the 'mighty machinery of education' being placed in ecclesiastical hands could be applied with equal force and validity to his proposal for introducing a secular education system under state control. This argument notwithstanding, support for Domett's minute was strong.

Following the publication of the 'minute' in July 1849 the New Munster Legislative Council reaffirmed its unanimous opposition to the denominational schooling principle, and urged Eyre to introduce schooling for Europeans based on the Irish national system.⁸⁵ Although Eyre at first refused, he did suggest to Grey that non-religious schools should receive aid according to their attendance.⁸⁶

In reply to Eyre and the New Munster Council, Grey did not conceal his assessment of the Council's defiance of his Ordinance as being manifestly illegal.⁸⁷ Although annoyed that the Ordinance had not operated in southern New Zealand, Grey was more concerned that the southern natives' education had become retarded. Consequently, he instructed Eyre to seek a compromise position. On 10 October 1849 Eyre recorded his intention to introduce by legislation an education system for Europeans, based on the Irish national system, at the same time as enacting the Ordinance for Māori and half-caste children.⁸⁸ This promise failed to sway the Council who continued to resist until Grey shifted residence to Wellington (the headquarters of the New Munster Council) in October 1851. After asserting his authority, the New Munster Council agreed to appropriate £1,000 for Ordinance-assisted education to be shared between the three main denominations: four-ninths to the Anglicans, three-ninths to the Wesleyans, and two-ninths to the Roman Catholics.⁸⁹ The Council's opposition had been overcome, finally.

With the missionary societies having played such a vital role in providing schooling in New Zealand, it followed from the Ordinance that they should enjoy a share of the available funds. While money was distributed to the three main religious bodies it was abundantly clear that it was the Anglicans who obtained the lion's share of the aid. Between 1846 and 1853, for example, £22,364 was appropriated for education: the Anglicans received £11,451, the Wesleyans £6,466, and the Roman Catholics £4,447.⁹⁰ Along with the one-twentieth of the revenue allowed for under the Ordinance there was further assistance from 15 per cent of the land fund, and when this proved insufficient there was recourse to the parliamentary grant.⁹¹

The land grants were a controversial adjunct to the system of finance established under the Ordinance. Grey had proposed that to meet the increasing demand for native education the government could purchase land and either sell it (for about £1 an acre) or gift it to religious institutions who could use it to become self-supporting.⁹² Self-sufficiency, Grey argued, had numerous benefits:

The pupils of the establishment could, if there was a sufficiency of land at their disposal, not only produce sufficient supplies for their own support, but they would at the same time be instructed in the improved modes of agriculture, which, as the (native) people of this country are distinctly an agricultural race, would confer the greatest benefits upon themselves, the European population, and generally upon the whole country.⁹³

As with the money grants, the Anglicans again enjoyed a resource monopoly regarding the land set aside for educational purposes. Between 1846 and 1853 the Anglicans were granted 5756 acres, the Wesleyans 876 acres, and the Roman Catholics 513 acres.⁹⁴

THE PROVINCIAL PERIOD: 1853-1876

By the close of the Crown Colony Period £6,300 was being granted annually for educating native children, and between 700 and 800 Māori children were attending boarding schools.⁹⁵ Satisfied with the progress of native education and confident that amalgamation between native and European races was "rapidly taking place", Grey turned his attention to European education - a concern for both private interests and religious authorities.⁹⁶ A series of land grants for grammar schools was made in 1853 for Auckland and Wellington schools, with children of all races and social classes being eligible for admission.⁹⁷ The schools were required to teach English, mathematics and, if the students wanted it, Greek and Latin.⁹⁸ Several years were to elapse, however, before the grammar schools were functioning fully.

A number of factors had militated against the successful implementation of Grey's native education policy. Difficulties were experienced in recruiting competent, let alone trained, teachers able to teach both the Māori language and the industrial requirements of the curriculum.⁹⁹ Support from Māori parents for the education of their children, furthermore, was alleged to be lacking. Commenting on this in 1856, the Rev. Octavius Hadfield, head teacher of the Anglican school at Otaki, berated Māori parents for their unwillingness to part with their children, even when schooling was for their children's benefit. Māori parents, he feared, were beginning to reject the Pakeha view of the importance of schooling.¹⁰⁰ An additional complication, Hadfield thought, was the governmental pressure for 'results' from its money grants which encouraged teachers to attempt to do more than they could reasonably be expected to achieve.¹⁰¹ Although deeply disappointed at the lack of progress at his school, Hadfield appealed for moderation in judging the success of Māori education. He concluded that while "the education of the native race will be slow", this was not a compelling argument for abandoning it altogether.¹⁰²

Further evidence of Māori discontent with the European-provided schools was recorded by school inspectors, teachers, and missionaries. Complaints concerning severe discipline - Māori pupils allegedly were 'whipped' by teachers

as a punishment for irregular attendance - and hard manual labour were commonplace.¹⁰³ Similarly, many Māori parents resented the fact that their children spent less than two hours on school work daily but up to eight hours clearing land, draining, and fencing.¹⁰⁴ Despite intense opposition from Māori parents to such schooling experiences¹⁰⁵ Henry Taylor, Auckland's first full-time Inspector of Native Schools, reported confidently that the purpose of educating Māori youth was to prepare them for labouring-type employment. Māori, he concluded, should have limited access to European knowledge:

I do not advocate for the Natives under present circumstances a refined education or high mental culture; it would be inconsistent, if we take into account the position they are likely to hold for many years to come in the social scale, and inappropriate, if we remember that they are better calculated by nature to get their living by manual than by mental labour.¹⁰⁶

Intellectual development for Māori youth, it can be argued, was being subordinated to both an assimilationist agenda and industrial training, necessitating the recruitment of Māori to 'break in the land'.

The Native Schools Act, 1858

Aware of the declining popularity of the mission schools, the government introduced a *Native Schools Act* (the Richmond Act) on 21 August 1858 which reflected its determination to continue and develop the mission schooling system for Māori introduced by Grey in 1847. Under the Act, a maximum of £7,000 was available annually over a seven year period (based upon a £5 to £10 yearly rate for each pupil enrolled) to those church schools educating native and half-caste children or adults.¹⁰⁷ Conditions were attached to the offer of funding, however. Money was given only to those schools associated with a religious body and where pupils were both boarded and educated.¹⁰⁸ The English language was to be the medium of instruction, along with the "ordinary subjects of primary English education". Although industrial training still was required, religious instruction was deleted from the curriculum.¹⁰⁹ The schools were subject to inspection, like the 1847 Ordinance, and were accountable for monies spent.¹¹⁰ Following the Ordinance, the subsidies were distributed unevenly again between the churches: the Anglicans, Wesleyans, and Roman Catholics received 49, 32, and 19 per cent of the available funds respectively.¹¹¹

The scheme was a failure when put to the test. Before the Act could be implemented fully the North Island land wars had erupted and many schools were forced to close. Other factors, such as the demand for child labour, insufficient food, ragged clothing, pupils being overworked in industrial schools, excessive corporal punishment and harsh discipline, poor-quality teaching, and a lack of school texts, militated against further progress in native education.¹¹² The inspectors, for their part, could do nothing more than report upon the average school attendance, the annual cost of educating each pupil, the scholars' proficiency, and the extent to which instruction was being provided in English, as required under the Act. With much punitive land confiscation after the cessation

of war it was scarcely surprising that many Māori were distrustful of the Europeans and their government, and withdrew from contact with them subsequently.¹¹³

By 1865 Māori had almost withdrawn completely from the schools - only 22 Māori pupils were attending schools throughout New Zealand.¹¹⁴ The land wars, in essence, attested to the breakdown of relations between the European and Māori races. In fact, the wars marked the end of the missionary period in New Zealand and, with it, Grey's philosophy of using the denominational boarding schools as an instrument to assimilate Māori into an increasingly European society and economy.¹¹⁵

The Native Schools Act, 1867

With the virtual abandonment by Māori of the mission boarding schools by the mid 1860s, and the realisation that the churches lacked sufficient financial resources to provide an effective schooling system for Māori youth, the government decided once more to introduce special measures for native education. The government's response owed much to William Rolleston's 1867 report on educational progress in thirteen native schools founded by the Anglican, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic missionaries. After criticising these authorities for emphasising religious instruction over English language teaching, Rolleston urged the government to consider establishing a general system of primary education.¹¹⁶ Accepting Rolleston's observations, the Minister of Native Affairs (James Richmond) proposed that the government now subsidise a national system of secular village day schools for Māori, controlled and administered by the Department of Native Affairs.¹¹⁷ A dual - but not monoracial - system was thus devised, affording schools for native children and ordinary public schools which had been, and were being, established in the provinces and attended principally by European settlers' children.¹¹⁸ Notwithstanding the government's declared intention to anglicise Māori in general and Māori youth in particular as quickly as possible while continuing to provide Māori villages with schools to hasten the process of assimilation, government neither decreed that native and half-caste children's schooling should be confined to the native schools nor that Māori only were to be educated in the native schools.¹¹⁹

Parliamentary debates on the 1867 Native Schools Bill highlighted three principles that came to dominate native education policy for many years: first, that Europeanisation/assimilation was an appropriate policy for government to pursue in order to 'civilise' Māori; second, that the schools could be used for the express purpose of social control; and finally, that education should be made available only in those communities where Māori had not only asked for schooling but had also committed resources.

In moving the second reading of the 1867 Native Schools Bill in the House, J.C. Richmond, Minister of Native Affairs, reconciled the provision of education with improving the "position of the Māori race". He was especially anxious that steps be taken to teach Māori the English language.¹²⁰ John Hall, Member for Heathcote (Christchurch), also claimed that learning English would pave the way for the "civilisation of the remnants of a noble race".¹²¹ Allied to this proposal was the issue of social control. For Major Charles Heaphy, Member for Parnell,

the extension of the education franchise to include Māori was a pragmatic form of social insurance, because "the more the natives were educated, the less would be the future expenditure on police and gaols".¹²² Hugh Carleton, Member for the Bay of Islands and a former Inspector of Native Schools, took these arguments one step further in announcing that the colony was faced now with a choice: Māori could either be "exterminated" or "civilised".¹²³ The latter option was favoured by Carleton, who reasoned that attempts to "exterminate the Natives" by way of warfare had all but crippled the colony's finances. Educating the natives, he concluded, would ensure that peace triumphed over war. Carleton, like his parliamentary colleagues, clung steadfastly to the belief that the Māori language was "an imperfect medium of thought". The civilisation of Māori, accordingly, could be achieved only by means of a "perfect language", English.¹²⁴ The culture that the native schools were to confer, predictably, was a heavily paternalistic Pakeha variant.

The 1867 Act, passed on 10 October, acknowledged the inadequacies of the land reserves that had been set aside under the original Wakefield plan and later by Grey, and permitted the cost of native education to be borne by the Colonial Treasury. This move recognised the changing public attitude on the funding and control of education since legislation was first introduced 30 years earlier; it was accepted more widely that education should become a charge against public funds. To this end, the Act provided an annual sum of £4,000 to subsidise the cost of buildings, land, books, and teachers' salaries.¹²⁵ Government-appointed inspectors were given the power to enter, inspect, and examine all schools receiving aid, and they were required to report annually to Parliament on the "attainments and progress of the scholars, the nature of the instruction given, the cleanliness and health of the scholars, and generally upon the discipline, management and efficiency" of the schools.¹²⁶ The government also paid for the education of Māori who attended European schools. All grants were conditional upon a satisfactory report from the inspector and the provision of instruction of Māori in the English language only, except in cases where it proved impossible to employ an English teacher. The curriculum to be offered in the native schools comprised "the ordinary subjects of primary English education ... taught by a competent teacher".¹²⁷ This, it will be recalled, was the same curriculum as that provided for in the 1858 Native Schools Act.

The most striking feature of the new Act was its advocacy of a 'self-help' native schooling philosophy, whereby the onus for exercising initiative was placed on the Māori themselves.¹²⁸ This idea was not new, however, having originated from a suggestion by Carleton when he was an inspector in Auckland in 1862. Carleton then had recommended placing the schools, to a large extent, in the hands of the Māori, thereby "inducing in them a spirit of self-reliance".¹²⁹ He shrewdly observed:

If we attempt to hunt them into education as we have hunted them into selling their lands, a spirit of resistance will naturally be engendered. Make education a part of the Runanga; give the direction of it to themselves; let them feel that it is their own work.¹³⁰

It was an opinion repeated in Parliament in 1867 when Carleton urged government to compel Māori to contribute "something in land, labour or money" for native schooling.¹³¹ Adamant that people valued only what they had paid for, he felt sure that Māori would then show an "interest in the matter and would consider themselves as being to a certain extent masters of the institutions".¹³²

In practice, schools were established under the Act only when a considerable number of adult male Māori inhabitants of a district wrote to the Colonial Secretary who administered the Act, asking for a school, and when they indicated their willingness to contribute toward building and maintenance costs.¹³³ The Colonial Treasurer was then empowered to grant a proportion of the building and maintenance costs, provided that Māori contributed not less than one acre of land for the school site, half the cost of the buildings (i.e. school room and teacher's residence), and one-quarter of the teacher's salary. The cost of school books was to be borne fully by the Māori people.¹³⁴ For the next 12 years the Native Affairs Department was responsible for administering all native schools established, maintained, and subsidised under the 1867 Act.

Commenting upon the impact of the 1867 Act Butchers noted that "the wars" had delayed its full operation until 1871 when an amending act was passed, the aim being to ease the financial burden placed on those Māori communities wanting schools.¹³⁵ Such an observation is overly simplistic, however, since it ignores the reality of racial disharmony in some parts of New Zealand, the problems encountered in trying to recruit suitable teachers, and the inability of many Māori communities to meet those financial requirements prescribed by statute.¹³⁶ Native schools were, in fact, established after 1867, albeit slowly and somewhat cautiously. By 1870 thirteen secular village day schools were functioning, with a total enrolment of 219 pupils.¹³⁷ Despite this apparent success progress was much slower than officials had expected. To assist Māori schooling endeavours new legislation - the *Native Schools Act Amendment Act* - was passed by Parliament on 14 November 1871, which relaxed some of the provisions of the 1867 Act. Poor Māori communities were no longer required to provide money for buildings and salaries. The Governor could, instead, require the kainga (native village) in certain cases to gift land for a school site in return for the Department of Native Affairs meeting all other costs.

Māori politicians supported the new legislation enthusiastically. Karaitiana Takamoana, the newly elected member for Eastern Māori, not only proposed that Māori children be compelled to be taught solely in English but also suggested that European children ought to attend the native schools to enable Māori children to acquire European culture.¹³⁹ As Harker has noted, Māori politicians' endorsement of this legislation strengthened the resolve of Pakeha politicians and bureaucrats that what they were doing was 'right' for Māori and non-Māori.¹⁴⁰

Many Māori communities responded positively to the changes made by the 1871 Act. The growth in the number of native schools established and pupil enrolments thereat was impressive. In the decade 1870-1880, for example, the number of new native schools increased four-fold (from 13 to 57) and the total enrolment rose seven-fold (from 219 to 1625).¹⁴¹ Data such as these were interpreted by officialdom to mean that more Māori were being assimilated into mainstream Pakeha society.

Requests for native schools to be established came initially from those Māori communities far removed from European contact, and from areas where Māori had either fought alongside Pakeha during the wars or remained neutral.¹⁴² Typically, these were communities which had remained largely unaffected by the wars and land confiscation; for example, North Auckland and eastern North Island districts. Māori in North Auckland indicated their willingness to contribute both money and land for native schooling. By 1876 there were 20 native schools operating in the region.¹⁴³ Māori in the Hawke's Bay/East Coast region chose, similarly, to write to the Colonial Secretary requesting that native schools be built; three were established in 1872, one in 1873, and two in 1874.¹⁴⁴ The reason why Māori wanted access to schooling was seldom concealed - it was the chief means by which to obtain social and economic parity with the Pakeha.¹⁴⁵ An additional insight into the perceived power of schooling was evident in the views expressed by 992 Māori who petitioned Parliament in 1877, urging the government to establish native schools throughout New Zealand. The petitioners left politicians in no doubt as to the 'proper' function of native schooling:

Māori children can learn the English language, for by this means they will be on the same footing as Europeans, and will become acquainted with the means by which the Europeans have become great.¹⁴⁶

Equally anxious that Māori not occupy "a poor position in the future", a group of 337 Māori had petitioned the government in 1876 to introduce legislation amending the 1867 Act so that any native school teacher (and his wife and children) provide "all the knowledge which the Europeans possess" and "be persons altogether ignorant of the Māori language".¹⁴⁷ In offering to prohibit the Māori language from being spoken in these schools, these petitioners equated mastery of English with enhanced life chances and access to a share of power.

The response of Māori tribes to the establishment of native schools, it must be noted, was not always favourable. Whereas some Māori communities thought the schools provided access to the more attractive aspects of the European world others viewed them as being Pakeha institutions which, along with war and land confiscation, had demoralised and diminished the Māori race.¹⁴⁸ As Barrington has demonstrated, Māori attitudes toward Pakeha culture and institutions - notably its schools - differed widely on a regional basis.¹⁴⁹ The government's failure to establish native schools in the Waikato, King Country, and Taranaki until the mid 1880s testified to the latent hostility of these Māori towards Europeans and 'things European'.¹⁵⁰ After lengthy negotiations between local Māori and the Department of Education a native school opened in the Upper Waikato in 1886. In the same year the first native school was built in the King Country; by 1900, three more schools were operating in the region.¹⁵¹

The growth of native schools was frustrated further by the rise of new religious and political movements which sought to retain, if not heighten, Māori autonomy.¹⁵² In 1881 James Pope (Inspector of Native Schools, 1880-1903) reported on the significant impact of Te Kooti's separatist movement on native schools in the Bay of Plenty.¹⁵³ Having established himself as the "high priest" of the religious sect he had founded, Te Kooti proceeded to warn Māori that their children would become "injuriously affected" if they associated with Pakeha

teachers and children at the native schools.¹⁵⁴ Similar difficulties were recorded by Pope in the Taranaki region as late as 1896, where Māori informed government of their determination to have "nothing to do with the Pakeha".¹⁵⁵ Such opposition is best exemplified at Parihaka - the Taranaki village in which government troops arrested the pacifist 'rebel' Te Whiti in 1881 - where Māori actively resisted all government attempts to open a school until 1903.¹⁵⁶ Despite these examples of resistance to schooling, by the beginning of the twentieth century Māori opposition to assimilation and Pakeha control had been overcome mostly with schools in place in most districts where Māori had once opposed them.¹⁵⁷ The extent to which the government was determined to supply schools for Māori children and, more importantly, Māori acceptance of this schooling, can be gauged by the number of native schools built and pupil enrolments therein. Almost 100 native schools had been established by 1900, with over 3000 pupils in attendance.¹⁵⁸ These data, Barrington has argued, suggest that only a minority of Māori wished to 'withdraw from European influence.'¹⁵⁹

THE EDUCATION ACT, 1877

The passing of the *Education Act* on 29 November 1877 marked the introduction of a national system of primary schooling in New Zealand. Earlier, from 1853-1876, the country had been divided into individual provinces; each province had its own government (council) and was completely responsible for its residents' education. But disparities in social, economic, and educational achievements soon were evident, not only between the North and South Islands but also between the provinces.¹⁶⁰ Confronted by the virtual bankruptcy of many of the poorer provinces by the mid 1870s, the Colonial Legislature proposed the abolition of the provincial government system. To this end the *Abolition of the Provinces Act* was passed on 12 October 1875, and the provinces ceased to exist from 1 November 1876.¹⁶² This move made possible and necessary the passing of the national *Education Act* within one year. The 1877 Act introduced a 'free, compulsory, and secular' national primary schooling system and created a central Department of Education charged, among other things, with formulating education policy applicable nationally, distributing the annual education grant ('vote') on a capitation basis to the local education authorities (Education Boards), and administering the regulations made under the Act.¹⁶² Responsibility for administering native education was transferred from the Native Affairs Department to the Education Department in July 1879.

The 1877 Act, which embodied the principle of universal and therefore compulsory primary schooling, exempted Māori children from attending state schools compulsorily. Māori parents were "at liberty" legally, to send their children to a public school if they so wished, however.¹⁶³ In this respect the Act upheld the precedent set by the provincial governments, none of whom excluded Māori by law from attending their schools; a number, in fact, had excused Māori specifically from local attendance and taxation requirements.¹⁶⁴ The goal of assimilation, McKenzie has argued, remained a part of the government's agenda in 1877. The definition of 'Māori' in the 1877 Act referred to both racial origin and lifestyle; thus half-castes living away from their tribe or community were judged

to be Europeans and were unable to be exempted from the provisions of the Act.¹⁶⁵ As McKenzie observes,

The exemption granted to Māori was due to the government's tacit recognition of the practical difficulties which stood in the way of rapid integration and also to its reluctance to appear to be driving Māori children into the European schools ... it made good sense to stress choice of entry for Māori children rather than to insist upon school attendance by law.¹⁶⁶

Although the native schools were exempted specifically from the provisions of the 1877 Education Act, this legislation provides an important insight into official native schooling policy. From 1879 a differentiated administration system was devised for the country's primary schools: the 'ordinary' public schools were administered by Education Boards while the native schools came under the umbrella of the Department of Education. The decision to adopt a dual administration structure was based upon two assumptions. First, it was argued that the education of Māori children warranted special care and attention if they were ever to compete on equal terms with Europeans in the future.¹⁶⁷ Second, owing to language difficulties and geographical isolation, the Māori people were seen as deserving of their own staffing arrangements and school curriculum as distinct from those in the adjacent public schools.¹⁶⁸

A policy that upheld non-segregated (integrated) schooling was entirely consistent with the stated policies of successive New Zealand governments. It was fully intended that rather than being monoracial the native schools would therefore be open to any children of school age who lived in the neighbourhood. The Department of Education would continue to administer these schools until such time as the goal of Europeanisation of Māori was attained.¹⁶⁹ In practical terms, this meant that native schools would be transferred to board control when their pupils had made sufficient progress in the English language to work through all six standards of the state primary school curriculum.¹⁷⁰

Economic considerations also had a significant bearing on the Legislature's decision to integrate the native schools into the public school system. Several politicians claimed that native schools were more costly to administer and maintain on an overall cost per pupil basis than were the ordinary public primary schools.¹⁷¹ The reality, however, was that the native schools were not especially expensive to run when their cost was measured alongside other small schools in rural areas.¹⁷² Criticism persisted nonetheless, over the existence of a separate school system that was seen to offer distinct advantages to Māori children that were denied to children who attended public schools.¹⁷³ Responding to this charge Departmental officials claimed that for the native schools to function successfully as "civilising agencies and centres for spreading European ideas and habits amongst the natives", the best possible school buildings and facilities were needed.¹⁷⁴ Māori children in this respect, were deserving of differential treatment - a stronger 'desire for education' had to be implanted first and then the 'language difficulty' resolved - which justified retaining a separate native school system.¹⁷⁵ The Department's attitude reflected, for the most part, the Legislature's view that once equality of access for Māori children was provided and attained by way of

native schooling and the Europeanisation process had been completed, further special treatment of Māori children as Māori was neither necessary nor desirable. The Department anticipated, therefore, that the spread of European settlement would result eventually in the merger of native schools with the public schools, and the consequent transfer of control to the Education Boards.¹⁷⁶

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