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**GIRLS AND BOYS
COME OUT TO STAY:**

**Ideological Formations
in New Zealand-Set
Children's Fiction 1862-1917**

**A Dissertation Presented in Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy
in English at Massey University.**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines ideological formations contained in children's fiction set in New Zealand and published between 1862 and 1917, considering forty-five primary texts (mostly novels, but also some short stories and picture-books) in light of their cultural background and relevant literary and postcolonial theory.

The first three chapters discuss these works' representation of Maori, focusing upon a number of recurrent tropes and themes applicable to pakeha (European) desire for indigenisation in a colonised land; upon myths justifying dispossession of land from Maori; upon ideologies of Maori physical and moral degeneration (including cannibalism, savagery, alcoholism, and disease); and upon attitudes towards miscegenation. Chapter Four analyses the works as politically conservative middle-class propaganda which presents New Zealand as a means to financial, personal, and familial betterment for the emigrant of middling status. Chapter Five probes the texts' strongly evangelical spiritual and moral messages, which suggest the possibility of a utopian colonial settlement realised through pure young settlers. Chapter Six discusses presentations of gender roles and assumptions in this fiction, demonstrating to what extent it was receptive towards or even instigated fresh ideas for gender modelling in children's literature (for instance the feminised or androgynous boy and the active, assertive girl). Chapter Seven examines ways in which the texts advertise broad ideals of the British Empire, such as patriotism, military might, self-sacrifice or martyrdom, and imperialistic paternalism.

Overall, the dissertation reveals early New Zealand-set children's fiction as perpetuating contemporary British ideological values through its intertextual recycling and repetition of familiar tropes and themes, thus making a significant contribution towards the wider corpus of postcolonial literature.

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INTRODUCTION

. . . *children's books can never be free of didacticism or adult ideological freight.* (Hunt, *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History* xii)

Children's fiction is a powerful social medium, acting as a reflection of popular views and cultural values, and a means of social control whereby adult producers direct juvenile readers towards viewpoints and values deemed appropriate or desirable (Richards 1). This thesis will examine the ways in which various strands of ideology are reflected in a small segment of English literature, New Zealand-set children's fiction produced between 1862 and 1917.

Defining the Topic: Early New Zealand-Set Children's Fiction

A variety of challenges arise when attempting to define what constitutes "New Zealand-set children's fiction." Betty Gilderdale notes, "Classification [of New Zealand children's literature] itself is a major problem: where do we draw the line between 'fiction' and 'nonfiction' and between 'adult' and 'junior'?" (*A Sea Change* xi). The children's literature genre is notoriously difficult to define in any case as works cease to belong to it when "the concepts of childhood which produces [sic] the conditions of production shift radically" (Hunt, *Children's Literature: The Development of Criticism* 1).

A start can be made by considering some historical ideas connected with the term "children's literature." Recreational literature published for children is a comparatively modern phenomenon, which Philippe Ariès suggests originated in late sixteenth-century France and England as a rising leisured class provided their children with expurgated versions of the classics (109). Most of the earliest works read and claimed by children, from chapbook adventures and romances to early novels like Defoe's *Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* and Swift's

Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World were initially written for adults (Arbuthnot and Sutherland 31). A substantial body of literature written specifically for young people dates from about 1800, but in this didactic period little attempt was made to differentiate works according to age, taste, or reading ability, and “children’s books” retained the formal grammatical syntax and sophisticated vocabulary of adult texts.

Keith Thomas has refuted the idea that the Victorians or their predecessors in early modern England “invented” the concept of childhood, and believes that a juvenile subculture has enjoyed a much longer existence (57, 1). However in nineteenth-century England the idea of an extended youth as a time for recreational reading in a genre quite separate from adult literature was a comparatively recent idea, and a flexible one, dependent upon social factors of class and gender. Young Britons of middle and upper social stations were generally considered “children” until young men went to university and young ladies graduated from the schoolroom at around age eighteen. Marriage tended to mark the end of childhood, and though a legal marriage could be contracted at age twelve for girls and fourteen for boys, in practice this was seldom the case. Rather, the desire of young Victorians to enter wedlock in material comfort tended to push the age of first marriage into the twenties (see Banerjee xxvi, Tosh 24). The British cottage child, in contrast, joined the adult labour force at age twelve, if not earlier, while the young factory-hand, mill-hand, or chimney-sweep was born into an existence of toil, a matter many nineteenth-century reform bills strove to rectify. Working-class youths had little experience of what we would today term a “childhood” and, even after the passing of the Education Act of 1870, limited opportunity to read literature of any description.

The problems inherent in defining the concept of Victorian “childhood” have been acknowledged by social historians and children’s literature commentators. Jacqueline Banerjee makes an apt plea for an exploration rather than an explanation of the terms “childhood” and “growing up” in a period in which the concept of childhood is difficult to define legally, chronologically, and biologically. She observes that social

recognition of adolescence as a separate period worthy of academic and literary interest did not emerge until after 1900, and notes that in Victorian fiction the adolescent years tended to be obscured in “general fuzziness,” with protagonists removed offstage during their teens (xxviii).¹ Banerjee does suggest, however, that in middle-class mid-Victorian Britain adulthood arrived at around eighteen for girls and the early twenties for boys (xxiv ff).

A lengthened middle-class “childhood” was often curtailed by colonial emigration, which required every family member, at least initially, to perform demanding chores. These responsibilities were accompanied by a measure of adult privileges, as reflected in Isabella Aylmer’s *Distant Homes, or, The Graham Family in New Zealand* (1862). Here fourteen-year-old Tom Graham, emigrating in 1857, is gratified to find boys his own age on sheep stations are held in “much consideration” for sharing labour with men (43). Population statistics cited in Charles Hursthouse’s 1849 *An Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth*, from which children’s authors such as W.H.G. Kingston drew material,² include two categories of colonial “adult”—those over eighteen, and those aged between fourteen and eighteen—as well as two classes of “children,” those aged seven to fourteen, and those under seven (65). Costs of emigrant passage depended on whether a child was under or over seven, but those over fourteen paid an adult fare.

This colonial blurring of boundaries between child and adult status sheds some light on the considerably mature “child” heroes of juvenile fiction published throughout the era. G. A. Henty’s protagonists are generally young men of fifteen to eighteen, well out of the schoolroom and immersed in labour, not to mention battles. The hero of Lady Barker’s “My Emigrant Boy” (1874) is fifteen when the story begins and eighteen when it ends; the hero of Emilia Marryat’s *Amongst*

¹ Banerjee insists the term “teens” is not inappropriate when discussing child characters in Victorian fiction. She notes that the first recorded use of the word is by Wycherley and that Ruskin’s *Praeterita* refers to the early “teen period” (Banerjee xxviii).

² J.B. Ringer’s *Young Emigrants* notes this, among Kingston’s many borrowings (14). See also J.B. Ringer, “William Henry Giles Kingston: A Borrower Afloat.”

the Maoris (1875) is seventeen. Families in the fiction examined here contain siblings ranging in age from two to twenty, although it is the teenage characters who are most finely drawn, and whose moral, emotional, and spiritual motives are most seriously examined. This trend in early New Zealand children's fiction towards adolescent protagonists with grown-up concerns, as well as the use of a vocabulary and syntax which would be considered demanding by today's standards (see Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 5), continued until the turn of the century, when it was challenged by the nursery fantasies of Edith Howes and others, and ultimately overturned in the lighthearted "family stories" of Isabel Maud Peacocke and Esther Glen.

Much of the literature examined in this thesis was designed to appeal to adult readers as well as children. The issue of defining juvenile versus adult literature has always been fraught with difficulties. Maurice Saxby notes that nineteenth-century children's literature bore a close relationship to adult fiction and that boys' adventure stories coincided with guidebook colonial novels for prospective immigrants (*A History* 67). In *The New Zealand Novel 1860-1965* Joan Stevens does not draw attention to this issue, and includes several texts (such as *Distant Homes*, *Waihoura*, and *The Greenstone Door*) which have elsewhere been defined as fiction for children. E. M. Smith comments on early twentieth-century fantasies and family stories in the "Children's Books" chapter of her *A History of New Zealand Fiction* (1939), but *Distant Homes* and *Waihoura* receive attention in other parts of her survey, and she discusses *The Greenstone Door* as both a children's and an adult historical novel. James A. S. Burns, in his 1961 *A Century of New Zealand Novels*, claims to exclude children's novels but does not define what he believes a children's novel to be. Consequently he includes *Distant Homes*, *Holmwood*, *Waihoura*, *Amongst the Maoris*, *A Christmas Cake in Four Quarters*, *The Greenstone Door*, *Under One Standard*, and other texts which contain at the very least a strong appeal to young readers as well as to an adult audience. Burns omits *Emily Bathurst*, a text specifically aimed at the daughters of middle-class Britons, because librarians differ

in opinion over whether or not it is a novel—not whether or not it is a children’s novel or a New Zealand novel. E. H. McCormick’s *New Zealand Literature: A Survey* (1959) also sets out to discuss only the adult literature of this country, yet analyses *Distant Homes*, the children’s books of Lady Barker, and *The Greenstone Door*. Clearly, the fluid appeal of many of these works defies strict classification.

Moreover, no discussion of nineteenth-century “children’s literature” can be made without bearing in mind the mid-Victorian middle-class tradition of family reading aloud. So-called “children’s” novels made wholesome, instructive reading material for entire households, including domestics. The episodes in *Distant Homes* where Captain Graham educates his family with evening readings from accounts of New Zealand life reflect the purpose for which many of the novels examined in this thesis were intended. Kingston, a vocal proponent of emigration, aimed *Waihoua* (1872) at the middle-class family, and *Holmwood* (1869) at emigrants of a lower social station:

The object of this series is to supply the cottagers and humbler classes of England . . . with books in clear, large type, composed of words the meaning of which they understand, sentences which the eye can take in with ease, ideas suited to their comprehension, on subjects likely to excite their interest, so that they may obtain amusement and wholesome instruction. . . .

The Series (Tales) will be found suitable for the poorer population of our towns, the inhabitants of our coasts, and our soldiers and sailors in barracks and on board ship; also for reading in night schools. (*Holmwood* Preface)

A useful protagonist in such literature is the child-man, a stripling of sixteen or seventeen who could be idolised by younger children, emulated by teenagers and junior servants, and fondly idealised by parents. From this it can be seen that the use of the term “children” in colonial literature is as broad and flexible as these novels’ appeal. These

works encouraged and educated potential settlers, supplying guidelines to their behaviour both at home and abroad, and provided those who remained in Britain with a perspective on and (as this dissertation will discuss) a justification of the imperial colonising mission.

Defining the terms “New Zealand” and “fiction” presents additional challenges. Just what is New Zealand fiction, especially early New Zealand fiction, of necessity published in London and aimed, in the first instance at least, at a readership resident in Britain? Is it a book written by a New Zealander, whether a British emigrant or an individual born in the colony? A book written by an English, French, or American author about New Zealand? A book written by a New Zealander but set elsewhere in the world? A book containing New Zealand characters but set elsewhere? All surveyors of a nation’s fiction face such problems in definition. Stevens suggests a New Zealand novel should be “. . . one which is related to this country, or to its people, or to the experience of life as human beings meet it in these islands” (9). Her survey excludes fiction by New Zealand authors but not set in New Zealand, and includes overseas-set books which deal with New Zealand citizens.

Bruce Ringer, in *Young Emigrants: New Zealand Juvenile Fiction 1833-1919* (1980), addresses the dual difficulty of defining juvenile texts and fiction. He takes fiction to “. . . include all writing, including myths and legends, which has an imaginative element; juvenile fiction is taken to include fiction which is primarily intended for children or adolescents” (9). Ringer discusses novels, collections of Maori myths, periodicals, and stories written by writers resident in New Zealand or living overseas but incorporating “some significant reference” to New Zealand in their works (37). In *A Sea Change: 145 Years of New Zealand Junior Fiction* (1982) and her entry on “Children’s Literature” to *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature* (1998) Betty Gilderdale discusses most New Zealand-set children’s novels with an imaginative element, including *The Greenstone Door* (which Ringer omits), but excludes Maori myths and individually published short stories.

For the purposes of this thesis I have broadly defined “New Zealand-set children’s fiction” to be any imaginative work by a local or overseas author which is set, at least partially, in New Zealand and which is intended (though not necessarily exclusively) for a reader aged under twenty. An exception is made in the case of New Zealander Isabel Maud Peacocke’s *My Friend Phil* (1914), which is set in Sydney but contains characters who term themselves “colonials” rather than Australians, a text which Betty Gilderdale has termed “the first New Zealand novel which could be called a ‘family story’” (“Children’s Literature” 532).

Establishing Genre Boundaries

A further challenge inherent in preparing this thesis involved delineating boundaries of genre within the broad definition of “New Zealand-set children’s fiction.” My focus concentrates mainly upon those works which Gilderdale terms the “settler story” and Kimberley Reynolds terms the “domestic adventure” (Reynolds 94), terms which I shall use interchangeably throughout this discussion. Gilderdale defines this genre as “the pioneering family tale of emigration and settlement,” which became popular throughout the colonial period (“Children’s Literature” 525). Its mode, suggests Lawrence Jones, is that of “naïve realism” (122). The domestic adventure may focus on a colonial youth rather than a family, and may combine the adventure element of popular boys’ literature with the domestic realism and affective relationships found in mid-Victorian girls’ fiction. As Gilderdale observes, in the Victorian period the boundaries between the boy’s adventure story and the emigrant family novel were never absolute (“Children’s Literature” 525).

However, although many of my selected texts fall into this “settler story” or “domestic adventure” genre, again, there are exceptions. Not all the novels under discussion deal with the emigration process, though most test a young protagonist by pitting him or her against an untamed landscape in some variety of “colonial experience.” Although I concentrate mainly on realist novels I examine three fantasies (Kate McCosh Clark’s *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* [1891], Amy Dora

Bright's "Three Xmas Gifts" [1901], and Sarah Rebecca Moore's *Fairyland in New Zealand* [1909]) which contain pertinent ideological messages. Moreover, I include four books of short stories (Bright's collection and three by Lady Barker), a picture book (James Duigan's *Tiki's Trip to Town* [1893?]), a school reader (John Finnemore's *The Little Maories* [1906]), and two travelogues (Thomas Wallace Knox's *The Boy Travellers in Australasia* [1889] and Anthony Trollope's *Australia and New Zealand* [1873]). Some problems of availability compounded my research, with a few of the texts listed in bibliographies proving to be unobtainable. Ultimately, my criteria for inclusion of a text in this thesis was that it contain clear ideological messages and be intended as suitable for children. I exclude Maori myths and legends, due to absence of pakeha (European) characters who function to define the texts' British ideological formations.³ With the exception of *The Cradle Ship* (1910) I also exclude Edith Howes' works of this period, which fall into the categories of nature study or nursery fiction.

Determining A Time-Frame

The earliest documented children's text with New Zealand content is the anonymous 1833 *Stories About Many Things, Founded on Facts*. In this work (which unfortunately I have been unable to sight), an English mother instructs her young son about various matters, including Captain Cook's encounters with "New Zealanders" and the reactions of Moyhanger, a Maori brought to London (Ringer, *Young Emigrants* 7; Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 11). The next-published juvenile work with New Zealand content is *Emily Bathurst* (1847), an anonymous tract encouraging young ladies to donate to the Church Mission Society. There is little plot. Hints of one appear when Emily hears of a girl who sacrifices a comfortable life in order to marry a missionary, but the most

³ Nevertheless, in preparing this thesis I have studied the four major works produced in this sub-genre during the 1862-1917 period: Edward Tregear's *Fairy Tales and Folklore of New Zealand and the South Seas* (1891), Kate McCosh Clark's *Maori Tales and Legends* (1896), J. C. Andersen's *Maori Fairy Tales* (1908), and Edith Howes' *Maoriland Fairy Tales* (1913).

expected of Emily is proof that she can maintain a quality wardrobe whilst donating money to charity. William Stones' *My First Voyage: A Book for Youth* (1858) relates geographical, historical, and scientific information, and describes a trading excursion down the Hokianga River. Bagnall says Stones depicts an "imaginary voyage" (I: 2, 987); there is scant fare here to satisfy a reader's imaginative hunger, however.

My discussion therefore begins with the next-published work with New Zealand content and intended for children, the settler story *Distant Homes* (1862).⁴ It concludes with works published in 1917. Jones divides early New Zealand novels into two periods, "Early Colonial" or "Pioneer" (1861-89) and "Late Colonial" (1890-1934). Ringer ends his survey of early New Zealand children's fiction in 1919. I however select 1917 as approaching an end point of the colonial era both in historical terms and in terms of "early" children's literature. Not only was New Zealand at this time immersed in the concerns of the Great War, which engendered social changes including an "intensification of the writer's sense of New Zealand" (J. C. Reid 52)⁵, but the same year saw publication of *Six Little New Zealanders*, a child-centred juvenile text which rethinks colonial values in terms of a securely settled existence. Gilderdale sees a natural development from the early pioneering novels into the local family story, epitomised in *Six Little New Zealanders*, and Ringer observes that New Zealand fiction began to come of age after the Great War, when *Six Little New Zealanders* enabled young New Zealanders to ". . . read about themselves as they were" (*A Sea Change* 73; *Young Emigrants* Preface, 35).

Texts as Vehicles for Ideology: The Methodological Framework

In her review of *A Sea Change*, Alison Grant suggests that early New Zealand children's fiction contains little "imagination, originality or

⁴ Joan Stevens, casting this work as adult fiction, terms it "New Zealand's second novel" (10); E. M. Smith sees it as the first New Zealand novel (16).

⁵ See Belich 95-118 on World War I and its effect upon New Zealanders.

sheer narrative skill” and “little literary merit”; accordingly she praises Gilderdale for conducting a (mainly) sociological as opposed to a literary appraisal of these texts (38). While I am not in unreserved agreement with Grant’s views, my study too avoids the frequently fraught issue of literary “quality” and concentrates on the ideological messages of the texts. Books written for children, “Perhaps more than any other texts . . . reflect society as it wishes to be seen, and as it unconsciously reveals itself to be” and “there is in most of them, if not a didactic element then a reflection of the social rules and ethic of the period” (Hunt, *Children’s Literature: The Development of Criticism* 2; Avery, “The Puritans” 95). Although by the mid-Victorian period the overtly moralistic children’s book had begun to yield to the text which seeks to entertain rather than instruct, this changeover was gradual and fluid, and the majority of texts produced for a colonial juvenile audience contained considerable didacticism.

Much has been written about approaches to analysing children’s literature. Until comparatively recently children’s literature was seen as a “subliterature” (Nières 49) or sub-genre of “real” (adult) literature. However by 1992 a body of criticism on children’s literature had been produced with an “ability to make links across disciplinary and cultural boundaries” (Hunt, *Literature for Children* 1). Recent critics agree that “Any discussion of juvenile fiction must be located . . . within the critical and ideological frameworks that operate in the analysis of both canonically received and popular adult literature” (Foster and Simons x).

Children’s fiction narratives yield what John Stephens terms “a story and a significance,” both of which are surfaces for inscribing the ideology of conformity to social norms (2, 4). Peter Hollindale believes that this ideology may take three forms: an overt “intended surface ideology” (the writer’s moral, social, or political beliefs, which readers are instructed to accept or believe); a passive presence (unconscious assumptions and acceptance of the values of the society producing the texts); and an embedding within the language, codes, and stereotypical characters with which a writer must work (27-31). Hollindale comments

that ideology is more than a political policy: “. . . it is a climate of belief . . . vague, and holistic, and pliant” (37).

Tony Watkins’ essay “Cultural Studies, New Historicism and Children’s Literature” (178) suggests as a suitable methodological programme for the cultural study of children’s literature the interpretative approach to analysing texts of mass communication set forth in John B. Thompson’s *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*. Thompson defines ideology as “meaning in the service of power” which permeates the contexts of everyday life, disseminated via the symbolic forms and social contexts of mass communication processes, being all forms of media from the seventeenth century onwards (7). Ideology, states Thomson, is used to sustain a multiplicity of asymmetrical power relationships, such as those between races, between the sexes, between age groups, between individuals and the state, and between states, as well as between classes in society. In his discussion of ways in which colonial period children’s writing subtly justified imperial power relationships, Joseph Zornado comments: “Power . . . defined the dominant ideology of Victorian England, and its practice—between the adults and the child or between Mother England and her colonies—figured as a sign of the dominant culture’s technological, cultural, and spiritual superiority. The use of power, in short, justified itself” (109-110).

To analyse literary ideological formations, Thompson proposes using “a depth hermeneutical framework” consisting of three parts: (i) an examination of the social-historical background to the production, circulation and reception of the mediated message; (ii) an in-depth analysis of the structure of that message; and (iii) an interpretation or re-interpretation of the message, providing a “creative construction of possible meaning” (289). The framework’s overall purpose is to show ideology at work, revealing how meaning in texts serves to establish and sustain relations of domination and subordination.

This thesis aims to examine New Zealand children’s literature published between 1862 and 1917 in the light of Thompson’s framework

through examination of the cultural background to the texts and analysis with the aid of relevant literary and postcolonial theory. The principal methodology employed is the location of notable formations of ideas, or recurring tropes with ideological significance. These emerge in the texts' settings, plots, and themes (such as the emigrant passage, the idea of a divinely blessed family homestead, or the presumably morally improving hard work of the "colonial experience"). They appear in characters' appearance, actions, and names, and in the texts' symbols, imagery, motifs, narrative voices, and language patterns. They are frequently found in moments of interaction between pakeha characters and indigenous characters, and between pakeha characters and the natural landscape. They can be discovered both in the texts' didactic messages and in their hidden or subtextual ideas.

Obvious difficulties arise, unfortunately, when attempting to gauge an accurate reception of these mediated messages by their intended audience. Mitzi Myers warns against the pitfalls inherent in judging early children's literature by the standards of modern society or literary criticism, and calls for a more concentrated focus on "the culturally specific formal properties of the works" that would "*integrate* text and socio-historic context" (41, 42). This question of just what constitutes the "cultural text" or "contextualising" in which we must read a work has been pondered by New Historicists:

Is the appropriate context for understanding, say, *Middlemarch*, the Victorian past in which George Eliot wrote it, the pre-Victorian past in which the story takes place, or the present in which we read it? Or is it all of these, together with the history of its reception from Eliot's time to our own? (Brantlinger, *Crusoe's Footprints* 22)

Several of my primary texts, being historical novels which in turn comment on the mores of an earlier era, present just such an interpretative challenge.

Richards sees the greatest importance of popular fiction as its ability to feed the reader's imaginative life, thereby creating "more immediate, more emotional and arguably longer-lasting impact than any number of school lessons, political speeches or church sermons" (2). This acknowledged, the notion of the "passive recipient" who unthinkingly accepts media-disseminated ideologies is almost certainly a myth. Recent analysis of children's literature lends weight to the reader-responses of a contemporary juvenile audience in order to determine a text's received meaning.⁶ Thompson sees the "process of appropriation" of media messages as being a personal, "active and potentially critical" one, "in which individuals are involved in a continuous *effort to understand*" (24). John Stephens discusses two models of ideological reading, a macro-discursive or "top-down" model, in which readers bring their knowledge and assumptions to a book, and a micro-discursive or "bottom-up" model in which the text imposes influence and significance on readers—though he questions the reality of an ideal reader willing to actualise a book's potential meaning (29, 44, 55). My analysis of early New Zealand-set children's fiction acknowledges both these models, considering ways in which texts rely upon an assumed world view shared by readers and ways in which texts endeavour to instruct readers in certain values and beliefs. However, pre-1917 readers' understanding of ideological formations in these texts and the influence of this material on individual lives is in most cases beyond my power to discover. The best I can offer, therefore, is a conclusion in the form of a personal re-interpretation, a "creative construction" of the texts' "possible meaning" to their intended audience.

Early New Zealand Children's Fiction: Major Criticism to Date

The first critical survey of early New Zealand children's literature, J.B. Ringer's *Young Emigrants*, was self-published in Hamilton in 1980. An expansion of the essay "Emigrants, Elves and Earnestness: Some Early New Zealand Juvenile Fiction (1833-1917)," which appeared in

⁶ Examples are contained in the commentaries edited by Peter Hunt.

Landfall in 1979, this work is an annotated bibliography which suggests a relationship between the texts and historical trends in New Zealand society. Gilderdale's *A Sea Change* (1982) is the first full-length history of the nation's children's literature and discusses trends and themes in New Zealand children's fiction between 1833 and 1978 on a genre-by-genre basis, suggesting that children's literature offers a different though not less important perspective on New Zealand's societal changes from historical documentation: "Less committed to historical and geographical exactness it may concentrate on precision of attitude and emotion and . . . will illuminate that period with flashes of insight" (2). Gilderdale followed *A Sea Change* with an essay on "Children's Literature" in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English* (1998). The focus of this work is chronological, although room is made for a discussion of emergent themes and literary quality.

The balance of work published to date in this field comprises Gilderdale's chapters on New Zealand children's literature in *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History* (1995) and *Literature for Children and Young Adults about Oceania* (1996), Ruth Ensor's 1968 bibliographical exercise *The Treatment of the Maori in Fiction*, and essays by Maurice Saxby, Jill McLaren, Margaret Mahy, Barbara Spiers, Elsie Locke, Sydney Melbourne, Marcie Muir, and Claudia Marquis on aspects of historical New Zealand children's fiction. Two dissertations commenting on some of my primary texts are Joan C. Gries' "An Outline of Prose Fiction in New Zealand" (1951) and Vaughan Yarwood's "Shibboleth of Empire: Attitudes to Empire in New Zealand Writing: 1890-1930" (1982). There exist some critical commentaries on *The Greenstone Door* and a number of publications concerning the works of Jules Verne, G.A. Henty, W.H.G. Kingston, Bessie Marchant, and Lady Barker (including Gilderdale's 1996 biography, *The Seven Lives of Lady Barker*).

An Overview of Dissertation Content

My thesis enlarges upon the work of Ringer and Gilderdale in breadth and depth. I analyse five additional full-length works: Anthony

Trollope's *Australia and New Zealand*, Mrs George Cupples' *The Redfords: an Emigrant Story* (1886), Eleanor Stredder's *Doing and Daring: a New Zealand Story* (1899), Bessie Marchant's *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* (1907), and Herman Foston's *In the Bell-Bird's Lair* (1911).⁷ I also discuss some extra stories by Lady Barker.

I see early New Zealand-set children's fiction as contributing towards the wider corpus of postcolonial literature by extending a particular discourse or semiotic field. Tropes and themes are repeated intertextually throughout these texts, reflecting what Zornado terms the "dominant ideology" or "dominant culture" of their time of writing (xvi). Frederic Jameson terms this the "political unconscious": ". . . the repressed and buried reality of . . . fundamental history" which can be analysed by "the unmasking of cultural artifacts as socially symbolic acts" (20). Jameson argues that "the culture or 'objective spirit' of a given period is an environment peopled . . . with those narrative unities of a socially symbolic type" (185).

Writing of Orientalist discourse, Edward Said calls this unity a "strategic formation," being "the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, and even textual genres, acquire mass, density and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large" (20). Terry Goldie terms representation of the indigene in postcolonial writing "semiotic reproduction," a process "in which each textual image refers back to those offered before" by way of certain "standard commodities" (6). These standard commodities include emphases on nature, sexuality, violence, orality, mysticism, and the prehistoric (17), all of which appear frequently throughout colonial period New Zealand-set juvenile fiction.

The first three chapters of this dissertation discuss ideological assumptions about indigenous peoples to be found in this literature. Chapters One and Two draw upon the work of Goldie to discuss the

⁷ Omission of these texts by Ringer and Gilderdale reflects difficulties in obtaining access to material. Some of these titles appear in Gilderdale's bibliography to *A Sea Change*, asterisked as texts she has heard of but not sighted. I was alerted to the Marchant text by a comment in Judith Rowbotham's *Good Girls Make Good Wives: Guidance for Girls in Victorian Fiction*.

desire of the pakeha writer and reader to “indigenise,” that is, to identify as colonials who belong in and fully possess a new land. Chapter One discusses “indigenisation through temptation,” which is achieved through concentrated identification with the natural landscape and its welcoming indigenous inhabitants. Chapter Two concentrates on the more negative “indigenisation through fear,” expressed in recurrent themes and tropes of racial and moral degeneration, violence and cannibalism, the absence of natives within texts, and native land dispossession. Chapter Three discusses ways in which this literature touches on the theme of miscegenation (intermarriage or sexual relationships between Maori and pakeha).

Remaining thesis chapters focus on the values these texts prescribe for European readers. Chapter Four discusses this literature as the product and perpetuation of a middle-class ethos, demonstrating how it focuses attention upon the middle-class emigrant, family, and home, and examining the attitudes it displays towards lower-class characters. Chapter Five discusses the evangelical ethos supporting these values, analysing references to religious observance, moral behaviour, and popular movements for social purity. Chapter Six draws upon a cross-section of scholarship in the gender criticism of children’s literature to show how these works were intended both to shape desirable male and female behaviour in readers and to challenge traditional gender expectations. Chapter Seven details how the imperial messages of the texts uphold or reform the ideals of the British Empire.

Chapters are not exclusive; some material overlaps, as is unavoidable in a discussion of intertextually repetitive tropes and themes. The overall aim of this dissertation is to explore, through an in-depth discussion of a number of texts, meaning in the service of power—the force and weight of the ideological messages contained in New Zealand-set children’s fiction published between 1862 and 1917.

CHAPTER ONE

BELONGING AND POSSESSING:

The Colonial Quest for Indigenisation

But what [children's literature] do we provide that is really our own? For our first hundred years we can say bluntly, very little and very poor fare. . . . No one can write from a sense of national identity until that identity is truly established. (Elsie Locke, "Book Trails" 94)

Indigenisation via Temptation

New Zealand-set children's fiction of the colonial period supplied a ready market in the home country, providing British readers with exotic entertainment and education about settler life as well as with comforting justifications for the imperial colonising mission. Most of the texts examined here were directed towards this larger British audience first and foremost and the smaller colonial readership second. It is interesting, therefore, to discover the importance accorded by many of them to an awareness of a distinctively New Zealand or "colonial" identity.

The dislocation and (in many cases) irreversibility of the emigration process engendered understandable feelings of cultural insecurity for pakeha settlers. Until the 1880s Maori were generally known as "natives" or "New Zealanders" while Europeans referred to themselves as "white inhabitants"—as though, as Sidney Baker has observed, "they had no stable claim to belong to New Zealand" (17). Baker lists the earliest example of a white man being termed a "New Zealander" as 1879, and suggests that the term "native" was not applied to pakeha until the 1890s (17).

The ensuing quest for a sense of permanent pakeha tenure and

selfhood in New Zealand is clearly reflected in juvenile literature of this period, with its young protagonists' development into "colonials" used to demonstrate ideologies of the colony as a satellite of the Empire, faithful yet unique. The texts aim to inculcate an understanding of the New Zealander as an obedient child of Mother England—incontrovertibly British, though somewhat differently so. When Sydney Bartlett of H.C. Storer's *The Boy Settler* (1907) suffers doubts about his identity upon emigrating, he comforts himself by quoting lines from Shakespeare (*Richard II*. 1.3.306-09) which he has learned at school:

Then England's ground, farewell: Sweet soil, adieu,
 My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!
 Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,
 Though banished, yet a true-born Englishman. (98).

Just as the heroes of nineteenth-century New Zealand adult literature are respectable gentlefolk, never egalitarian or anti-English (Phillips, "Musings" 524), so juvenile literature presents colonial difference via a series of exotic adventures appealing to the idealistic yet respectable young emigrants with whom the British government wished to populate the colony. Young heroes' escapades—encountering natives, taming land, mustering, hunting, fire-fighting—offer both colourful lures to emigration and minimal threats to British hegemony.

In this context the literary trope of indigenisation emerges as a prime ideological instrument for establishing a white colonial identity which was unique, respectable, loyal, and as securely connected to the land as the pre-existing population of brown New Zealanders. Terry Goldie defines indigenisation as a process whereby white colonisers identify with a new land by writing about its landscape and indigenous occupants. A European not wishing to see himself as alien in a new country can choose either to reject, exclude, and replace the native Other or indigene, in a process known as indigenisation via fear, or to incorporate him, in a process which has been termed indigenisation via

temptation (Goldie 2, 12-13). Indigenisation by fear scenarios suggest various justifications for colonial violence or race eradication; examples of these in New Zealand-set junior colonial fiction will be examined in Chapter Two of this dissertation. The current chapter will discuss the ideologies inherent in non-violent indigenisation by temptation scenarios, which allow a European to assimilate, include, or “acquire” the indigene without ever having to abandon his white self (Goldie 214).

Early children’s texts set in New Zealand express multiple instances of pakeha desire to indigenise—to know, possess, and dominate the new land and its native inhabitants. These instances serve to plot points of integration, locations at which young *emigrants* can move towards self-perception as young *immigrants*. Youngsters in *The Redfords* begin life in Otago feeling “upside-down” and “opposite Old England” (53); the novel reveals their journey to selfhood as established colonials. Not only does this process assume a critical significance to writers (and readers) seeking to overcome “feelings of alienation and the sentimental pull of the English home” by securing their fictional characters to a new-formed colonial identity (Phillips, “Musings” 528), it also conveys “meaning in the service of power” by incontrovertibly establishing the colonial protagonist as the new native, possessor and master of the land.

Ideological formations in early New Zealand-set children’s fiction are, like those in the wider corpus of postcolonial literature, defined and reinforced by reproduction through an extended intertextuality (Goldie 6), and the texts examined here repeatedly recycle familiar themes and topoi related to indigenisation. Gilderdale notes that this country’s juvenile colonial fiction is preoccupied with twin themes: encounter with Maori and encounter with the land itself (see Barley 1-3). The former reflects the “idea expressed by the cultural boosters of the 1890s . . . that any distinctive New Zealand cultural identity could be based in some way upon the Maori” (Phillips, “Musings” 527). Throughout centuries of Eurocentric fictional and non-fictional travel writing the indigene has been imaged as the “Natural,” a child of Nature, “autochthonoi,” and

intimately associated with land (Goldie 1). Unsurprisingly, therefore, the majority of texts examined here forge close links between the New Zealand landscape and the Maori, frequently providing pakeha protagonists with journeys through bush to a pa (fortified settlement), accompanied by an indigenous friend or guide who, like the “Africanist” presence or persona found in American literature, functions as a “surrogate and enabler” for the white protagonist in an unfamiliar environment (Morrison 6, 51). These Maori characters are usually rapidly milked of their local knowledge and exit the text after symbolically passing on the mantle of indigeneity to their white successors. Other texts establish the protagonist as engaged in a personal encounter with the landscape, often assisted by a pakeha “old colonist” figure; such narratives frequently exaggerate the putative differences between the new country and the old, the “new chums” and their former British selves.

Common to both types of narrative is a preoccupation with the land. New Zealand’s “distinctive and inherently dangerous” landscape and climate offer children’s fiction authors “specific and unpredictable dangers from volcanic and tectonic forces, as well as general dangers from exposure, accident, drowning, and disorientation, which they can choose to draw on for their power” (Hebley 9). Thus the heroes of early New Zealand-set children’s fiction repeatedly traverse threatening, mysterious landscapes of bush, river, or sea in quest-like journeys which imply a symbolic as well as a practical purpose. Pakeha characters who nearly drown, become lost in bush, or are captured by hostile tribes are rescued in episodes of symbolic psychological rebirth; at the same time they learn survival skills, physical and moral resourcefulness, surveying or map-reading skills, and awareness of the land’s future commercial uses, thus establishing a sense of colonial acquisition. Some of these texts openly assert this hegemonic imperative of indigenisation while others—at least in theory—attempt to adopt an assimilationist argument which ostensibly rejects the logic of white conquest.

The Indigenising Journey

Distant Homes contains an indigenising journey which became a prototype scenario for much settler fiction to follow. Here, fourteen-year-old Tom Graham treks from Nelson to Christchurch through bush, including a kauri forest (the novel is not noted for its geographical accuracy), accompanied by his father and Maori guides, who teach him methods of understanding and subduing his new terrain, such as crossing a river with ropes and constructing a fern tent. En route the group stays overnight at a pa. This journey is, to use Mary Louise Pratt's terminology, an "anti-conquest strategy" experienced in a "contact zone." Pratt defines anti-conquest strategies as seemingly innocuous exploration narratives which "seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony," disguising the fact that they are really apologies for acquisition, and contact zones as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (7, 4). It has been suggested that while South Pacific juvenile settler romances do not actually take place in "contact zones," being set some fifty years or more after the onset of colonisation, "even at this stage of the Empire's development the negotiation between the colonizing and the colonized is viewed by the metropolitan writer as if it were a first encounter" (Marquis 54). Ostensibly the Graham family are harmless travellers, at most harbingers of the pax Britannica, yet they rapidly assert European control and authority over the local indigenous population. Pratt notes the readiness of indigenes to comply in these anti-conquest narratives, eagerly laying open their country to the acquisitive eyes of the arrivant: "A 'contact' perspective . . . treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and 'travelees,' not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practises, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power" (7).

Thus Captain Graham and his son's indigenisation journey is soon reflected favourably upon them as chiefs from the local tribe visit the Graham homestead with promises of "*tabu*" (sacredness) and protection: "Wife of the good captain, we welcome you to our country; we shall call you mother, and be unto you as sons. Bid us serve you, and we will do it, even as a child obeys his parent" (83).

Here the children of Nature reverence Mother England. Mrs Graham represents Queen Victoria in this metaphor of adoption, which serves to efface or disguise the violent and appropriative excesses of colonisation. These Maori voluntarily locate themselves as subordinate to powerful whites, acknowledging the English Grahams as their all-wise and benevolent parents and themselves as ignorant, unruly children who must learn, obey, be manipulated. In this manner the Grahams are integrated into their new land and the local tribe, which accepts their presence and authority and shields them from hostilities. The Grahams appear to assimilate with Maori while actually asserting imperial hegemony.

So do pakeha in *Holmwood, or the New Zealand Settler*, who eagerly interact at the contact-zone, being as keen to follow their guides into the bush as the natives are to lead them. When local chief Toi Korro offers to show Peter, servant to the pioneer Parry family, a shortcut home, the lad replies, "To be sure; you know more of the country than I do . . . so I'll go the way you say is the best" (5). In the guise of native tracker, Toi Korro later leads all the Parrys, by reading each leaf and footprint, to the hostile tribe who have kidnapped their maid and daughter. As identification with the natural landscape is the only area in which Maori is posited as superior to pakeha in this text, the Parrys are happy to submit to Toi Korro's judgement in points of travel etiquette because secure in their own domination in all other matters.

Amongst the Maoris' hero, sixteen-year-old Jack Stanley, undergoes an elaborate indigenisation quest on his journey through North Island bush. Jack and his settler companion Bernard treat their first exposure to the landscape rather like a game. Despite losing their way

and sleeping rough they are in high spirits, “like two schoolboys playing at ‘Robinson Crusoe’” (93). However the Crusoe game is not permitted to continue too long, and the lads soon fall in with Colonel Bradshaw, an old identity who chaperones their journey and provides them with a wealth of textbook information on racial superiority and the inevitable fall of Maori inferiors before such as themselves. Bradshaw has an entourage of native attendants, but in this text Maori guides are a necessary evil against whom the white settlers must constantly strive to prove themselves vigilant and dominant; one (a fellow suspected from the start for his dark, shifty looks) kidnaps Jack.

In *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* the scenario of native guide is reduced to the situation of paid hireling—almost, of traitor. A police party hunting a murderous Maori follows a tracker who knew “every bush road and short trail from sea to sea, and for forty miles in either direction, and he was disposed to get good commercial value for his knowledge” (280). He also knows he will have to flee once Tuniri is found, for “plenty of his tribe . . . would be swift to avenge the betrayal” (280). This tracker offers more than an instance of commercial reciprocity with pakeha, however; he also provides an indigenisation adventure for hero Karr Gwynne, a city banker who must come to grips with the bush before marrying Margaret, the text’s bush-girl heroine.

The life of Cedric Tregarthen in *The Greenstone Door* (1914) is a continuous indigenisation experience enacted amidst a natural landscape which “subtly pervades the whole book, influencing the characters and shaping their actions” (Gries 86). As a toddler Cedric becomes lost amid fern, an enveloping environment which symbolises his removal from the old British civilisation. Fostered by the pakeha Maori⁸ trader Purcell and protected under the title of “Little Finger” of Chief Te Waharoa, Cedric grows up in a pa, immersed as much in Maori language and culture as in a landscape dominated by “the great bulk” of Mount Pirongia (31). At one point Cedric professes close identification with the indigene (“the

⁸ The term pakeha Maori was applied to early white colonists, whalers, or traders who attached themselves to a local Maori tribe.

Maori was nearer to my heart than the pakeha,” 155) though at other moments finds it difficult to determine which race has the greater claim upon his loyalty. Appropriately, then, he finds himself imprisoned throughout most of the New Zealand Wars, rendered physically as well as psychologically incapable of taking sides. Cedric is able to identify with either Maori or pakeha points of view (though always retaining a belief in his own racial and cultural dominance) and his indigenisation journey seeks to coalesce these sometimes conflicting perspectives. Enervated after three years in Auckland’s pakeha society Cedric returns to Matakiki via a long bush tramp in which his fragmented self-identity is confirmed:

I wanted to be alone with myself—that new other self which had sprung into prominence from some unsuspected depth or shallow of my nature . . . I would have it out with him in the wide silent spaces of Nature. . . . I steered by the stars, by the beckoning summit of Pirongia, and by the knowledge picked up from the natives of the direction of the ancient ways. . . . And as my body grew in health, my mind gained in sanity. (239)

The natural landscape, which Cedric’s knowledge of Maori culture enables him to penetrate, imparts a measure of self and nationhood. Yet even this is not wholly sufficient, and Cedric’s inner battle is played out in grander scale at the Battle of Orakau, where Maori are presented as noble savages who die so that pakeha can inherit their land. While Cedric feels that pakeha are the superior leaders, those sacrificing their lives for this vision include his dear Maori friends and relations.

With such conflicting claims upon his loyalty Cedric’s descent into madness becomes credible, and it is during this period of cognitive dissonance that Cedric indigenises to the fullest extent. Here again landscape nurtures and heals, as Cedric goes “bush” in a setting once again dominated by Pirongia, living in a cave and sleeping wild like “a creature of the woods and mountains” (312). Through the device of temporary insanity Cedric is permitted to act irrationally, casting aside

European civilisation and identifying completely with the New Zealand landscape—becoming, in effect, a savage. However he never degenerates to a level with which a pakeha reader could not identify but always retains a hazy notion of his western cultural superiority, which is gradually strengthened as his sweetheart Helenora supplies him with picnic dainties and quotations from Wordsworth and Schiller. After nine months' isolation, a symbolically significant duration suggesting the human gestation period, Cedric's reason returns and, his indigenisation complete, he begins life anew as the superior white "Maorilander" of the future. This is a straightforward enough process, considering that the significant brown claimants to New Zealand leadership have by now all been killed off. Moreover, although non-participation in war connotes non-acquisition of the spoils, at the novel's end prosperous Cedric is apparently grazing sheep on the once-bloody heights of Tekuma pa. Thus this text which ostensibly argues assimilationist theories ultimately supports white hegemony.

Sleeping with the Enemy: "Night at the Pa" and Captivity Narratives

An important component in these indigenisation treks is the hero's night at the pa, a specific style of settler adventure symbolising formal penetration into indigenous culture. Like many of his literary successors, Tom Graham of *Distant Homes* objects to the native gluttony, smoky whare (huts), and "ugly and disgusting idols" he witnesses at his pa, but he participates in games with the Maori boys cheerfully enough and of hangi (earth-oven) food, eaten with his fingers, Tom declares "he never tasted anything so good in his life" (48, 47). The young Parrys in *Holmwood* participate in a hangi at Toi Korro's pa with a goodwill approaching actual relish. When Sydney Bartlett in *The Boy Settler* becomes lost in thick bush he is welcomed into a kainga (village), where he is offered a meal in the chief's own whare by a hospitable community of women and children. All males in the village are absent at a tangi

(funeral), enabling Sydney to act the part of white explorer free of challenge and even briefly to become an honorary chief. The pa visit allows fictional heroes to experience native life without ever having to abandon their superior British selves.

Other characters are thrust into the pa experience against their wills. Captivity narratives were a popular literary form in the colonial era, offering the British reader exotic thrills at a safe remove. Kingston's *Holmwood* and *Waihoura* show settler families recovering children who have been kidnapped by a hostile tribe. Verne spices *Among the Cannibals* by making savage Chief Kai-Koumou imprison the white protagonists. Just when the men fear death and consumption by cannibals and the women dread an even worse fate, the party is rescued by its European friends. However, of these characters only the French geographer Paganel, who undergoes an isolated captivity at a rival pa, appears actually attracted to Maori culture; Paganel is welcomed as a chief, due to his possession of such wonders as spectacles and a telescope, and receives a moko (tattoo). Although Cedric Tregarthen of *The Greenstone Door* spends much of his life in a Maori village, he is at one point "captured" by Te Huata "the Cannibal Chief" and threatened with death. Rescued by Maori prince Rangiora, Cedric emerges doubly determined to usher in a new colonial order of pakeha dominated peace.

Amongst the Maoris' Jack Stanley spends an uncomfortable night at a "pah," little dreaming he will soon be imprisoned within what he considers its nauseatingly dirty environment. Disregarding Bradshaw's advice, Jack openly ridicules the community's "horrible old object" of a tohunga (priest), and desecrates tapu (sacredness) by disturbing a pile of "dreadful old rubbish," which just happens to be a chief's burial site. Upon attempting to continue his journey he is abducted, stripped, bound, starved, beaten, spat upon, and forced to labour in a potato plantation to the rhythm of the tohunga's taunts. The purpose of this survival narrative incident, placed midway in the evangelistic framing plot of *Amongst the Maoris*, is to humble Jack and teach him that arrogance and vengeance are vices unbecoming a Christian gentleman. Marryat also clearly

attempts to generate sympathy and understanding for the plight of the colonised Maori. Jack himself comes close to being colonised, with his British culture mocked and displaced by a set of alien values expressed in an unknown tongue. He is renamed (ironically, for this youth paranoid about cleanliness, tastes, and odours, the appellation is “Dirt”), reclothed (in fact unclothed), and made to assume a subordinate position to a foreign master. Marryat’s work resonates with such ironic touches (Marquis 57), and alternates between sending up and supporting Jack Stanley’s fastidiousness, a trait reflecting his innate sense of civilised British superiority.

Such episodes can be read as providing a seemingly innocent “reciprocal vision” of the kind noted by Pratt, “. . . parodic reversals of Eurocentered power relations and cultural norms” (82) which deflect the reality of imperial hegemony. They also provide a thorough indigenisation experience, albeit one performed against Jack’s will. Although the experience is poetic justice for the arrogant immigrant boy, like the Crusoe bush game it is not permitted to continue indefinitely. Just as Jack is about to suffer the ultimate irreversible humiliation of being himself tattooed into a “horrible ol’ object” (156) his English friends arrive to rescue him. This is a classic example of the manner in which

. . . survival literature furnished a “safe” context for staging alternate, relativizing, and taboo configurations of intercultural contact: Europeans enslaved by non-Europeans, Europeans assimilating to non-European societies, and Europeans confounding new transracial social orders. . . . the very existence of a text presupposed the imperially correct outcome: the survivor survived, and sought reintegration into the home society. The tale was always told from the viewpoint of the European who returned. (Pratt 87)

Marquis notes that Jack's imprisonment comes close to figuring Maori resistance to English power, but despite these "fascinating inversions with which Marryat plays" the story is full of "imperialist failure to acknowledge the Other" and the overwhelming message of the text is that "frightening disorder . . . is identified in and by the savage" (57). Thus the narrative emphasises the privations and miseries, rather than the pleasures and freedoms, of Maori culture. While the experience is a necessary precursor to Jack's indigenisation, in case the life of a natural savage should actually prove appealing to him the episode is neatly curtailed and its allure refuted before the point of no return.

In H. A. Forde's *Across Two Seas* (1894) itinerant Maori pilfer items from Golden Grove, the Vaughan family's settler homestead, including the youngest child, Daisy. Clad by Maori women in "native dress, or rather undress," Daisy is temporarily turned into a "baby Maori . . . the face already browned by dirt and exposure" (131). Later in the novel threatening Maori warriors visit Golden Grove and one attempts to pierce the ear of ten-year-old Jack (the family are most shocked to find him no unwilling participant). The indigene in *Across Two Seas* attempts to symbolically "colonise" the pakeha children Daisy and Jack with native dress and adornment. The attempts are not permitted to succeed: Daisy's Aryan colouring identifies her in spite of her disguise⁹ and Jack's elders scold him out of his folly. Such "cultural cross-dressing figures the seductive horror of 'going native'" (Marquis 62), and is therefore promptly squelched by authoritarian white adults who reiterate the imperative of pakeha domination and indigenous subordination. However Daisy's and Jack's experiences provide safe, temporary, excursions into indigenous culture and contribute to an indigenisation process whereby the Vaughan children are permanently integrated into their adopted land.

⁹ As in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles*, where Bruce, hiding in a whare, is shown not to have really "gone native" because artificial darkening of his skin and hair cannot extinguish his European colouring. His sister would have "known him anywhere despite the disguise" (227).

These episodes of Europeans being received by Maori inhabitants, whether they are welcomed by friendly natives or forced to resemble more threatening natives, provide the reader with powerful indigenisation messages.

Friends, Maidens, Enablers

Some texts feature Maori characters who are more than guides but who befriend pakeha, actively assisting or “enabling” their indigenisation, and even saving their lives. Goldie notes how a bond of friendship with the indigene can serve as a catalyst for the white’s indigenisation; Gilderdale mentions the importance of the pakeha/Maori friendship theme in colonial junior fiction (Goldie 22; Barley 6). Examples are seen in *Amongst the Maoris*, in the Christian slave Marara who, along with the tohunga’s daughter Yuata, supplies imprisoned Jack Stanley with food and clothing and helps him to escape. At one point Marara even gives up his only garment (a flax mat) to cover Jack’s nakedness, drawing Jack physically closer into the world of the Maori than he has ever been before.

In *Doing and Daring* a Maori father and son provide opportunities for the indigenisation of fifteen-year-old settler Edwin Lee, a process which begins when Edwin rides with Chief Nga-Hepe on his horse into the Waikato thermal district, thus coming into close physical contact with the “lord of the soil” (20). As they pass each pa site, Nga-Hepe initiates Edwin into the mysteries of the indigenous past by reciting legends, religious rites, and past wars. Edwin gains a rapid education in Maori culture—a way of life this novel depicts by the standard commodity of historicity as a sign of the past, rapidly disappearing (see Said 190, Goldie 17). Soon after gaining this potted cultural history Edwin proves he can conquer the landscape by rescuing drowning sailors from the surf, uncovering homes buried by the Tarawera eruption, and reclaiming a sacred hill—or at least forcing Nga-Hepe’s son Whero to “unmake” the tapu.

Whero is an engaging figure, the first Maori boy to appear as a major character in a children's novel. He is never permitted to steal centre stage from Edwin, however, but instead functions as a foil highlighting Edwin's superior British qualities and as a gateway allowing Edwin possession of the land. Whero, repeatedly symbolised by animal imagery, functions by instinct and can track his way unerringly. Being a physical child as well as the idealised "child of Nature," Whero makes the perfect indigenous "enabler" for a pakeha hero. Just as importantly, Whero becomes one with his canoe. The canoe in postcolonial literature represents indigenous technology not as artifice but as nature, the "canoe as autochthonous"; it "provides the white characters with an entry into the symbolic power of Nature . . . the white in the canoe is clearly 'entering' the nature which belongs to the [indigene]" (Goldie 21, 22). Thus the extended episode where Whero paddles Edwin down-river in his canoe signifies Edwin's most formal and significant penetration into the landscape. Edwin, concealed in the bottom of Whero's canoe, blends into oneness with the indigenous emblem of Nature, and with his adopted land.

The Maori boy George in H. Louisa Bedford's *Under One Standard* (1916), functions similarly to Whero as vehicle for a pakeha boy's indigenisation. Signified as the natural, George acts as a physical deliverer by saving settler David Copeland's life in a rock-climbing incident. Later he guides David to rescue Folkes, a surveyor imprisoned by a hostile tribe, through a seemingly impenetrable landscape of ". . . tangled bush and fern far higher than his head . . . thick undergrowth . . . swampy ground, where not unfrequently they sank in to their knees or rolled over on some mossy boulder" (153-4). The pair edge along a tree trunk over a river's "whirling torrent":

George threw a backward glance. "Follow?" he said, interrogation in his voice.

“Yes,” said David, knowing, as he said it, that one false step would hurl him into the foaming river below.

(154)

To David this is a struggle through terrain which threatens to engulf, harm, even kill him. To negotiate it he must trust George, who is quite comfortable amid the wildness: “. . . it seemed as if George wriggled his way through the tangle with the swiftness and ease of a snake” (154). The snake metaphor suggests the general view of Maori as held by pakeha in this novel—as a tricky and dangerous if not downright evil animal—and David’s entry into the new land is made all the more difficult by the fact that until now he too has held “nigger” George in suspicion. Thus part of David’s initiation into what it is to be a colonial involves growing in tolerance of Maori even while retaining his white superiority, an assimilationist ideology which nevertheless leaves no doubt as to which party is to be master.

In punishment for his loyalty to pakeha culture, George is cast out of his tribe to live like “a hunted animal” in the bush, and—surprisingly, for this child of Nature—he loses his ability to survive in the wild, sickens, and dies, at the same time as David is matured, strengthened, and secured as a capable colonist. Thus Maori gives place to pakeha and superior white David becomes the “native” possessor of a landscape he no longer finds alien.

George not only guides David in geographical understanding of the land but also urges him towards Christian repentance. George is such an exemplary follower of the western faith that he becomes an inappropriate vehicle for initiating David into Maori mysticism, another standard commodity employed in postcolonial representations of the indigene (Goldie 17). This task devolves to Sally, a native housekeeper. Sally and David observe a shower of shooting stars which Sally, in a mixture of indigenous mysticism and Biblical prophecy, declares a war omen from an angry God. While the text’s other white characters rubbish native “inborn superstition” (139), David cannot help feeling uneasy, and

returns home to find war indeed imminent.

The Greenstone Door contrasts pakeha Cedric with the young Maori chief Rangiora, largely to demonstrate that Cedric naturally acquires a superior knowledge of and connectedness with New Zealand. Although Rangiora saves Cedric from drowning, it is Cedric who reveals to Rangiora the landscape's secret places, a hidden track and cave. Cedric may be rationally sceptical of devilry and superstition, but he does profess himself touched by a kind of Maori mysticism as he surveys the curiously prophetic stalagmite formations in the cavern. He also finds himself unable to dismiss striking instances of tohungaism. Like *Under One Standard*, *The Greenstone Door* suggests that as part of their indigenisation process those with friendly leanings toward Maori enter into a state of heightened mysticism where premonitions are felt and understood.

Cedric scorns Rangiora's offer to "adopt" him into his princely household. Not only has Cedric already been adopted as the symbolic "Little Finger" of Chief Te Waharoa and as the foster son of Purcell, Te Waharoa's "Thumb" and a settler indigenised to the extent of happily fighting and dying for his adopted tribe, but: "So assured was I by this time of the greatness of my race that I could even smile at his proposition. 'Not so, Rangiora,' I said. 'Presently the Maori will be a part of the household of the pakeha'" (51).

Although the older narrator Cedric looks back on his younger self with a measure of irony here, this text nonetheless advocates assimilationist ideas while making clear which race is to be master in the New Zealand of the future. Throughout *The Greenstone Door* Cedric is presented as a supremely superior New Zealander due to his combination of whiteness *and* indigenisation. His claim to tangata whenua (person of the land, or native) status is unshakeable, though only truly confirmed after Rangiora, his rival for position of lord of the soil, is killed in the colonial wars. Like *Under One Standard*, *The Greenstone Door* argues for racial tolerance yet accepts extinction of its noblest savages.

Other texts present Maori girls as vehicles for pakeha indigenisation. While a children's text of this era will seldom permit its adolescent male protagonist to desire a Maori maiden physically it will frequently utilise her as a means to indigenisation via temptation. Her guidance or protection of the young settler suggests an element of salvation in the land, the idea of "restorative pastoral" similar to that found in adult colonial novels, whose heroes find contentment in the love—and land—of a dusky damsel (Goldie 16). The maiden's gender makes plain the asymmetrical colonialist power relationship to which these texts subscribe. She exists to help, serve, and submit.

In Kingston's *Holmwood* and *Waihoura* Maori maidens are inextricably linked to the white characters' indigenisation quests. Yeda, the Maori princess nursed to health and converted to Christianity by the Parrys in *Holmwood*, is young, pretty, assimilable, industrious, and pathetically grateful to the pakeha who have taken an interest in her. She and her companion Madu are daughters of Nature, at ease in the bush and possessed of exceptional physical stamina enabling them to penetrate it; these skills facilitate the rescue of captured settler girls. Similarly, the eponymous Maori princess of *Waihoura* whom the settling Pembertons heal and convert reciprocates by rescuing their children and maid, who have been kidnapped by hostile Chief Hemipo. In this novel the colonial landscape assumes a threatening symbolism reflecting the violent indigene (much is made of dense foliage which blocks out the sun) which is in turn countered by restorative landscape imagery associated with the redemptive Maori maiden. Lucy Pemberton makes the journey to her bush homestead accompanied by Waihoura who, as indigenous guide, educates Lucy in the names of native trees and birds. Thus begins Lucy's indigenisation process into her new land, which culminates in her abduction by and escape from Hemipo's warriors. Lucy, her younger brother Harry, and their maid Betsy are kidnapped by Hemipo, and enter a canoe which ". . . the Maories, well acquainted with the river, navigated dexterously [sic] amid the rocks and occasional rapids in their course. Now and then the water could be seen bubbling up on either side, and

sometimes leaping over the gunwale, and once or twice so much came in that Harry feared the canoe would be swamped" (107).

Fears of death by accident if not by murder intensify as the landscape and climate grow wilder. Amid torrential rain, wind, and "terrific peals" of thunder, lightning flashes illuminate "the savage features of Hemipo, who was sitting in the stern steering" (108). Kingston signifies the violent indigene by savage surroundings, a landscape so wild it threatens danger even to the savage himself. Hemipo's band is ultimately compelled to abandon the canoe and continue on foot, forcing their captives to penetrate a valley which narrows to a defile, "the sides, composed of wild rugged rocks with overhanging trees crowning their summits, rising precipitously on either hand" (111). Here the warriors pause with drawn clubs and the settlers prepare for death; however the party continues through the gorge to Hemipo's "pah," where the three are imprisoned.

Liberated after three days by Waihoura and her slave girl Manima, Lucy, Harry and Betsy slip out of "an opening in the stockade . . . so narrow that only slight people could have passed through it" (119). Waihoura leads them down a narrow zigzag cliff path to the river, then paddles them in a canoe downstream between high cliffs (120). Not being a male warrior, Waihoura cannot overcome Hemipo—this task is accomplished by her lover, the friendly rangatira (chief) Rahana, who functions as an extension of Waihoura's desires—but her instrumentality in the Pembertons' reclamation of their liberty and land is demonstrated in the most striking feature of this text's central tableaux of landscapes: their yonic imagery. Narrow chasms, overgrown rivers, secret paths, and hidden openings; this symbolism of the female body suggests a typical ideology of salvation and possession offered to the white colonist by the Maori maiden. The novel's pakeha characters pass through a symbolic defile in an image of penetration into the dark secrets of the New Zealand landscape (signified by Hemipo's pa) and are upon their return journey reborn into a peaceful countryside dominated by themselves, in which the landscape imagery has miraculously changed to incorporate symbols of

openness, cleansing and light: “. . . the neighbouring woods burst forth with a chorus of joyful song, the sky overhead was blue and pure, the waters bright and clear, and the grass and shrubs, which grew on the banks, sparkled with bright dewdrops” (126).

Kingston’s novels suggest that possession of a Maori maiden, not by miscegenation (which his texts frown upon) but by such seemingly disinterested means as friendship, conversion, or medical ministrations, is the pakeha family’s gateway to ownership of and belonging in the new land.

Cedric in *The Greenstone Door* also escapes his captivity under Tamihana through the offices of a Maori maiden, the charming Pepepe or “Butterfly,” who helps him slip out of a canoe under cover of darkness. Although Cedric’s knowledge of the local landscape is good, Pepepe’s is better. “I soon found,” he comments, “that Pepepe had chosen the spot for my attempt with judgement born of knowledge” (340). Such knowledge of the land and its helpful secrets is freely shared with white settlers by the Maori maidens throughout these texts.

Margaret in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* makes a similar indigenisation journey in the company of a wahine (female) guide as she seeks her ill brother Bruce in remote Whangarei bush country. Led by night over dangerous swamps and a sheer mountain precipice, Margaret leaves “herself blindly to the guidance of the Maori woman” Kushti (219). At the other end of this terrifying passage Bruce hides in a whare, having fled civilisation on suspicion of wrongdoing, and within this wild environment Kushti and her mother-in-law provide salvation and nurture for the pakeha heroes. While Margaret is characterised as a hardy, capable bush-girl—indeed she is specifically praised for having qualities of fearlessness and physical endurance befitting a Maori maiden (237)—she is too civilised not to require indigenous assistance to negotiate an unfamiliar landscape.

As befits their characterisation as relatively uncivilised, these Maori maidens operate with greater physical agency than the texts’ pakeha girls, albeit within limited spheres as vehicles of indigenisation

propelled by the desires and authority of the (predominantly male) pakeha coloniser. The liberties enjoyed by the Maori maiden compensate for the more restricted framework in which a pakeha heroine is compelled to operate and provide her with indigenisation, as it were, by proxy.

All the indigenes who assist pakeha in these texts are of blue blood, white appearance, or are converted Christians—or all three. Redemptive Maori maidens are invariably the daughters of rangatira or tohunga; charming Whero and saintly George are chiefs' sons. Rangiora is the noblest of them all, “a youth of such godlike descent that even his parents suffered extinguishment from his greatness” (46). Kushti is the blonde widow of a half-caste. Marara is Christian, fair-complexioned, untattooed, and possessed of “a more intelligent and pleasanter cast of countenance than most of those around him” (143). Waihoura is “much fairer than . . . any of her companions, scarcely darker, indeed, than a Spanish or Italian brunette” (19). These texts present a socially or racially “noble savage” as the one most receptive to and supportive of pakeha civilisation. This not only provides a good example to the indigenous rank and file, but ensures that pakeha characters are drawn to indigenes of similar class, intellects, morals, and physiques, thus preventing them stooping too far down the evolutionary scale in their quest for indigenisation. The presence of noble savages also serves to justify the extinction of more degenerate indigenes when necessary.

Pakeha and Land: Old and New Identities

While many texts utilise the Maori to facilitate pakeha indigenisation, others show settlers making unassisted encounters with the landscape. The versatile Vaughan family of *Across Two Seas* slash their way through miles of near-impenetrable bush to their North Auckland homestead, and before long the narrator can state: “Joscelyn and Betsy were complete bush girls; the blinding, pouring rain was a joke to them” (133). The Redfords likewise trudge for hours through “thick, thorny” though “beautiful” underwood to their Otago settlement (57-58).

Sydney Bartlett in *The Boy Settler* takes work on a riverboat which steams into surroundings evocative of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: ". . . the very heart of the country" where there is no sound, not a human habitation in sight, and where "Willows meeting overhead shut out the light" (134). This is far from a dark night of the soul for Sydney, however, as the absence of human habitations, either Maori or pakeha, suggests a land delightfully free for his own occupation and exploitation. Soon Sydney is revelling in his new environment: "He had always been fond of the country, and possessed a deep and reverent love of Nature" (153). The text makes much of the contrast between the utilitarian Liverpool residence of his youth—a square stone house in a "dreary garden enclosed by a high wall" (7)—and the wide New Zealand landscape. These environments clearly connote a lack of, and an opportunity for, social and personal development. The colonial life swiftly transforms Sydney from an insecure adolescent into a hero oozing "resourcefulness, individuality, and self-reliance" (307). Armed with only a bucket, axe, and colonial pluck, he saves his employer's homestead from fire, and this farm is later bequeathed to him, consolidating his decision to be a permanent settler. He declares that "here I must stop," because here "there are deeds to be done" (228-229).

Thus colonial identity in this fiction manifests itself in comparison with characters' former British selves, a process intrinsically tied to interaction with the landscape. During these journeys into the landscape a character's indigenisation is signalled by an increasing familiarity with the new flora and fauna (he or she may comment on birdsong, or its absence in thick bush, or investigate native plant life) and increasing sense of ease in the bush. Protagonists who wholeheartedly embrace the new life, land, and all its challenges are shown to be remoulded into characters more resourceful, dogged, earnest, adventuresome, adaptable, tolerant, and—possibly—less pretentious than before. Holcroft notes that "the Huckleberry Finn tradition is dispersed in our fiction . . . the resourcefulness in open country, and the delinquency" (44). While few heroes of New Zealand colonial children's fiction are

permitted to indulge in true Huck Finn-style delinquency, most experience a refreshing outdoors freedom which moulds them into better—and (as will be discussed in Chapter Four) usually wealthier—men.

Although Wilfrid Renshaw, the fifteen-year-old protagonist of G.A. Henty's *Maori and Settler* (1881), is not concerned with character improvement through indigenisation per se (like most of Henty's heroes he possesses an abundance of manliness and initiative from the start), his father undergoes moral and physical salvation after exposure to the bracing colonial environment. The responsibilities of taming and farming a raw land remould the impractical academic into a brawny, decisive new man—as Gunby has noted (59), a somewhat improbable development. Similar metamorphoses from mixed-up youth to brawny settler hero transform the protagonists of *In the Bell-Bird's Lair* and E. Simeon Elwell's *The Boy Colonists* (1878). The former text sees Edward Strangemuir turn from lonely failure to a successful community leader after a few years of working a Taranaki bush settlement and communing with its native birds. The latter text (an embellished autobiography) shows Ernest, a shy sixteen-year-old farm cadet with nary a shred of outdoors experience or worldly wisdom, overcoming the harsh Otago terrain and climate in effortless heroic fashion (at one point he single-handedly negotiates an unknown mountain range).

Immigrant characters are often assisted or enabled to penetrate the landscape by a white “old colonist” or “old identity” figure. He (most of these figures are older men who exude patriarchal authority) is not only the product of a fine British education but has attained familiarity with the local climate, topography, Maori language, and native customs and can function as an eminently respectable substitute for or double of the indigene. The “old identity” is vital to the new immigrant as a symbol of achieved desires, being master of an environment with which he has indigenised or “completely identified” (*Doing and Daring* 10). These works abound with such figures: Purcell in *The Greenstone Door*, Captain Graham of *Distant Homes*, Ottley in *Doing and Daring*, Parker

in *The Boy Settler*, Fritz of *Across Two Seas*, and the omniscient Colonel Bradshaw of *Amongst the Maoris* are only a few examples. Some texts include more than one old identity, each embodying a specific aspect of colonial identity; in *Distant Homes*, for example, Tom not only learns much from his knowledgeable papa (who can converse with and subdue Maori), but is also “adopted” by a New Zealand land agent, an authoritative pakeha with secure tenure in, and ability to dispense ownership of, land. Similarly David Copeland of *Under One Standard* soaks up the local wisdom dispensed by his mentor Folkes, but is later adopted by a man with actual colonial wealth, the landowning farmer Kempe.

Parallel to the old identity stands the figure of the learned scientist, botanist, or “herboriser,” who offers the new chum knowledge of the landscape both practical and theoretical. Pratt has analysed the importance of the naturalist or “herborizer” text which gained popularity from the mid-eighteenth century onwards as a “narrative of ‘anti-conquest,’ in which the naturalist naturalizes the bourgeois European’s own global presence and authority” (28). Scenarios of harmless botanists exclaiming over the curious wonders of Nature serve to disguise the fact that the newly-discovered flora may prove commercially lucrative, leading inevitably to land appropriation and the exploitation of natural resources. This is made clear in *Maori and Settler*, where hobby-botanists like Atherton and Renshaw eagerly lift forest specimens to sell in England for a tidy sum. The gentlemanly herboriser figure is an anti-conquest trope supporting the imperial mission; the naturalist presents a “utopian, innocent version of European global authority,” natural history itself being a form of global hegemony based on land and resource possession (Pratt 27-8, 39). He imposes order upon the threatening disorder of the bush (see Marquis 61). *Maori and Settler* goes on to present the comic innocence of Mr Renshaw, an amateur ethnologist whose bumbling investigations the local Maori tribe patiently endure, as, to use Pratt’s terms, “utterly benign and abstract” (38), thereby deflecting attention from the text’s real business: colonial land acquisition and

military subordination of the indigene. Juvenile colonial texts treating of indigenisation act as vehicles justifying or “naturalising” acts of land appropriation and European control, presenting characters’ identification with the New Zealand landscape and its indigenous occupants as innocuous rather than authoritative, inquisitive rather than acquisitive. In *Fairyland in New Zealand* geologist Dr von Rutter’s innocuous interaction with a “simple-minded” local tribe (who revere him as a chief or magician for his possession of matches and ability to reconstruct a moa skeleton) masks his foremost interest—minerals in the ground. The narrator of Lady Barker’s “Christmas Day in New Zealand” (1871) is more honest, pondering not only the beauty of a mountain “nook” overflowing with lush fern, but the “handsome fortune” this greenery would fetch in a London market (258).

The geographer and explorer Paganel in *Among the Cannibals* is both a harmless scientist and an authoritative old identity, guiding white travellers with superior navigational skills: “He managed with surprising cleverness in the darkness, choosing without hesitation paths almost invisible . . . He appeared able to distinguish the smallest objects in the profound obscurity” (136). Paganel’s mastery over the land is explained by the revelation that during a brief tribal captivity he has been received as a chief and given a full body moko (tattoo), including a “heraldic ‘kiwi’ with spread wings” (188), which functions as an outward symbol of indigenisation. At times brushwood threatens to impede the party’s progress: “. . . ferns . . . seem to second the Maoris in obstinately defending the ‘national soil’” (71). However the Europeans quickly overcome all such setbacks. At times they assert land discovery, for instance by penetrating kauri forests which we are told “the foot of man had never touched” (141). This is a significant assertion, and no proof for it is offered. Throughout this tale a European superiority over and right to control land shines supreme, as Paganel and his followers effortlessly cross dangerous terrain and manipulate natural or traditional resources (a thermal mountain, a cave, a canoe) to outwit Maori foes.

Pakeha and Water: Settlers Reborn

The colony's different and dangerous landscape clearly offered countless opportunities for settler characters to indigenise. Several novels structure the ultimate indigenisation experience around a water immersion, featuring a near-drowning episode from which the protagonist is rescued by a friend or sibling. In these symbolic baptismal experiences the hero bonds with and is reborn as a child of his or her new land, in accordance with the Christian understanding of the rite which asserts that a baptismal candidate's old self is symbolically buried in a watery grave and he now lives "resurrected" as new creation.

In *Amongst the Maoris* an unexpected dunking works in both the evangelical and indigenising senses for Jack Stanley. In a moment of characteristic impetuosity, Jack capsizes a canoe on the Waikato River, nearly drowns, and is rescued by his friend Bernard, who takes a near-fatal fever. The survival of both boys suggests a message of salvation and resurrection, intertwined with what Goldie terms "individuation," a phenomenon connected to indigenisation in which a "character gains a new awareness of self and of nationality through an excursion into the wilderness" (46). Jack is reborn into a newly critical and spiritual self-knowledge, no longer a selfish dilettante but a repentant Christian and capable colonial, a new man spiritual in the New World temporal. He reads his Bible with understanding and journeys away to ponder his sins alone in the bush (which he now negotiates with ease), clad in garments "dirty enough to ornament a Maori" (354). This last detail is significant, indicating the once-fastidious boy's new willingness to identify with even the least-liked aspects of nativeness. Although he returns to England at the novel's end (and Marquis points out that the south to north direction of his journeying is important in this regard, 55), Jack undergoes as complete an indigenisation experience as would be acceptable to the British reader of 1875, emerging as an upright son of the Empire who earns his living sketching (significantly) New Zealand landscapes.

The near-drowning trope occurs in prototype in *Distant Homes*, where the youngest member of the Graham family, Arthur or Aps, becomes lost in a forest and is then swept away in a river before being rescued by his siblings. Aps is no older than four in this episode, but these experiences immersing him within New Zealand Nature are significant, for when the older Graham sons enter the Church and the Navy it is Aps who will presumably follow his father's profession as colonial farmer. *Across Two Seas* repeats the pattern, with young twins Jack and Edgar Vaughan tumbling into the river near Golden Grove. Pulled out senseless by his siblings, Jack is revived to become a sturdy son of the Empire: he appears in illustration on the novel's spine, a stalwart settler hoisting a Union Jack on a flagstaff in the family garden. Similarly in *Six Little New Zealanders* the youngest Malcolm children come close to death in the Ngapapa River and are saved by their sister to emerge colder, wiser, and—most importantly—preserved for future leadership in the Dominion.

Margaret in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* not only rescues drowning children but undergoes the experience herself. Margaret, a rare instance of a female “old identity,” is a strong rower and swimmer who has few problems dominating her local landscape. However when she saves two small boys after a boating accident (the pair go on to learn all the outdoors settler skills they can) Margaret is hampered by her long skirts and must herself be rescued by her sister. Her brother Bruce also nearly drowns when saving a Maori baby from a swamp, a near-death experience which haunts his dreams: “. . . the creeping, black water, the horrible mud that sucked me down, down, down! Ah, I was close in sight of death then!” (229).

The swamp reappears in almost identical language in Peacocke's *Patricia-Pat* (1917), where ten-year-old Laurie paddles a raft onto a frog-pond, crying, “I'm Captain Cook discovering Australia . . . And this . . . is New Zealand . . .” (253-54). The imaginary location has symbolic significance, for just as Laurie reaches “New Zealand” he slips off the raft and is sucked down. Like Bruce, he cries in fright at memories of the

landscape's power: "I seem to feel the horrid stuff creeping up my legs now, an' every time I shut my eyes I can see water an' reeds an' mud, oceans an' oceans full of slimy mud" (267). His elders are less concerned: "What is a little extra mud to a boy? They revel in it" (264). The incident is seen to contribute towards a healthy knowledge of and appreciation for the child's environment—it is, in other words, an indigenisation adventure.

A dramatic instance of this trope occurs in *Doing and Daring*, where Edwin Lee attempts to rescue a drowning man and is himself swept away by the river current. Edwin is already a Christian, so the episode cannot signify a spiritual conversion in the manner of Jack Stanley; instead Edwin sheds his past self and is reborn a New Zealander, committed to building a white presence in the colony. It also consolidates his relationship with Whero (who for much of the novel has been the object of either his suspicions or his paternalism), though Edwin is never allowed to forget his role as harbinger of a morally superior culture.

While Whero does not save Edwin, two novels show Maori enabler figures rescuing pakeha from the water, thereby enhancing the motif's power as an indigenisation trope. In *The Redfords*, the settler child Lily tumbles from a boat and is saved by the family's Maori servant, who symbolically restores Lily to occupancy and mastery of a landscape which he himself will soon quit. *The Greenstone Door* reinforces the hegemony of the superior indigenised pakeha in the episode where the child Cedric becomes trapped underwater in a river and is rescued by his friend Rangiora. Through this act Cedric becomes incontrovertibly convinced of his Maori companion's noble character (though, like Edwin, he always retains the moral upper hand in their relationship) and he establishes a peace compact with Rangiora, suggestive of larger peace between their races. This pact of Tatau Pounamu or the Greenstone Door which, paradoxically, can be sealed only in blood, is the central symbol in a novel which has been described as "a fable of what it was to be a New Zealander" (see Butcher 89-100). In his quest to establish his New Zealand identity Cedric emphasises the

sacrificial nobility of his Maori friend even as he asserts his own perceived right to supplant him in the colony.

The Language of Appropriation

Like Cedric, most European characters in these texts attempt to maintain an appropriate cultural distance even whilst indigenising. This flexible positional superiority—a view which “puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the [indigene] without ever losing him the relative upper hand” (Said 7)—clearly created some dilemmas for colonial authors of junior fiction. Obviously, a straightforward method of indigenisation would be for characters to familiarise themselves with the native language and customs as soon as possible. Yet while the old identities in these novels can converse in Maori and frequently advise young emigrants to learn the language, few heroes wish to do so. The fluent Maori speaker Cedric Tregarthen is something of a rarity amongst them. Jack Stanley fails both in attitude and in ability at the task; *Under One Standard*'s David studies Maori with ill grace; and although the older teenage settlers in *Across Two Seas* agree to study Maori (along with German) for trade purposes, they soundly chide their younger brothers for engaging in cosy conversation with a party of visiting natives: “. . . you must not take to Maori English so kindly, or you will be forgetting your mother tongue” (157). Boys, apparently, must be watched lest they are tempted to “go native.” Girls could presumably be relied upon more naturally to abhor uncivilised behaviour, and it is the girl characters in these texts who are more often seen familiarising themselves with the Maori language, though usually only to better fulfil the civilising mission of teaching and preaching to the colonised. They learn Maori to dominate natives, not become their equals.

Conversely, pakeha characters in these texts may further their indigenisation processes by helping themselves to Maori names or terms, which they then display as tokens of indigeneity. English settlers in

Fairyland in New Zealand name their son Rangī and their home Rata Hall. Edward Strangemuir of *In the Bell-Bird's Lair* appropriates token signs of Maoriness, such as the pen-name “Rimu” and the ability to write with intimate knowledge about native flora and fauna. Undergoing a “colonial experience” in an isolated bush settlement secures his presumed tangata whenua status.

No Maori appear in J. Millar Thomson's *The Bush Boys of New Zealand, or Dinkums and Mac* (1905), which strikes today's reader as odd given that the book's opening words are “Tenakoto! Tenakoto! Tenakoto Katoa!” (“Good day! Good day! Good day to you all!”). The cover depicts a Maori boy and the word “Tenakoe!” (“Hello to you!”). The title suggests that by 1905 pakeha children could consider themselves as gladly welcomed New Zealanders, or even as indigenous if born here. Dinkums and Mac, the sons of Irish and Scottish immigrants, have appropriated elements of the Maori who have disappeared from their rural settlement. As “bush boys,” they function as Maori stand-ins. The story opens with Dinkums emitting “a whoop that would have done credit to a Maori on the war path” and effecting “a number of grotesque positions and hideous contortions that bore a remarkable resemblance to the Haka or war dance of the same dusky skinned race” (9). Dinkums and Mac similarly contort Maori words to form a type of hybrid language, turning “Taiho” into “Taisho” and substituting “giggie” for “kie-kie”. The MacLeans' homestead is named “Te Wharepuni” but is no tribal meeting house, rather the centre of an overwhelmingly pakeha milling and farming community. Thus the “ubi sunt” lament, defined by Goldie as a common trope of the standard commodity of historicity (the “inherent assumption that the essence of the culture and the community are in the past,” 159) rings clear in *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*: all that remains of New Zealand's former indigenous population is a faintly-remembered hybridised language. Throughout, this novel focuses on the beauties and dangers of the New Zealand landscape, which intrepid settlers and their bush boy sons must learn to conquer and thus possess. Dinkums and Mac have no trouble subduing their hostile, dangerous

landscape; from infancy their games have been of the rough, tough outdoor variety, while from old identity Whaler Joe they learn bush lore, survival, and hunting. This is the knowledge, Thomson suggests, which moulds colonial boys into the leaders this country requires.

In the urban New Zealand of Peacocke's novels Maori are represented by isolated references; in *Dicky, Knight-Errant* (1916) the name "Maori" is bestowed upon a dog. When a soldier (race unspecified) jokingly enquires whether Dicky might be a German spy, the boy replies, "Oh! I'm not that . . . I'm a New Zealander, and can only speak my own language" (127). The sentry, with much face-pulling and eye-rolling, challenges him to say, "Ka whawhai tonu! Ahè! Ahè! Ahè!" (footnoted as "The famous answer made by the Maori chieftains in the battle of Orakan [sic], to the English"), to which Dicky, seemingly affronted, answers, "I did not mean that I was a Maori." He manages a "Tenakoe" which gets him inside the camp; apparently by now no more is expected of a New Zealand boy. Like Thomson's *Bush Boys*, this text considers things Maori a legacy of the past: the soldier quotes from a history lesson. The name of the Auckland homestead Te Mata in Peacocke's *Patricia-Pat* is a similar anachronism, attracting postmen's jokes: "Tomato. Rum kind of name, isn't it?" (34).

Six Little New Zealanders also suggests in its very title that by 1917 pakeha children enjoyed a secure indigenised status. The Malcolm family are sure of their identity, which their escapades in the tussock country surrounding their uncles' Canterbury sheep station serve to confirm and support. Their integrated status within the occasionally treacherous landscape is symbolised by Jan Malcolm's mastery of the text's token Maori, mad or "wild" Tairoa. Jan has a knack for taming unruly animals, with which Tairoa, the "natural" indigene, is associated. Soon Tairoa is packed off to his people (in an unspecified location far away from the novel's action) and the unruly young Malcolms replace him as the natives or savages of the land. The sole reminder that Maori once dwelt there remains in the classic indigenisation strategy of the

quaint names bestowed upon the youngest Malcolm girls, Ngaire and Pipi.

Western Perspectives: the Art of Indigenisation

While all these texts are concerned with capturing the image of the colony through means of print and language, some of them also mention the parallel medium of art, frequently used by colonists to represent the knowability of a new land. Texts of colonialist discourse are deeply engaged in recording a European point of view through the eyes of what Pratt has termed the “seeing-man”—the European male protagonist of colonialist landscape discourse, “he whose imperial eyes . . . look out and possess” (7). John Berger has pointed out that the analogy between physical possession and ways of seeing reached its peak during the era of oil-painting, 1500-1900. In keeping with a period characterised by major European colonial expansion and new attitudes to property and exchange, painting reduced every subject, whether inanimate or human, to the status of objects for sale or purchase (Berger, et al. 83-85). *Distant Homes* records with amusement a colonial artist manipulating native superstitions in order to take chiefs’ portraits:

One old man would not be persuaded . . . he would be sure to die if the white man put his image upon a book. . . . The traveller laid his watch upon the ground and . . . [said] that it would stop moving if it was angry . . . the astonished man immediately sat down, saying he would do anything if the watch would only breathe again. (40)

This is a stock motif of colonialist discourse, and the scenario of a learned European who conquers simple-minded natives by wielding technological magic reappears in several texts examined here, including *Among the Cannibals* and *Across Two Seas*. In *Fairyland in New Zealand* the very process of portraiture inspires the native audience with an awe amounting to “terror” (25) as Dr von Rutter, after his performance

with the moa skeleton and matches, is free to make his sketches—take his own possession—of Maori.

Amongst the Maoris is dominated by the observations of Jack Stanley, the young man who not only observes with an artist's eye but desires to possess the objects of his gaze. His ownership of the comely slave Marara is initiated by Jack positioning the youth and "taking" his likeness. This is not a contact zone scenario, so Jack is not obliged to impress by magic tricks, but he must nevertheless respect a social protocol which prevents him from starting with Marara and force himself to "sketch the ugly old chief and his shrivelled wife first as a sort of powder, and take the good-looking young man afterwards as jam" (120). In *Amongst the Maoris*, printed thirteen years after *Distant Homes*, the taking of native likenesses has come to be viewed by the colonised not as a sacrilege but as an honour, with Maori colluding in their own symbolic capture. Marara soon willingly adopts a position of moral and physical servitude to Jack; at first Jack deems Marara his "companion," but Marara, "half understanding what was said, answered that he would be servant to the *Pakea*, and, upon the strength of the new bond between them, at once proposed carrying Jack Stanley's baggage" (172). Marara becomes a species of assimilated house-nigger, acquiescing in the viewpoint and behaviour of his white master; he looks on, "apparently amused," while Jack beats, bullies, and berates a fellow Maori guide (284).

While some indigenes in *Amongst the Maoris*—particularly the "vicious" tohunga and the shifty-eyed Karee—attempt to engage in visual reciprocity, it is the pakeha perspective which is shown to be natural and proper, part of the all-encompassing metaphor of colonialist expansion.

The Impossible Necessity

Phillips has suggested that Maori culture, mythology, and history was selectively used in colonial art and literature to "provide Pakeha settlers

with a New Zealand home in thought” (“Musings” 527). However as the above texts demonstrate, the indigenisation process need not necessarily require the presence of the indigene. While indigenisation in early New Zealand junior novels often required a response to the tangata whenua resident in the colony, equally often the indigene is viewed by pakeha author and characters simply as part of Nature, indistinct from the hero’s and writer’s perception of the country itself. Interaction between a pakeha immigrant and an alien landscape frequently fulfilled the task of creating a “colonial.” Neither does indigenisation in these texts necessarily arise from pakeha characters’ desire to identify with the indigene or the colonised land; frequently the literary indigenisation experience is undertaken against the characters’ wills, as in the “survival narratives” detailed above. Not all characters emerge from their adventures with a greater understanding of or tolerance for Maori, and those that do frequently have their assimilationist beliefs rendered unnecessary by the removal of a brown-skinned presence from the text.

What is demonstrated by these scenarios of young pakeha repetitively interacting with the local landscape or participating in things native is what Goldie has termed “the impossible necessity of becoming indigenous” (13). The process may be technically impossible, but the tensions of colonisation deemed it a necessity. Of New Zealand literature’s efforts towards an indigenisation process, Phillips comments:

It must be recognised that however thin and at times embarrassing was the implementation of this idea, the effort was based on a serious problem, and represented for a number of New Zealand intellectuals at the turn of the century a genuine effort to deal with cultural life in a new society. (“Musings” 528)

Despite the seeming impossibilities, by the end of the nineteenth century the idea of indigeneity had passed into general belief. In Webster’s 1898 *Dictionary* a “New Zealand native” was classified as “a British subject born in New Zealand, whether a white man or a Maori”

(Baker 18).

Be it accomplished by physical penetration into Nature, symbolic penetration into indigenous culture, or the indigene's image captured on paper and thereby possessed, the search for indigenisation via temptation in early New Zealand juvenile colonial fiction is an overwhelmingly popular quest, reflecting both the desire of colonisers for security and identity within an alien environment, and the desire of an imperial power to establish unquestioned authority and possession within its colonies. The colonial identity thus created is presented to young readers as a temptation devoutly to be pursued.

CHAPTER TWO

“BAD IMITATIONS OF OURSELVES”:

Images of Maori Violence, Dispossession, and Degeneration

“I mean to stay in this country. If it weren’t for those nasty brown natives, it would be a very tidy place.” (Forde, Across Two Seas 138)

Indigenisation via Fear

The quest for indigenisation led authors of early New Zealand-set children’s texts to employ a variety of literary strategies which denigrated or symbolically removed the colony’s indigenous occupants, thereby presenting New Zealand as a natural or rightful European possession. This is the process Goldie terms indigenisation via fear: a literary positioning of the indigene as an object of terror or distaste deserving of elimination, or as a “non-presence” which has already been eliminated. Indigenisation via temptation includes or acquires the indigene, but indigenisation via fear pointedly excludes him (Goldie 214). The fiction examined here abounds with themes of indigenous violence, racial degeneration, and land dispossession, which gain in mythic status with each intertextual repetition.

Ideas of race degeneration developed within the Eurocentric worldview in which nineteenth-century British colonisers were inculcated. By the time of the Enlightenment the term “race” had evolved from a Renaissance usage describing family lines to refer to perceived biological subdivisions of the human species (Hudson 248). The developments of scientific classificatory systems led by the eighteenth-century naturalist Linnaeus, which contributed to a “new planetary consciousness” informing the “basic element constructing modern

Eurocentrism,” divided humanity into four or five main “races,” in contrast to the multiple finer distinctions between varieties of mankind found throughout earlier travel and scientific literature (Pratt 15, Hudson 248-50). This shift, notes Hudson, coincided with “the general influence of imperialism and slavery” which “deprived non-European peoples of their national identities and made those differences less important to Europeans,” regarding native populations as commonly “savage” (251).

A contemporary and follower of Linnaeus, Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, was the first naturalist to make systematic use of the term “race” to denominate sub-groups of the species known as humanity—although his use of terminology was inconsistent, leading him to argue, confusingly, that very marked racial differences could be classified as a new “species” (Hudson 253-55). Buffon believed human difference altered according to environment, and his popular *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* (1749-1804) explained human racial variety by a process termed “degeneration,” suggesting that humankind was created of European appearance and that different skin colours and physical traits (the races) appeared in response to climate, diet, and customs. This degeneration culminated in the Hottentot, who was believed to be the antithesis of the European, physically, mentally, and morally: “Buffon regarded savages as stupid, lazy and undeveloped men” (Goodman 66).

An influential follower of Buffon, the anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, expanded Buffon’s theories into a classification of five racial varieties (Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malay), based on a broad continental division of humanity. His 1775 treatise “On the Natural Variety of Mankind” arrived at the monogenistic view that the original, superior and beautiful human form was created Caucasoid and that other races descended from this type in a degenerating hierarchy, with the Caucasian European as most attractive and least degenerate and the Ethiopian type as least attractive and most degenerate. This marked a contrast to the Enlightenment view of progressivist evolution, which saw mankind as a unified species in a progress of

gradual evolution towards civilisation and believed education could be used as a tool to produce enculturation in primitive races (Young 32, 46).

It has been suggested that neither Buffon nor Blumenbach originally intended to produce rigid racial classifications; Blumenbach in particular espoused the essential unity of humankind as a single species and considered classification of racial varieties as merely for convenience (see Montagu 62-63, 69). However by the nineteenth century degenerationist theories had gained significant currency in both popular and academic imaginations as scientific proof of a hierarchical classification of races, successive links in a divinely-ordered Great Chain of Being. The idea of separate “races” had by now assumed, for some users, the connotation of different “species.” While monogenists believed that humans of all races sprang from a single created (white) Adam, polygenists, on the other hand, argued a theory of separately created races—an idea of human varieties being separate, and therefore unequal, species.

This theological framework underwent modification following the publication of Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, after which scientists began to redefine the terminology for explaining racial difference from the divine ordering of estates to “natural selection.” The debate over single versus multiple creations was gradually replaced with the theory of a common anthropoid ancestor (see Montagu 33, Stocking 45). Darwin more specifically addressed the issue of human difference in *The Descent of Man* (1871), which drew upon the already widely-circulating anthropological theories of a racial hierarchy and of a naturally-determined cultural evolution via stages of savagery and barbarism to civilisation (Malchow 180, Stocking 113-14).

As the Victorian era progressed, determination of racial difference became an obsession: anthropologists eagerly highlighted anatomical dissimilarities between races, while under the newly-coined scientific discipline of ethnology comparative psychologists and phrenologists correlated indigenous peoples’ brain size and levels of cultural achievement, and social scientists examined linguistic and cultural

differences of human beings around the globe. Collectively these endeavours achieved “a practice of cultural politics” (Young 66), establishing a linguistic and imagistic lexicon in both popular and academic belief, within which the indigene became located as primitive or degenerated. Some ethnologists of the era, such as the French linguist Ernest Renan, believed black races to be incapable of achieving civilisation, and yellow races only partly capable (Young 69).

Maori occupied a somewhat ambiguous position around the midline of this racial hierarchy. Although some anthropologists thought the race had migrated from Africa and was therefore Ethiopian, its brown skin led to a widespread belief that it was of South Asian or Malay origin (see, for example, Polack, *Manners and Customs* 6, 13 and Nicholas II: 286). In terms of children’s literature, this idea inevitably suggests the stock Malay pirate character who appears in almost every nineteenth-century boys’ seafaring adventure novel, a cut-throat rascal who exists to be routed by British might and right. Semitic origins in line with a popularly circulating “Wandering Tribes” mythology were also postulated, particularly by missionaries, in the first half of the nineteenth century (see, for example, Arthur S. Thomson I: 71 and Taylor 8, 56). In the second half of the century a theory that Maori were of Aryan stock attracted some interest. Edward Tregear’s *The Aryan Maori* (1885) attempted to prove, via the new sciences of comparative philology and comparative mythology, that Maori descended from an Aryan race in India, thus drawing a sympathetic analogy between indigenous New Zealanders and Europeans, and constituting an indigenisation strategy which made a strange land, people, and customs instantly knowable, easily possessed by the pakeha (Howe 52).¹⁰

However the racial origins of Maori are accounted for—sympathetically or otherwise—most nineteenth-century experts concurred in the opinion that the race was, if not a separate species, undeniably

¹⁰ For further discussion of this, including the influences of European comparative scholarship upon Tregear, see K.R. Howe’s *Singer in a Songless Land: A Life of Edward Tregear* (39-52).

“primitive” or “savage” in comparison with Western culture and beliefs. This is a European myth-model, defined by Obeyesekere as an “underlying set of ideas (a myth structure or cluster of mythemes) employed in a variety of narrative forms” (*Apotheosis* 10). The myth-model of primitivism provided justification for an imperial “civilising” mission which saw its imposition of authority and the consequences these wrought as needful. Sensationalised literary accounts of cannibalism, infanticide, and tribal warfare combined with Victorian judgements upon Maori diet, degree of medical knowledge, and living arrangements to support “dying out” theories espoused by such scholars as Alfred Newman, whose 1882 address to the Wellington Philosophical Society postulated that the Maori race was vanishing even prior to pakeha colonisation (Stenhouse, “A Disappearing Race” 125).

Thus we find embedded within nineteenth-century junior fiction a variety of techniques designed to reinforce a widespread ideology of indigenous primitivism, inferiority, savagery, and degeneration. Texts represent Maori who are childlike or apelike, who are unable to withstand Western diseases, who are in physical decline and failing to adapt to change. Authors may argue from various standpoints of monogenism or polygenism, or incorporate scientific references to Darwinian evolution or natural selection, but all acquiesce in an ideology which is at once ethnocentric, reassuring Westerners of their racial superiority, and political, constituting an ongoing attempt to justify colonial violence and land expropriation.

This chapter will deal firstly with the images of violence—cannibalism, warfare, tattooing, alcohol, madness, and ill-treatment of women—represented in the texts under discussion, then examine this fiction’s recurrent tropes of dispossession and degeneration.

Indigenous Violence: Ferocious Cannibalism

The recurring themes and tropes of violence in early New Zealand-set junior fiction suggest Maori are “savages” who by their uncivilised practices have forfeited all their rights, civil and natural, over

the land (see Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* 172). Of these, cannibalism receives particular attention. Recent cultural historians have debated whether cannibalism was ever much more than a culturally constructed myth fuelled by European fantasy and perpetuated intertextually throughout postcolonial writings.¹¹ The earliest of these sceptical voices is that of William Arens. While not denying the possible past or present existence of cannibalism, Arens focuses on the ways in which literature purporting to represent anthropophagy emphasises a culturally constructed European metamyth simultaneously exoticising the Other and indulging in self-congratulation for stamping out heathen behaviour (“Rethinking Anthropophagy” 41). Obeyesekere suggests that the practice of cannibalism by New Zealand Maori—in particular the ferocious cannibalism represented in colonialist discourse, as opposed to ritualistic human sacrifice—was itself motivated by complex discursive exchanges between English sailors and Maori at the colonial contact point: “. . . large-scale anthropophagy was a reaction to the European presence” (“British Cannibals” 653). These ideas are not necessarily new; Tregear commented in 1885: “. . . many Maoris say, cannibalism is quite a modern institution in this country” (57).

It is not my purpose to discuss whether or not cannibalism was practised by Maori, but to explore how the trope of cannibalism is repeatedly employed within junior fiction to establish meaning in the service of power—in this case the territorial imperative of imperialism. Texts define Maori as the feared, immoral Other who is self-eliminating, or whom the coloniser is justified in eliminating. Such ideology is an example of “cultural-boundary construction and maintenance,” which is practised “by every society to create a conceptual order based on differences” (Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* 145). When a colonising mission brands groups of indigenous peoples as cannibals, “Warfare and

¹¹ For a sampling of materials on this argument see Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* and “Introduction: The Cannibal Scene”; Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* and “Rethinking Anthropophagy”; Sahlins, “Cannibalism: An Exchange”; and Obeyesekere, “‘British Cannibals,’” *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, and “Cannibal Feasts in Nineteenth-Century Fiji.”

annihilation are then excusable, while more sophisticated forms of dominance, such as enslavement and colonization, become an actual responsibility of the culture-bearers” (*The Man-Eating Myth* 141). Hulme, in *Colonial Encounters*, argues that postcolonial literature uses cannibalism as a sign of the non-human, thus denying anthropophagi the essential human rights of life and property by placing them outside the protection of such European codes as the Law of Nations and Natural Law. The key issue in cultural-boundary construction is not acquisition of morals, but acquisition of land.

The idea of cannibalism in literature has long held fascination for the European mind, from the classical myths of Uranus, Cronus, and Polyphemus to the sixteenth-century travel literature of the *Mundus Novus* genre which flourished following Columbus’ discoveries in the Americas, to mariners’ tales, both fanciful and factual, of cannibalism following shipwreck or becalming.¹² Fetishistic or psychocultural factors clearly feature in this literary obsession, which prompts writers to discuss things which are culturally forbidden, or to symbolically purge a community’s conscience by nailing practices considered taboo upon a scapegoat figure.

Early commentators reflected their unease over the similarities which could be drawn between the habits of the South American cannibal and the Roman Catholic Eucharist in their attempts to allegorise anthropophagy as a spiritual rite, to systematise it as “noble” vengeance, and to make distinctions between civilisable “good” cannibals (the exo-cannibals who eat only their enemies, cooked) and uncivilisable ferocious cannibals (endo-cannibals, who devour members of their own tribe or family, raw) (Lestringant 68-70). Arens notes that during Spanish colonisation of the New World any resistance to the colonisers was blamed upon the Carib peoples, who were believed to be lawless cannibals, rather than the Arawaks, who were considered peaceable,

¹² See Frank Lestringant’s *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne* for an insight into this recurring fascination in French literature alone.

noble savages, thus legitimising the barbaric Spanish reaction which generated a measure of European moral discomfort (see Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* 45 and Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* 16-17). Indeed, the term “cannibal” itself derives from the name of these people, “Carib” (Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* 49).

As Robert Leeson explains in *Reading and Righting*, children’s tales grew from and retained the roots of adult popular literature, particularly the folktale. Thus the trope of cannibalism, which has fascinated adults from earliest times, has also long been a feature of the children’s story. From the fairy tales of Perrault and Grimm to the sensational chapbooks and didactic moral narratives of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, children’s writing abounds with human-devouring ogres who are slain by doughty protagonists. It has been suggested that in these stories the cannibalism trope epitomises “evil, to be defeated and undone” by young heroes, and symbolic images of cannibal defeat and/or rebirth of the victim suggest the survival of the family unit and the child within it as “allegories of time and resignation: the future belongs to the young giant-killer” (Warner 161, 182). Hence images of cannibalism are deemed acceptable for the child readers of colonial junior fiction, even as the sexual excesses of colonialist discourse frequently imputed to the indigenous “savage”—such as incest and homosexuality, which appear as familiar tropes in adult anthropological narratives—for obvious reasons make scant appearance in children’s literature of the era (see Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* 28, 147, 156). Even so, most New Zealand junior colonial fiction handles the cannibalism theme in a more subtle manner than that of the crude fairytale prototype, with the exception of the sensationally gruesome *Among the Cannibals*, and retold Maori myths and legends, in which whole tribes of men, women, and children cannibalise with impunity and the cannibal “ogre” or “goblin” Makutu figure is frequently presented at his bloodthirsty worst. Most nineteenth-century New Zealand children’s fiction, however, presents in place of Jack the Giant-Killer a morally superior white youth who overcomes a brown-skinned (potential or

former) cannibal not in a physical battle but in a contest of cultural values.

In his discussion of Caribbean colonial contact narratives Hulme differentiates between the terms “anthropophagy” (the act of eating human flesh) and “cannibalism,” which, when used within postcolonial discourse, he defines as “. . . a term meaning, say, ‘the image of ferocious consumption of human flesh frequently used to mark the boundary between one community and its others,’ a term that has gained its entire meaning from within the discourse of European colonialism” (*Colonial Encounters* 86). This is the meaning of the term “cannibal” found in early New Zealand junior texts, which are filled with images of ferocity, uncleanness, and greedy devouring of human flesh—acts which the civilised European abhors but may be fascinated by or even secretly desire.

The Cannibal Present: Threat and Opportunity

Two types of cannibal narrative appear in these texts: those which see cannibalism as a continuing threat to the settler and those which present cannibalism as a remnant of a cultural past. Examples of the former appear in *Among the Cannibals* where Paganel, an authority on anthropophagi, is terrified at the thought of traversing New Zealand. Glenarvan scoffs that “a few such wretched creatures need not frighten ten Europeans who are well-armed” and warns Paganel not to frighten the youngsters with wild stories, to which the geographer replies, “I exaggerate nothing . . . New Zealanders are the most cruel, not to say the most gluttonous, of anthropophagi. . . . War only means for them the hunting of that savoury game called man” (40).

His opinions on ferocious cannibal consumption are supported by narratorial comments: “Paganel’s fears were only too well justified. New Zealand has a terrible reputation, and a sanguinary mark may be put to all the incidents which have signalled its discovery. The list of martyrs is long” (21). Chapter V, “In Which Cannibalism is Treated Theoretically,” contains gruesome and bizarre examples of missionary deaths and

cannibalism. Various reasons for the practice are suggested, with Paganel concluding that while hunger, dearth of animal flesh, or superstition may have been initial causes, Maori now find the custom “natural” and pleasurable (42): “New Zealanders are by nature cruel . . . we may believe that their stomachs had as much to do with it as their superstition” (41).

These are both the vengeance-seeking exo-cannibals of European tradition and uncivilisable endo-cannibals: Kai-Koumou and his tribe devour enemies, domestics, and widows of the deceased. Captive European travellers witness decapitated heads, scarification, human sacrifice, and “a frightful scene of cannibalism” in which men, women, and children, “seized with a bestial fury” and spattered with blood, fight over flesh scraps with “the delirium and the rage of tigers, infuriated over their prey” (103). This scene has been dismissed as an example of Verne’s “wild extravagance of incident” (Marcie Muir 38). It nevertheless fulfills a clear ideological function as a trope in the wider postcolonial discourse, justifying imperial conquest and land acquisition by reducing the indigene to the level of sub-human savage who cannot be permitted natural human rights such as land ownership.

Similarly, when hostile chiefs in *Holmwood* declare they will fight if deprived of their lands, Major Parry informs them *they have no lands in those parts* because they have killed and eaten the original owners (43, emphasis mine). The chiefs appear unable to argue against this, although they suggest that since their fathers drove their foes into the sea, perhaps the practice should continue. Parry warns them: “. . . if you go to war with [the English], your destruction will be inevitable” (40-41). Those who practise cannibalism forfeit their natural and civil rights to life, liberty, and land possession to the non-cannibalistic imperial power, who may kill, conquer, and expropriate land with impunity (see Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* 156-57).

These ideas can be found in *Six Little New Zealanders* where, according to household legend, the Maori servant Tairoa has “mad fits” when he will “dance a haka, and rush round with a tomahawk and want to

kill white people” (37). His employers disbelieve this as a “rubbishy story” until in vengeful retaliation at a boy’s prank Tairoa attacks the children, weapon in hand. While it is not suggested that Tairoa is a cannibal, his ferocity directed against women and children locates him as one of a continuing line of savages who must be removed to ensure pakeha safety and tenure in the colony. Indeed, the story reads as a reinvention of the settler’s tale, with the Malcolm children transported from suburban comforts to an isolated Canterbury homestead where a sub-human indigene, tattooed and violent, invites his own elimination.

Henty, who prided himself on historical accuracy, was aware that cannibalism was not practised in New Zealand in the 1860s. However *Maori and Settler* still mentions the practice. As the emigrant vessel sails past cannibal coasts, “It will be very tiresome if they do not come out,” complains Marion Renshaw; “I want to see a real cannibal” (100). Though no eaters of human flesh, Maori are here presented as bloodthirsty marauders of pakeha, “human tigers, and no more deserving of pity” (251). The text suggests that the New Zealand indigene will have no chance to attain high levels of civilisation and indeed scarcely deserves to do so; his violence towards settlers justifies extermination by white militia (see Marquis 61).

Similar ideology informs the presentation of savage Tuniri, who in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* commits murder and roams “at large, with his thirst for blood aroused like a tiger after its first human kill” (277). It is suggested that the killing may have a motive of vengeance, perhaps for sacrilege against a chief’s grave, but the language used to describe it is nevertheless that of the traditional cannibalism narrative, even down to the “noble vengeance” explanation. Police, fearing Tuniri’s act may stir up wider native revolt, are relieved when he drowns himself in a presumed paroxysm of terrified conscience. A landscape that does not succeed in killing this text’s pakeha heroes dispatches Tuniri swiftly enough, symbolising which race is now its natural master.

The image of the tiger recurs throughout these representations, connoting an inherent appetite for blood which is bestial, depraved, sub-

human. The indigene's bloodlust is also expressed in his avowed delight in tribal warfare, dancing the "mad" haka, and the gruesome dried heads which horrify pa visitors in *Among the Cannibals* and *Amongst the Maoris* and terrify unsuspecting children in "The Maori's Present" chapter of the anonymous *Adventures Ashore and Afloat* (1866).

The Cannibal Past: King of the Cannibal Islands

Other texts show indigenous violence and cannibalism as less a present threat than a signifier of historicity or the cultural past. In *Distant Homes* most Maori are assimilable, but on his first day in Nelson town Tom Graham glimpses an object the reader understands to be a rare curiosity: a "great Cannibal King,—the mighty man-eater, who gobbled up half-a-dozen of his enemies last summer" (19-20). Fascination with this character might well be expected from a boy reared on sensational adventure tales about "niggers," who sings at intervals:

Hoky, Poky, Wankum Wun,

How do you like your enemy done,

Roast or boiled, or fried in the sun—

The king of the Cannibal Islands. (3)

This is one of several versions of the nineteenth-century comic ballad, "King of the Cannibal Islands."¹³ So deeply did the "facts" of this song enter the popular imagination that it is cited in the chapter on "The Feegees, or Man-Eaters" in Thomas Mayne Reid's 1860 ethnographic work *Odd People: Being a Popular Description of Singular Races of Men*:

Have I a reader who has not heard of the "King of the Cannibal Islands?" I think I may take it for granted that there is not one in my large circle of boy-readers who has not heard of that royal anthropophagist . . . the old song was no exaggeration . . . it presents a picture of the life

¹³ Lyrics by A.W. Humphreys; music "Cumberland Reel" by John Charles White.

and habits of his polygamous majesty that is, alas! too
ludicrously like the truth. (173).

A music-hall joke has seeped into public consciousness as “the truth”;
thus Tom casually renames his cannibal chief:¹⁴

“And I’ve seen Hoky Poky,” said Tom,
mysteriously.

. . . .

“Oh! you goose, Tom, do tell us quickly whom you
have seen.”

“Hoky Poky, King Wankum Wum.” [*sic*]

“Nonsense.”

“Indeed I have; and he sent his compliments to
you, and wants to know if you’ll be one of his fifty
wives.” (19-20)

Cannibal and polygamy jokes like this, popular in Victorian England for their ability to trivialise the threatening indigene and to displace colonial guilt on to the uncivilised Other, were clearly considered appropriate material for children’s entertainment (Malchow 118, 121). Cannibalism is, of course, *the* defining feature of the discourse of colonialism, connoting a savagery in desperate need of imperial civilisation, or deserving of elimination (Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* 3). Yet *Distant Homes* reveals that by 1857, when the Grahams arrive in New Zealand, this particular type of civilising mission is scarcely necessary. Although the Cannibal King is reported to have been gobbling up enemies just last summer and the Grahams’ cook lives in fear of being roasted and devoured (threats with which Tom delights in teasing her), no incidents of massacre or cannibalism appear in *Distant Homes*. On the contrary, description of the Cannibal King’s activities echoes statements frequently found in ethnographic and anthropological literature to the effect that indigenous tribes examined at a contact zone have ceased to anthropophagise very recently, just a decade ago, or yesterday, or, as in

¹⁴ *Across Two Seas*’ Dick Vaughan also shows knowledge of the song by dismissing Maori place-names as “‘Hoki-Poki’ or ‘Matti-patti,’ as the native jabber has it” (56).

this case, “last summer,” such vague temporal references serving to perpetuate a myth of cannibalism for which there is no clear evidence or first-hand observation (Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* 36). Malchow, analysing the sensational gothic elements embedded in much imperialist fiction, describes cannibalism in such discourse as necessarily mysterious, hinging upon the “apprehension of the unseen . . . an eternally unviewable act that has to be *imagined*, not witnessed” (52).

Further reassurances of security for *Distant Homes*' colonial readers are provided by the manner in which threatened native uprisings are effectively quashed by the mentally, morally, and militarily superior Grahams. At first Captain Graham is wary of his new neighbours, believing all Maori to be savages at heart and afraid “there is really a very bad spirit getting abroad among” them (157). Indeed, disaffected rebels from the North soon arrive at the pa, when a war-dance is performed and “wild feelings” are incited (191). Captain Graham hastens to quash the threat with speeches of pakeha law and authority and, frightened and humbled, the Maori chief thanks him for saving his people from bloodshed. In such a climate cannibalism does not stand a chance.

The Greenstone Door likewise implies that cannibalistic practices disappeared almost spontaneously at the time of colonisation as a result of Maori shame before superior values. It paints as part of the “old order” bloodthirsty scenes of anthropophagy in which defenceless maidens are butchered and their corpses, “gouting blood,” carted away for roasting, while Cedric is himself narrowly saved from Te Waharoa's umu (oven). These episodes are presented as hazy memories from Cedric's early childhood. Save in the private desires of aged chiefs cannibalism has naturally died away due to the presence of Europeans: “The disgust of the white man, evidencing itself on the lips of the missionary and the escaped convict alike, had eaten its way less to the conscience than the pride of the Maori . . . From this infection (so to call it) of shame to a natural soul-growth of distaste was a matter of very few years” (12).

If cannibalism is no threat to the settler, why then does the novelist include characters claiming to practice it? Aesthetic

requirements relevant to the genre supply an obvious reason: adventure tales demand thrills and colour, and “cannibalism is what the English reading public wanted to hear” (Obeyesekere, “British Cannibals” 635). Of parallel importance to this fetishistic component is the compulsion—however deeply embedded in the author’s subconscious—to reinforce meaning in the service of power by distancing the indigene as the wild, bizarre, degenerate primitive beside whom civilised British superiority, and mastery, shines supreme. Aylmer and her successors faced the task of creating stories with sufficient adventure to warrant publication, yet which encouraged rather than deterred prospective emigrants. For this reason *Distant Homes*’ Cannibal King is, above all, *old*. His is the first of many entrances on the New Zealand juvenile fiction stage of the aged decaying cannibal chief, a trope indicating a disappearing if not already eradicated violent indigenous presence and a striking example of the standard commodity of historicity, in which the indigene appears only as the sign of an exotic past (see Goldie 148-69). For this same reason the cannibal chiefs in *Among the Cannibals* are also, if still bloodthirsty and vigorous, definitely middle-aged, described as being in their forties and having wrinkled foreheads.

The reader of *The Boy Colonists* learns that Otago’s cannibals had, by 1860, melted into folklore. A cadet discovers a greenstone chisel, a relic of the “old days” (159), and nearby is another historical curiosity: “. . . a large blackened space where there have at one time evidently been huge fires. This place is literally covered with bones . . . The bullock-drivers always used to say that this was a grand Maori feasting-place, and the bones were men’s bones” (159).

Yet *The Boy Colonists* also relates a cannibal chief encounter similar to that of *Distant Homes*. Harry Talbot, newly landed at Lyttelton, meets aged Chief Tairoa, who boasts: “. . . there is no meat equal to white man: I hope I shall taste it again some day” (19). Yet is Tairoa really a cannibal? Harry cannot quite determine his tone, “. . . whether he meant his words in earnest or in joke, he laughed so immoderately; but he believed that the old fellow really did fancy human flesh still, from the

way in which he smacked his lips” (19). It is Harry, acquiescing in the widespread fascination of Europeans with the idea of cannibalism, who broaches the subject by asking “if he had ever tasted human flesh.” Hulme notes: “Our fascination with ‘cannibalism’ is certainly ambivalent in a way that ought to be of interest to psychoanalysis. Like incest it marks a forbidden form of behaviour and therefore, predictably, examples of it are deeply intriguing to us” (*Colonial Encounters* 31).

Obeyesekere even suggests that repeated enquiries of European travellers and explorers about cannibalistic practices may have suggested to indigenous peoples that it was the *Europeans* who were the anthropophagi, compelling the indigene to act before he was acted upon (“British Cannibals” 634). Certainly Tairoa’s boasts echo purportedly factual travel literature, for example Polack’s account of a chief who expresses “excessive delight” in cannibalism (*Travels and Adventures* 168) and *Old New Zealand*’s aged rangatira, “Lizard Skin,” who dies murmuring “How sweet is man’s flesh” (Maning 235). In light of this Western fascination with the cannibal chief, reinforced and perpetuated through an intertextual play in a variety of fictional and non-fictional cultural sources, the reader cannot be certain whether Tairoa’s answer is sincere or whether he is simply playing the role of exotic tourist-curiosity (which is how Harry clearly sees him) and enjoying a joke at the lad’s expense meanwhile. Either way, anthropophagi pose no threat to the potential colonist reading Elwell’s memoirs. Tairoa is very old even in 1859 and had died by the time *The Boy Colonists* was published. Together with his fearsome practices he is presented as a sign of “the past in the present . . . an incongruous artifact who offends the process of natural time” (Goldie 167).

Maori in *Doing and Daring* are also historical cannibals. They are noble savages who have nonetheless inherited an inherent lust for cannibalistic violence, symbolised by the blackened human bones which litter their sacred tribal hill, but the danger is rapidly disappearing. Aged Chief Kakiki, “one of the invincibles, the gallant old warrior-chiefs that are dying out fast,” has adopted a lifestyle of western domesticity, being

sufficiently wealthy (presumably through land sales) to “live like his kinsmen at Hawke’s Bay, hire a grand house of the pakeha, and pay white servants to do everything for them” (81, 242). The invincibles are thus not invincible at all—they can be bought. Young Whero, their remnant, is convinced to relinquish tribal values, go to school, and assimilate to pakeha ways, while his father Chief Nga-Hepe simply disappears. A “lord of the soil, the last surviving son of the mighty Hepe, whose name had struck terror from shore to shore” (20), Nga-Hepe spends much of the novel terrorising Edwin Lee in the belief the boy has stolen his money. However once his wealth is restored to him Nga-Hepe turns from an assassin into a defeated gentleman who shakes hands with Edwin and obligingly quits the scene forever.

The Redfords portrays the Dunedin of the mid-1860s, where Bernard Redford sees an old cannibal, Chief Tyro, who used to eat white people “long ago” and who declares that “he won’t die happy till he eats another white man” (83). Tyro is wealthy—his land and good behaviour too have been bought—but his cannibal statement is made in tones less ambiguous than those of the possibly joking Tairoa. Maori in *The Redfords* are portrayed as still inherently savage, a genuine, if crushable, threat to settler safety and order. Tyro still exerts a negative influence over younger, more assimilable Maori, and his part in the downfall of the Redford family’s servant William Tarakua (who turns from noble to violent indigene) suggests that all Maori are at core savage, and that colonisers are not only justified in eliminating their threat to social order, but have a duty to do so.

Of particular interest are the similarities between the portraits in this rogues’ gallery of cannibals: the cannibal chief is usually old, is glimpsed by a young settler “in town” around the year 1860, expresses his fondness for eating human flesh, and his name is a variation on a theme: Tairoa/Tyro/Tarakua/Te Waharoa/Tuniri. Even *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* mentions that Uncle Martin bought his land from “an old Maori chief, Taiaroa” (147). The name may recall the Otago Ngai Tahu chief Te Matenga Taiaroa (c.1783-1863), known for his aversion to

pakeha, but it is clearly more than a simple historical reference. As a signifier of the sub-human Maori the name is recycled throughout this fiction, accumulating with each use overtones of savagery, historicity, and present threat, incorporating a warning to pakeha to be prepared to fight the resurgent cannibal.

Tattooed, Ugly, and Immoral

Together with cannibalism, the tattoo was a popular colonial signifier of the savage, sub-human indigene. Victorians saw tattoos as the barbarous and painful scarification of the noble human form, thus an outward sign of a deviant nature (Malchow 190). Darwin found them disturbing and disagreeable-looking. Polack viewed them as a divinely-appointed symbol of immorality, like the biblical mark on Cain's forehead mentioned in Genesis 4:15. Many of the texts examined here concentrate on the distasteful appearance of the tattooed native. "Extraordinary" tattoos, we are told, "spoil" the features of otherwise good-looking Tairoa in *The Boy Colonists*, belying his fine physique and intelligent expression and suggesting moral unfitness to dwell in a civilised colony even where physical unfitness is not in evidence. Similarly, Kai-Koumou in *Among the Cannibals* may have a fine physical form, dazzling teeth, and a "magnificent air," but his much-tattooed "fierce . . . sinister physiognomy" foreshadows his evil behaviour (77-78).

These descriptions correspond to contemporary anthropological assumptions. Certain late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century scientists, making the discomfiting observation that indigenous peoples were frequently found to be in health, strength, and physique superior to Europeans, rapidly concluded that the indigene must suffer from a physical and moral "insensibility" which enabled him both to withstand pain and to relish eating human flesh. As French anthropologist François Péron hypothesised, "moral perfection must be in inverse ratio to

physical perfection” (qtd. in Stocking 32¹⁵). This theory of “inverse ratio” reassured Europeans whose sense of racial superiority had been challenged by newly-discovered peoples. Péron later debunked his hypothesis as idealisation after concluding that indigenous Tasmanians, Australians, and Timorese were not superior physical specimens at all, but rather lethargic and enervated—due, Péron suggested, to their degraded customs (see Stocking, 31-3).

Thus, early New Zealand-set children’s texts dwell on correspondences between tattoos and moral imperfection. In *Amongst the Maoris* a native convert declares that tattoos are only for heathen “devils” (214), drawing a clear equation between immorality and tattoo. Settlers in *The Redfords* sight

. . . native boatmen, of the once-terrible race of savages—
Maories, as they are now called. These men attracted
general interest; they were decently dressed and
remarkably intelligent looking, though one had variegated
patterns of blue tattooing on every part of his dark skin
that was visible, as if continued inside under his clothes.
(48)

The word “though” is significant: the tattoo effectively negates any pretension to decency and intelligence. In *The Redfords* the visible moko continues “inside,” in other words, in the heart, connoting inherent indigenous savagery. William Tarakua at first appears as “a tall, rather good-looking man, in ordinary colonial dress, though his complexion was swarthy with some marks of tattooing” (57); he soon degenerates into a pakeha-hating maniac and is termed an “ugly cratur” deserving of removal by imperial might.

Similarly, Ngaire, narrator of *Six Little New Zealanders*, describes the murderous servant Tairoa as “awful-looking,” “tattooed horribly,” and with a “very ugly smile” (37-38); his ugliness is a visible indicator of

¹⁵ The original source is François Péron, *Observations sur l’anthropologie*. Paris, 1800: 2-7, 9-12.

the savagery towards pakeha lying dormant within him. Jack in *Amongst the Maoris* professes himself disgusted by the moko: “All the men were frightfully tattooed, their faces being seamed and scarred all over, so as to disfigure them completely whatever of good looks they may originally have had: though beauty is very unusual amongst the Maories even without tattoo” (109). Handsome Rangiora in *The Greenstone Door* evinces his cultural superiority by refusing to be tattooed. His pakeha friends convince him to resist being “transfigured out of all likeness to yourself” by what Puhī-Huia terms a “very ugly” moko (118). To besmirch the divine likeness bestowed upon Adam and his descendants was, to the Victorian mind, sacrilegious; evangelicals taught that man was a noble creation, made in the image of a God whose Word prohibited cutting one’s flesh.¹⁶ Moreover, Blumenbach classified racial variety according to Western notions of beauty, with the Caucasian as the most beautiful and least degenerate type (the closest to Adam). The uglier the face, the lower it appeared on the scale of racial hierarchy. Thus tattoos in these texts increase ugliness and immorality, culturally lowering rather than elevating the recipient. In these texts it is the unassimilable, uncivilisable Maori who are decorated with the moko, the icon of savage deviancy, while friendly, assimilable indigenes remain untattooed and unblemished.

Some texts highlight pakeha characters as fearful of being tainted with the moko. *Among the Cannibals*’ Paganel is wracked with shame over his moko, which implies the “going native” so abhorrent to nineteenth-century moral conservatism. Jack in *Amongst the Maoris* is not permitted to suffer this shame, but the one line of moko incised into his face is a warning of how great may be the fall even of civilised boys who allow their thoughts to be consumed with “savage” traits like rage and vengeance. When Wally McLennan in *Six Little New Zealanders* “tattoos” his own face with geranium juice and impersonates Tairoa,

¹⁶ For example, Deuteronomy 14:1.

inherent savagery is stirred in both white child and Maori man, and terrifying consequences ensue.

Across Two Seas uses the pierced ear as a moko-like signifier of deviant scarification. This novel reveals a fascination with native ear appendages: the first Maori the family glimpses are described as “such queer fellows; with teeth, and bones, and stones, and bits of ribbon, stuck in their ears” (38), while in the book’s illustrations large gypsy-like hoops dangle from indigenes’ earlobes. Malchow notes that in the nineteenth century the male earring was seen as a complex signifier of deviancy, associated with two varieties of degenerate, inferior, and feared being: the native or “half-breed” and the effeminate or homosexual man (190). Small wonder the Vaughans are appalled to find their ten-year-old son happy to have his ear pierced by native visitors.

Intemperance, Madness, Savagery

Further crucial signifiers of indigenous savagery appear when Maori characters in these texts are exposed to liquor, which incites them to violence and madness. In *The Redfords* ill-gotten alcohol stirs up Maori disaffection and turns partly-civilised William Tarkua into a murderer. So vital to the text is William’s drunkenness that it is used as a plot mechanism to develop suspense throughout the novel. Mr Redford strives to see local natives as “harmless” but must eventually admit that William returns from trips to Dunedin in bad attitudes of sulkiness, disloyalty, carelessness, and rebellion. The cause is drink, which is “. . . most dangerous for any native to indulge in, and William had seemed to be on his guard against it hitherto; but on the present occasion it became plainer and plainer he had broken through his rule” (101).

Although temperance messages abounded in women’s writing around this time, Cupples’ text contains a specific framework of racial difference. The comments, narrated in the tones of Mr Redford, the authoritative Victorian patriarch, provide an example of what Bakhtin terms “pseudo-objective motivation” (305)—a setting forth of views that

the leaders of colonial society attempted to disperse amongst the general population. “There is really no mystery at all in the decline of the Maori as a people,” stated an article in an 1876 edition of the *New Zealand Temperance Times*, “. . . the reason is as plain as daylight, and is contained in the fact that Maoris, with very few exceptions, are most lamentably addicted to excessive indulgence in drink” (qtd. in Hutt 43¹⁷). This presumes that highly evolved Europeans possessed reason which would ensure moderation, and had developed the ability to consume alcohol without adverse effects, but that liquor caused primitive, degenerating natives to “decline” in morals, health, and population.

Furthermore, *The Redfords* warns that natives cannot drink without forgetting their proper place in the order of things, that is, social inferiority to the colonist and his family. When sober, William is a model of assimilation and servility towards his betters. When inebriated, he resents taking orders, resulting in an accident which nearly claims the life of a settler child, and becomes “sullen and moody”—“even mad-like” (104). The Redfords restrain and imprison him, forbidding him to associate with the Maori riff-raff on the edge on the settlement, but at the novel’s climax the young settlers observe William disobediently drinking at Tyro’s campfire. Upon William’s excuse that he wanted to see his friends, George Redford commences a harangue upon liquor and “skulking,” ignoring warnings that it might be unwise “to rouse half-drunken men . . . especially half-tamed savages” (113).

This presentation of William as friendless is the only moment where the text appears consciously to empathise with him, and his subsequent bad behaviour dispels any reader sympathy thus generated. William begins a noisy war-dance, flourishing a stick. “He’s getting quite mad,” says Dick, but before he can warn the homestead that restraint is required William attacks the group with “a wild yell as only a savage throat can utter” (114). The girls flee for reinforcements, who arrive to

¹⁷ Hutt’s source is *New Zealand Temperance Times* 1.8 (23 December 1876): 4; qtd. in Paul Frederick McKimney, “The Temperance Movement in New Zealand, 1835-1899,” Diss., Auckland U, 1968: 210.

find George and Dick have conquered William and are dealing with his supporters. Old Tyro and the women look on, either “stupefied by drink, or determined not to get themselves into trouble with the white faces,” though apparently “quite ready to take advantage” of a native victory (115).

William’s rebellion is not over yet; a few hours later he threatens the Redfords’ cook and attempts to fire their home. Wounded by a pakeha bullet, William flees for good, and Tyro and his camp follow. The novel ends with the settlers established “for good and all” in a land cleansed of undesirable indigenes.

William’s slide into savagery is necessary from an artistic point of view. As stated earlier, the colonial adventure story genre demands adventures and since an Otago setting free of colonial war or wild animals is in danger of failing to supply them, a savage Maori is invented to add excitement. However William’s savagery is equally necessary from an ideological perspective. Colonial administrators feared that alcohol “would contribute to widespread social dislocation among a Maori population they paternalistically viewed as vulnerable to liquor abuse,” and passed various ordinances prohibiting liquor sales to and liquor distillation by natives—the latter indicating that Maori were viewed not merely as the victims of European vices (the so-called “fatal impact” theory) but as active potential threats to a pakeha-dominated commercial sphere (Hutt 19, 24, 28).¹⁸ Thus William Tarakua, constantly referred to by the synecdoche “the Maori” and thereby standing for the entire race, is characterised as a recidivist breaker of pakeha law and deserving of punishment.

While Hutt notes that Maori taste for alcohol remained generally moderate up to the time of the New Zealand Wars, when it burgeoned, possibly spread by kupapa (Maori who fought alongside the Crown and whose rations included a supply of rum), he also suggests that “Maori drinking . . . was often *perceived* as being more comical, more dangerous

¹⁸ Stevan Eldred-Grigg makes similar comments about Maori and alcohol in colonial times (*Pleasures of the Flesh* 67-88).

and more prevalent than was actually the case, a perception reflected in the legislative and historical record” (28-29, 36). This perception fuelled popular ideas such as that expressed by Lord John Russell, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, in the 1840s: “Between the Native, who is weakened by intoxicating liquors, and the European who has all the strength of superior Civilization and is free from its restraints, the unequal contest is generally of no long duration; the Natives decline, diminish, and finally disappear” (Hutt 13).¹⁹

Like William Tarakua, Tairoa of *Six Little New Zealanders* degenerates into madness and violence against his employers. Although the motivating factor of alcohol is not mentioned, Tairoa’s madness is sufficient to establish him as a primitive being who cannot be allowed to participate in civilised European society. As Gilman notes, the association of madness and violence combines two abstractions of the Other: “Both are focuses for the projection of Western culture’s anxieties” (148).

The correspondences drawn in fiction between intemperance, race, madness, and racial decline reflect beliefs widely held throughout nineteenth-century Europe. Gilman has demonstrated how images of racial pathology and mental illness have been stereotypically Othered in Western popular culture as a part of society’s attempts to stabilise a sense of self and establish the illusion of order in the world (19-25). Although the association between madness and blackness has a long history in Western art and thought, the stereotypical myth of the black madman gained particular power during the mid-nineteenth century (137). Nineteenth-century psychologists linked an assumed high incidence of insanity within the U.S. black population to emancipation.²⁰ Obvious

¹⁹ Hutt’s source is: HRA Series 1. Vol. XX: 774ff; qtd. in Harry C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island: A History of South Island Maori During the European Colonisation of New Zealand*. Wellington and Christchurch: Aoraki P, 1993: 157.

²⁰ Gilman (137-140) discusses the erroneously-compiled 1840 U.S. Census, which indicated that free blacks suffered astounding levels of insanity, and the opinions of eminent U.S. physicians which provided anti-abolitionist forces with “scientific” evidence that freedom and licence—including the use of stimulants—contributed to madness in blacks.

correspondences can be drawn between the free black, thrust into a society filled with prejudice against himself and the sensation-dulling temptation of alcohol, and the Maori under colonial rule.

This widely acknowledged image of the intemperate, mad, violent Maori appears in many works examined here. *Adventures Ashore and Afloat* contains a homily against those who sell rum, as well as arms, to natives. *Under One Standard* has Maori George branded “mad” for giving advice which threatens a colonial sense of security, and makes threatening Wi-Kingi an abuser of liquor. Drink brings out the worst in Chiefs Rangihaeta and Te Rauparaha in Alexander Fraser’s *Daddy Crip’s Waifs* (1886), revealing “the hidden character of the sanguinary warrior” (85). Both *Holmwood* and *Maori and Settler* deplore native fondness for alcohol, suggesting that drunken Maori commit excesses of rape and murder against settlers. Verne does not even bother with the “fatal impact theory” to which most other authors allude, but rather suggests that Maori pave their own way to savage degradation with intoxicants; Kai-Koumou’s tribe guzzles strong liquor brewed from pimento until “There was nothing human left in them” (*Among the Cannibals* 104). In *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* we are told that Maori are prone to “habits of intemperance” (47), and murderous Tuniri is indeed crazed with alcohol, for which he had “sold everything he possessed, his two wives included . . . and . . . would have cheerfully sold himself also” (280).

Savage Men: Degraded Women

Tuniri sells his wives like chattels. Such ill-treatment of Maori women is yet another strand in these texts’ multi-layered images of indigenous savagery. Although the theme is foregrounded only in the evangelical *Emily Bathurst*, whose purpose was to raise money for the Church Missionary Society by presenting the plight of heathen women in the worst possible circumstances, it is glimpsed throughout other texts. Maori girls are sacrificed and cannibalised (*Among the Cannibals*, *The Greenstone Door*). Yuata is downtrodden by her tohunga father (*Amongst the Maoris*). Marileha is illiterate, powerless, ill-respected by her chiefly

son (*Doing and Daring*). Kingston's texts empathise with Maori girls who suffer arranged marriages to cruel chiefs; Waihoura is actually shot by her evil fiancé. Tiki's mother in *Tiki's Trip to Town* is a "pack-horse for her lord and master, whose back was tapu [sic]."

Amongst the Maoris observes that even Christianised Maori women, "apparently possessed of no natural affection," regularly practice infanticide, and take their children from school to participate in cannibal feasts (192), implying an inherent degradation in Maori females, not necessarily caused by males.

These portrayals of female degradation have a clear ideological function, for nineteenth-century anthropologists calculated the extent of a race's civilisation—and the likelihood of it enduring into the future—according to its treatment of the reproducers of its future generations. As early as 1817 Nicholas suggested that the Maori population was small because the mistreatment of women produced a short period of fertility—not such a bad thing, Nicholas observed, as it left plenty of room for European settlement (II: 296-300). Polack's *Travels and Adventures* reported interviews with Maori women who practised infanticide in order to spare their girl children the miseries of polygamy and wife-beating. The degraded state of the Maori woman, said Polack, equalled the downfall of the native civilisation: ". . . the absolute rise and decline of nations depend much on her conduct in social life" (I: 363).

Mobile and Degenerate: The Maori as Gypsy

Such images of natural indigenous degradation and degeneration support a powerful trope which recurs throughout colonial period New Zealand-set junior fiction: the image of the Maori as Gypsy. Several texts attempt to justify imperial land acquisition and cultural elimination of Maori by representing an indigenous population which is both naturally itinerant (to the extent of willingly dispossessing itself of land) and culturally primitive, degraded, and immoral.

Gypsy imagery fulfils a number of ideological functions. It provides a handy reference point with which to acquaint a British readership with an unfamiliar race. Gypsy or Romany had inhabited Britain for the last four hundred years and the Victorian reader would have had no difficulty identifying them, either by personal observation or the deployment of a number of popular stereotypes, as a dark-skinned, itinerant, illiterate tribal community.

Similar social attitudes also surrounded Gypsy and Maori as images of the Other. Treatment of the Gypsy in nineteenth-century Britain ranged from suspicion, dislike, repressive legislation, and persecution through to tolerance, pity, and attempts (frequently paternalistic ones) to understand and document Romany culture, or to promote the itinerants' welfare by assimilation, education, and Christian evangelism. Conflicting opinions—that Gypsy are the feared Other or that Gypsy are the tempting, liberating, or desired Other—frequently coexisted in the ideological stance of a group or an individual.²¹ Recurrent in Victorian Gypsology are emphases on squalid living conditions, unsupervised children, habits of trickery, and low morals, yet equally prevalent is a Romantic conception of the Gypsy as a picturesque, bohemian curiosity. Common to all opinions is the notion of primitivism. Academic opinion in particular regarded the Romany as a “pure-blooded,” though notably primitive, race. Gypsologist Arthur Symons stated: “The Gypsies are nearer to the animals than any race known to us in Europe” (qtd. in Acton 121-22²²). As this race and its customs were believed to be dying out, well-meaning efforts were made throughout nineteenth-century Europe to document and preserve the Romany culture, but a public happy to enjoy Gypsy melodies in the salon or symphony hall considered a physical Romany presence in its communities undesirable. As George Borrow observed in 1874, “. . . there can be no

²¹ See Acton on the much-contested, ostensibly humanitarian Moveable Dwellings Bill, first introduced to the English Parliament in 1885, and the curiously ambivalent stance taken by members of the Gypsy Lore Society towards the objects of their interest.

²² The original source is “In Praise of Gypsies,” *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* April 1908: 295.

doubt that [Gypsies] live in almost continual violation of the laws intended for the protection of society” (179). The nineteenth-century Gypsy represented a criminal element hovering at the borders of civilised society, a potential disruption to order, stability, and social control.

Cultural, racial, and social similarities between the English Gypsy as described by Victorian ethnologists and the Maori represented in early junior colonial fiction are manifold. Many white Victorians saw the Maori, like the Gypsy, as a noble, pure-blooded primitive with picturesque customs. These more positive feelings towards Gypsy and Maori life were usually associated with sentimental nostalgia for the past; symphonic Gypsy airs had their parallel in the Maori tourist concert party (accompanied by Western guitars), as a remnant of an almost-lost culture. Both Gypsy and Maori also represented a lifestyle in need of civilising and a soul in need of saving, and both suggested an ever-present threat of anti-social behaviour, as well as an undesirable presence upon European land.

Most importantly, the Gypsy motif emphasises the trope of mobility. An itinerant native population is seen to be dispossessing itself of land, *willingly* and *naturally* impermanent, idle, ignorant of the productive uses of soil. Such ideology functions to excuse and justify pakeha land acquisition. Although nomadism has been popularly viewed as genetic or cultural in basis, and suggestive of an irrational lifestyle, Acton argues that Gypsy nomadism is nothing more nor less than a pattern of economic necessity: the majority of Romany were settled for hundreds of years but were driven off their land during the late-Victorian and Edwardian agricultural depression and forced to assume a travelling lifestyle (1, 125, 257).

However, as Hulme notes in reference to Caribbean colonisation, . . . strategies of a colonial discourse were directed in the first place at demonstrating a separation between the desired land and its native inhabitants. Baffled at the complex but effective native system of food production, the English seem to have latched on to the one (minor)

facet of behaviour that they thought they recognized—mobility, and argued on that basis an absence of *proper* connection between the land and its first inhabitants. . . . this settled pattern of living became in the discourse of colonialism an aimless, nomadic wandering that, by extension, left the land empty and virgin. (*Colonial Encounters* 156-57)

Hulme goes on to suggest that the mobility trope is actually a systematic projection of colonial *European* behaviour on to the native population, the type of behaviour psychoanalysts refer to as “disowning projection” (*Colonial Encounters* 167 and notes). Indeed, in New Zealand, as in the Caribbean of which Hulme writes, the first colonists, explorers, and missionaries were neither settled nor, despite their technological prowess, capable of feeding themselves. “Well into the 1850s, most European settlements were dependent upon Maori trading and provision of foodstuffs” (Hutt 23). Arguably, by the 1860s and ’70s, when New Zealand-set children’s fiction began to be produced, this situation was changing and settlers were establishing permanent homesteads and productive farms. Certainly by the end of the nineteenth century the settled, prospering farmer had become an icon of national stability, and the itinerant pakeha drifter or “sundowner” figure was viewed by an increasingly urbanised New Zealand society with suspicion, as a disreputable if not criminal element (see Phillips, “Mummy’s Boys” 223).²³ Both reasons—pakeha are not yet settled and pakeha are not itinerant—contribute to the use of the Maori mobility trope in children’s texts throughout the colonial period, implying an othering and debasing of the “degenerate” indigene, together with justification for pakeha land acquisition and control.

Local Maori in *Distant Homes* are rootless, ready to resettle wherever the current economic situation dictates. Lucy Graham’s first impression of them is as exotic “gipseys”; their settlement looks like a

²³ A very disreputable sundowner appears in “The Little Maories.”

“gipsy encampment” by night (172). The Graham homestead offers the tribe such enticing civilisation, education, and commercial opportunities that they quickly dismantle their former settlement, establish a new pa and market nearby, and begin to grow “quite rich” on the proceeds of their weekly trading with the fledgling pakeha community (143); meanwhile the settlers’ land is under no threat. In *The Boy Colonists* the local tribe is unsettled and impermanent; small and nomadic, it “frequently moved up and down the river” (42). Maori in *The Redfords* have no ancestral lands. Chief Tyro is wealthy but has been reduced to one of “the wandering class.” In an image resonant of the rich Gypsy potentates of European folk-consciousness, Tyro comes to Dunedin to sit for his own and his spouse’s portraits and, with “his dingy wife and her gypsy-looking companions,” he sometimes camps on the Redfords’ side of Pelichit’s Bay (103). These nomads are “tolerably quiet” and busy themselves weaving baskets (a traditional Romany occupation); however one of their number, an “idle native of the wandering class who used to be seen in the neighbourhood”—a type of Gypsy Rover—supplies William Tarakua with the liquor which is his downfall (103). It is no surprise when the tribe is forced to flee the area for good, leaving a void for permanent white occupancy.

Unsavory, thieving, kidnapping native itinerants camp in the forest near Golden Grove in *Across Two Seas*. “Good Maoris hate them,” comments Chief Tatau; “they, like a gipsy race, have no home, but wander, steal, disgrace honest people” (127). *Across Two Seas*, like the early European commentators on South American cannibalism, here makes subtle use of the adjective “good” to differentiate racial subgroups. Tatau’s tribe are acceptable because assimilable, the itinerants an uncivilisable threat on the fringes of society. Having stripped the bush of wild pigs they now steal settlers’ livestock and have “made themselves very obnoxious everywhere” (127-28). Like Tyro’s, this group is nomadic and cowardly, disappearing when challenged by settlers.

The trope of nomadism continues in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles*, where Te Hone’s Whangarei tribe frequently moves about between inland

and coastal areas. In contrast, Te Hone's pakeha wife reveals her own inherent racial characteristics by refusing to go with them. The text also mentions a Maori who left the North Island to emigrate to Stewart Island with a portion of his tribe (90). The impression given is that Maori enjoy wandering and care little for land, while secure settlement is both natural to and needful for Europeans.

The Sartorial Circus

Particularly striking in this literature's Gypsy resemblances is the motif of gaudy, curiously clad Maori. When Lucy Pemberton in *Waihoura* crowns the civilising changes she is trying to effect by re-clothing Waihoura in crinolines, she declares: "Now you are like us outside, you must become like us inside" (46). "Waihoura," notes Marquis, "is Lucy's empire" (65). The accompanying illustration presents Waihoura as a decorous Victorian young lady. Yet such effortless assimilation, suggested through the facile adoption of respectable Western dress, is the exception rather than the rule in the literature examined here. More often these texts present the common imperialist literary trope of indigenes "stigmatised by their wearing of inappropriate or shabby, discarded European clothing" (Malchow 230), which indicates that natives are inauthentic and absurd, degenerate anachronisms in the colonial world. This ideology has been termed "chronopolitics" (Virilio 79), being the suggestion that a race or nation is dying out, confined to a past period.

Throughout this fiction, images of oddly-attired natives are used as an anti-conquest strategy, an "ubi sunt" lament for the presumably disappearing pure-blooded, and traditionally clothed, racial type. Inhabitants of the first pa the Graham family visits ". . . were poor, and adopted many European habits, which, though rendering them in reality more comfortable, sadly lessened the picturesqueness of their Pah" (*Distant Homes* 44). Maori, says the text, look "much better" in mats and feathers; English dress "makes them move clumsily, while a white shirt collar, and gay tie, makes their tattooed faces look very funny" (167). The

chronopolitics here are clear: Maori belong to the past. While the text paints Lucy as disappointed in this (“the few natives she saw were scarcely different from Europeans, and, except for their tattooed faces might have passed for gipseys,” 67); it nonetheless emphasises that the Grahams arrive in New Zealand *after* the age of the Maori. Lucy is consequently permitted to mock the deflated ideal, for instance laughing “heartily” over an anecdote about a native schoolgirl who wears a long-sleeved dress as if it were a pair of trousers.

Maori in *The Boy Settler* likewise suffer from a deplorable lack of sartorial taste and deportment. Barefoot women “swagger” about and smoke pipes, wearing “comical” gaudy clothing. At one point Sydney observes a “motley cavalcade” whose “clothes might have constituted the stock-in-trade of a second-hand clothes shop” (157). These indigenes provide an amusing sideshow, and their innocent vanity is presented as decidedly inferior to that of Sydney (who is enormously proud of his soldier’s uniform and farmer’s costume).

Nga-Hepe of *Doing and Daring* too rides in the sartorial circus. Despite his fine horse, saddle, and top hat, the remainder of his apparel—a blanket, a shirt, a lady’s scarf, a scarlet coat, feathers—creates a “grotesque appearance” (15), defusing his more fearsome aspects. Similarly in *Under One Standard* hostile Wiremu Kingi looks awkward, and much less alarming, in an open-necked shirt and “capacious trousers” than in tribal costume (66).

A Girl of the Fortunate Isles describes the sight at Whangarei wharf:

Maoris . . . clad in every hue of the rainbow . . . a dignified gray-haired man, with curly hair ornamented by the black and white feathers which proclaimed his rank as a *rangatira*, stalked majestically to and fro, followed by a little bowed woman . . . resplendent in a pink silk blouse, and a skirt the exact shade and brilliance of Reckitt’s Paris

blue.²⁴ She carried a pair of patent leather boots under her arm, but her copper-coloured feet were bare, and dusty, from long tramping in the wake of her lord and master. (215)

The lookalike Romany potentate and his dingy wife from *The Redfords* are recycled here as pitiable objects of absurdity. Even friendly Kushti provides humour in her “ragged old cloth skirt, a new print blouse, and a very smart hat, under which was coiled and frizzed the very yellowest hair” (216).

Gypsyish old hags with flowing locks and orange kerchiefs regularly appear to mutter curses in these texts. One, from the “local camp,” is glimpsed in *Patricia-Pat* (“on a white pony, a brilliant orange-hued scarf tied over her dusky locks,” 228). In *Under One Standard*, “One hideous old crone who sat by the roadside with an orange handkerchief bound round her head, and her elfish black locks hanging straight on each side of her face, looked up with a leer at Mary and her baby” (177).

Laments of a decline in “picturesqueness” and an increase of absurdity in Maori appearance following the arrival of pakeha abound in historical accounts of the colony. Sherrin’s *Early History of New Zealand* relates the Reverend G. Clarke’s belief that his Kaikohe congregation “formed one of the most grotesque gatherings conceivable”; one man wears a shirt as if it were trousers, another a carter’s frock and two black waistcoats with no trousers or footwear. “Such and more ludicrous was the outward appearance of my congregation,” states Clarke; “and, to crown the whole, they were perfectly unconscious of there being anything about them to excite a smile.” Sherrin comments that this demonstrates “the serious manner in which the natives sought to prove their civilization” (389); it shows also the serious manner in which representatives of a colonising power sought to prove native inability to adapt to or understand the rules of civilisation.

²⁴ A cleaning agent, used for whitening linen.

Further examples of this colonial sartorial circus, many of which bear striking similarity to the accounts in colonial children's fiction, are found in Nicholas' *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, while Polack's travel narratives recount several ludicrous spectacles of Maori in Western garb, including the wearing of a shirt like an apron and a pair of trousers tied about the neck, men in women's gowns, and a man with arms pinioned in a coat, "as civilians would incarcerate a lunatic within a strait waistcoat" (*Manners and Customs* 181). Maning's *Old New Zealand* pours scorn on degenerate younger Maori who ape European manners, customs, and clothing.

In *Amongst the Maoris* Jack Stanley simultaneously scorns and laments the decline of the picturesque native ideal: "Some of these Maoris were dressed in their native mat, and looked picturesque though filthy; whilst others had quite destroyed all interest in their appearance by adopting European dress, in which they looked awkward and ridiculous" (68-69). The tohunga, whom Jack makes a particular target of his mockery, is a prominent performer in this theatre of the absurd, ". . . decorated with a pair of trousers, made in the European fashion, though I think no London or Paris tailor would have disputed the making of them. They were of a very large size check pattern, and, being also much too big for their wearer, were confined round the waist with a belt of flax" (110).

Jack determines to reclothe his servant Marara in a manner he considers more appropriate to a "noble savage." The act of reclothing indicates ownership and control, symbolising the colonising effort in microcosm, and Jack knows what he is about: "I have to keep Marara in order and the first thing I am going to do with him . . . is to clothe him in clean clothing" (277). Jack's pakeha friends acquiesce in this, Bradshaw suggesting Jack provide Marara with a suit of livery in his family colours, while Bernard thinks Marara would look well in buttons. However, in keeping with this text's overall chronopolitician view, Jack decides that Marara must belong to the past, unambiguously:

“Marara shall have a bran-new flax mat, and nothing besides. I will try to keep him an unsophisticated savage as long as I can; and I shall insist upon the old mat being made a bonfire of. Only fancy how it will burn and fizzle! I should think Marara, with his Maori nose, will enjoy the smell of it.” (277)

The colour and qualities of Marara’s replacement garment carry overtones of biblical righteousness as Jack, playing God, scorns both to keep the mat which was once deemed acceptable to cover Jack’s own nakedness, and to dress Marara as a European. Continuing in the tradition of travel-writers who wash their natives clean, Jack determines Marara must look like a Maori but not smell like one, and proceeds to manipulate him into a sanitised, tourist-curiosity native in concert party clothing. By manipulating to chronopoliticist ideals the one Maori prepared to submit to his control, Jack seeks to reverse the disappointment which the New Zealand indigene has presented to his senses: he emigrated expecting to find “. . . some amount of romance, at any rate; not to see a lot of frightful creatures dressed up like bad imitations of ourselves” (78).

Bad imitations of ourselves—the phrase is worthy of examination. It is on the one hand an instance of Marryat’s irony; throughout the novel she is never above taking gentle swipes at colonial pride. On a deeper, psychoanalytic, level it suggests the projection of Victorian fears, fascinations, sins, and desires onto the indigenous Other. By no accident did the Victorian popular press regularly display “comic images of the absurd nonwhite in European dress” (Malchow 237). The Briton, particularly when faced with colonial physical privation and a sometimes inclement climate, feared to look foolish, incapable, or less developed—physically, morally, and spiritually—than the indigene. He similarly feared to see the savage, presumably an individual inhabiting a lower echelon of the evolutionary hierarchy, look like himself. Harvey has observed how the fashion of nations for dressing their men in rigid black clothing has regularly coincided with their highest points of international power, and suggests that the values associated with the wearing of black

attire—“self-effacement and uniformity, impersonality and authority, discipline and self-discipline, a willingness to be strict and a willingness to die” might act as a cohesive glue to maintain imperial order (156). The years 1840-1870 were a time of British imperial profit and expansion, when the formal costume of the British gentleman denoted his importance and his faith in the imperial ethos; however from the mid-1870s Britain waned as a commercial power, though the Empire continued to enlarge geographically until after the Great War. Harvey admits an element of imperial *angst* appearing in the consistent adoption of dark dress after 1870 is difficult to prove; however, “One can certainly say that High Victorian black was important black, and, however rich, was accompanied by cares” (157). Harvey sees the social coherence and acceptance of authority implied by respectably-dressed Victorians as far from serene: “. . . [the clothes] are the product of a will and effort to maintain them . . . the insignia also of misgiving and anxiety, the uniform of an effort and assertion of discipline” (153). Thus the Victorian is both horrified and fascinated to watch creative variations played out upon the trappings of the civilisation he brings, in this case his familiar if restrictive clothing, and is determined to present such imitations of himself as *bad*—not only in bad taste, but morally “bad,” an affront to the natural order of things.

For an outwardly conventional Victorian colonist to turn repressive garments upside down or inside out, or wear loud clashing colours, would be shocking, daring, and—perhaps—desirable, imparting a sense of freedom similar to the temporary license granted by the fantastic costumes and role reversals of the medieval carnival. Images of cross-dressing which appear repeatedly throughout these “sartorial circus” narratives are especially deviant as they threaten two boundaries—race and gender—and, in consequence, they appear especially attractive. This is made clear when Lucy Graham giggles about the Maori girl who turns a dress into trousers, trousers being garments Lucy herself would wear if she could fulfil her desires and act like a boy. Representations of such carnivalesque attire abound in “factual” accounts

of the colony's early travellers and missionaries, and while most writers confine themselves to mocking the various collections of Maori sartorial oddities they witness, Maning goes further, warning that the introduction of Western dress and customs is turning the younger Maori generation from noble warriors into degenerated spineless dandies (though, he observes, the dandy can also hide the savage). These images also can be read as the "disowning projections" noted earlier, which have their origin in *European* psychology and behaviour (Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* 167 and notes). Thus when Mark Vaughan of *Across Two Seas* admonishes his younger siblings for laughing at Maori, his brother taunts him that he will soon be wearing mats and feathers too if he is not careful. The idea of the white man "gone native" is a powerful image of debasement and degeneration (see Malchow 192-94).

Breaking such cultural boundaries threatened European civilised superiority, and in consequence throughout the period literary images of the native as a threat or an object for conversion yielded to images showing the indigene as an object of derision (Malchow 119-20). Thus a male member of *Across Two Seas*' thieving Maori Gypsy tribe is glimpsed looking ludicrous, in Betsy's stolen Sunday bonnet, wrong side before. Even friendly Chief Tatau's willingness to assimilate is represented by the trope of sartorial caricature, suggesting the indigene as being both incapable of complete civilisation and insufficiently intelligent to grasp the fact: ". . . his appearance was, as he thought, rendered truly noble by the addition of an ordinary grey-and-white flannel shirt of English manufacture; on his head waved a plume of feathers" (96). Maori ideas of nobility are deflated here by the more sophisticated pakeha perspective. Eight years later, Tatau appears at church in a tweed suit and "thinks himself quite an Englishman" (185). These "he thought," "he thinks" phrases are regularly recycled in nineteenth-century representations of Western-garbed Maori, suggesting the inferiority of

Maori thought processes and cultural taste.²⁵ Spiers believes novels like Forde's showed Maori who were encouraged "to become, in fact, brown Englishmen" (3), but this is not entirely the case. Tatau, the primitive, is permitted only to "think himself" like an Englishman. For him to *actually* become "an Englishman" would be, to the colonialist mind, unpermissible.

The heroes of *The Boy Travellers in Australasia* are introduced to a Maori who is a prime example of assimilation. Like Lucy of *Distant Homes*, "Frank was disappointed at seeing the man dressed in European garb, and looking altogether so much like an Englishman that he was not readily distinguished from the men of British origin" (193). He is fair, with the "complexion of a native of the middle or south of France, and certainly lighter than the southern Italian," and an aristocrat: "The families of the chiefs are readily distinguished by their superior grace and dignity, just as the aristocratic part of a race is distinguished in any other part of the world" (194). However the etching accompanying this description of a handsome noble savage is entitled "In a State of Decadence" (a phrase which does not appear in the text), and shows an ill-shaven, unkempt, cross-eyed subject, with an expression which can be read as intoxicated, surly, foolish, or all three. The illustration impresses upon the reader a negative stereotype of decadence of equal if not greater power than the assimilationist text.

Although texts differ as to the preferred alternative to contemporary Maori's strange attire (assimilationist texts requiring its replacement by European clothing, and extinctionist texts preferring a return to native dress, thereby signifying a happy acceptance that Maori belong to the past), all agree that a patchwork of Maori and modern is unacceptable. Such a patchwork is a kind of hybridity which, by giving the indigene a means of existing in the modern world in a distinctive way, is abhorrent to assimilationists and extinctionists alike.

²⁵ Another example is found in *Tiki's Trip to Town*, where young Tiki receives his first clothes: ". . . a gaudy-patterned Crimean shirt—a size too big for him—in which his mother, no doubt, thought he looked very tiki [sic]" (i.e. tika, meaning correct).

Greedy Idle Thieves

As well as an appearance suggesting decadence, traits of cupidity and idleness routinely associated with the Gypsy in Britain were smoothly transferred to their southern counterparts. Images of rich chiefs, made comfortable and docile by land sales, figure strongly in this, as do images of cunning native traders. The assimilationist behaviour lauded in *Distant Homes* does not always correspond to the novel's cynical and infantilising asides indicating that Maori assume nominal Christianity and seek the outward forms of civilisation from "cunning," to obtain material goods. The reader of *Across Two Seas* is informed that the real motivation behind Maori friendliness is the acquisition of material items, including guns. Similar greed, violence, and cunning characterises Tomatu in *Adventures Ashore and Afloat*, whose lust for arms is screened by a pretended desire for Christianity and education (151).

Other texts show Maori as idlers satisfying their inherent greed by theft. In *Holmwood* Matangee robs the Parry homestead; after the raid his men succumb to gluttony and sloth, giving their prisoners opportunity to escape. Nomadic Maori in *Across Two Seas* steal the settlers' tinware, clothes, and pretty children. The Vaughans fear to leave anything lying about the settlement, as does Uncle Martin in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles*, for "those thieving natives from the kainga under Te Hoa are always nosing around for something to lay their thievish fingers on" (210). They are idlers, too: ". . . it is just ruin to try to work [the land] with Maori labour. Six shillings a day I am paying Waliko, and he is not worth six pennies!" (35).

Cupidity in these texts can also appear in the guise of selfish Maori who refuse to sell land. Several texts, such as *Distant Homes*, lay the cause of land wars firmly at the feet of inter-tribal disagreements over property ownership and sale. *Under One Standard* presents Wiremu Kingi as a scapegoat for all that is disliked about Maori: he is angry, troublesome, ruffianly, vengeful, duplicitous, and drunken, and most of

all “a pestilent chief . . . rich and insolent: not only won’t sell his own land, but hinders those that would” (56).

Dirty and Disorderly

As well as being presented as idle thieves, as in Victorian Gypsology, Maori in these texts are depicted as living in squalid tribal conditions, indicating a race in need of paternalistic care. In *Across Two Seas* we read of “the wretched wharries which sheltered the despised race” of filthy Maori nomads (127-28). The indigene here becomes a “curious-looking object which crouched in the hut doorway,” degraded through dirt and self-neglect to a level scarcely human.

The first “Indian” met by Jack and Bernard in *Amongst the Maoris* is also a filthy “sly” itinerant who begs for tobacco. When Jack complains that “He wasn’t my idea of a noble New Zealander,” Bernard replies: “I think travellers are very apt to wash their natives clean before they send them into print. I fancy most uncivilized people are dirty” (83).

This “first impression” ignoble New Zealander is a significant image, suggesting a colony cluttered with the unworthy. From here on the novel brims with descriptions of Maori ugliness; filth (foul odours, copious perspiration, unsanitary dwellings, fleas, and lice); and lack of hygiene (foodstuffs are putrid; decomposing corpses litter the pa). Jack scoffs when Bradshaw urges him not to hurt the peoples’ feelings:

“Feelings!” Jack Stanley exclaimed; “I did not suppose they had any . . . I fancy they have about as much feeling as they have sense of smell.”

“You must not judge of them as you would of ourselves,” said the Colonel. (121)

Here Maori are othered, far from “ourselves.” As Marquis notes, “Marryat’s story is . . . disturbingly infatuated with the gothicized figure of the Maori” and emphasises “the Kristevan power of horror, the abjection, the fixation on abomination, filth, and threatening disorder” (56-57).

Similar images of Maori squalor appear in early travel narratives, proof of the complex intertextuality which pervaded much colonial literature.²⁶ They provide ideological justification for the civilising mission, as in the following ethnographic-style passage, describing Jack's first glimpse of a pa:

They were mostly dressed in flax mats, which, as we see them, are nice, clean, fresh-looking things, but upon the person of a Maori are dirty and frowsy, and anything but fresh; but some of them were adorned with blankets, which were a degree more dirty than the mats. Their hair, with some, hung down their backs in elf-locks; with others, twined up on end, like hearth-brooms; and in either case it was thick with a sort of pomade of grease overlaid with dust. (109-10)

Outward appearance suggests moral status, and ugliness and dirt connote evil, suggested by those elf-locks and (witches') brooms. The eyes of Jack, the text's "seeing-man," observe and disapprove, positing natives as "reductive, incomplete beings suffering from the inability to have become what Europeans already are, or to have made themselves into what Europeans intend them to be" (Pratt 152).

A similar blend of disparagement and mockery is heard in *The Boy Colonists*, which describes a Maori village:

. . . several mud huts thatched: the walls were very low, and the chimney built so as to allow as much smoke as possible to enter and remain in the hut: every one who knows what a painful thing smoke from a wood-fire is, and how it makes the eyes smart, will see how delightful one of these retreats must have been to live in. The natives in and about these huts seemed very dirty. . . . [Maori huts] always reminded Ernest of pigstyes . . . (41-42)

²⁶ See, for example, Polack *Travels and Adventures* 185, 321, 381, and Nicholas I:87, 267, 282-83.

Darwinian Perspectives: Apes and Children

Motifs and themes indicative of Victorian Gypsiology, therefore, abound throughout much early New Zealand-set children's fiction. Other authors of these texts utilise tropes drawn from nineteenth-century science, such as social Darwinism.

The Maori, suggest several works, have progressed—and can progress—no higher than a simian or childlike state of evolutionary development. *Amongst the Maoris* takes as its authority the tenets of European scientific empiricism, with white civilisation located as the dominant model before which lesser civilisations fall. “But do you think the Maoris liked being taken possession of?” Jack asks. Bradshaw replies: “Perhaps they were not asked . . . They have been treated as ignorant children, who must be taught to behave themselves; but I think now they begin to appreciate the advantages of civilization” (212). *Amongst the Maoris* implies that Maori are on the whole not civilisable and presents them as a curious, often pitiable, yet ultimately repellent and degenerate racial type.

Methods more subtle than Bradshaw's heavy-handed lectures were employed by other authors of the era. In *Distant Homes* Captain Graham, fearing for his family's safety should the local tribe revert to savagery, attempts to “. . . persuade them that they were better further inland, and amongst their old haunts; they only answered that they loved the English, and wished to be like them . . . and said they wished to know how to speak like books, and would give their children to the English women to teach” (137).

Although *Distant Homes* presents Maori as eager to copy pakeha behaviour (such ideology being necessary for the furtherance of the imperial mission) the novel's assimilationist stance is periodically undermined by images or allusions which posit Maori as a degenerate species who cannot truly succeed within civilisation and who either pretend to assimilate in order to gratify their greed or who absurdly attempt to imitate their betters. Native mimicry of pakeha values in this text is often of a ridiculous, childish, or simian nature (such as the

episode where Maori copy the English by planting rose gardens). These indigenes know they are the pakeha's social and evolutionary inferior. High-ranking tribesmen who visit the Graham homestead naturally position Captain Graham as their "Master" (135).

Above all, Aylmer's primitives are childlike. Even their language is infantilised, being specifically equated to the baby-talk of two-year-old Aps, while social Darwinist ideology is more than suggested by the episode where the Grahams observe Maori children running about naked and undisciplined, "like wild goats," leading Aps to inquire whether all monkeys had tails (143): Darwinism out of the mouth of babes, as it were. Yet, like children or pets, *Distant Homes'* Maori are controllable and teachable. Captain Graham believes a firm hand and a good example will keep them in line and declines to form a colonial militia. His presence as an Englishman is considered authority sufficient—which is fortunate, as Graham admits the impossibility of a handful of scattered settlers successfully defending a region like Canterbury.

The few Maori met by Ernest in *The Boy Colonists* similarly each display some degree of mental, emotional, physical or moral weakness or degeneration, frequently characterised as childishness or harmlessness; as Pratt has observed, when natives ceased to be considered a serious threat and acquired the status of a conquered people, European travel literature granted them the stereotype of being "benign, ingenuous, childlike victims" (65). The trope of the prelogical indigene has long held currency in European thought (see Obeyesekere, *Apotheosis* 15-16 and Gilman 140), and this is the light in which Ernest analyses a Maori government boat crew, whom he describes as not only lazy and addicted to dubious entertainment (cards, brandy, and tobacco), but as exhibiting childlike and primitive, if not primate-like, characteristics, ". . . jumping and capering about in all directions, all giving orders, shouting and screaming at each other" (21). Elwell's memoirs recall the sight of Maori racing paper boats down a creek: the men "jumped, clapped their hands, and laughed like children" (21-22). At least, Ernest informs us, these are an improvement over the "unmanageable" white riff-raff who formerly

manned the landing craft, both monkeys and children being governable and trainable.

Elwell purports to be writing a factual account of New Zealand, and thus utilises tropes and phrases similar to those found in early New Zealand travel narratives. Polack too describes Maori as having “infantine minds” and being prone to “caper with delight” (*Travels and Adventures* 180); in a later work this is rephrased as “infantile manners” (*Manners and Customs* 3). Arthur S. Thomson believed Maori had “the minds of children” (I: 84). Such characterisation is, as Pratt points out, simply another anti-conquest strategy, a method of asserting European hegemony and superiority while purporting to pity the Other.

Holmwood’s assimilable Maori, such as Toi Korro, are both infantile and simian: “The native behaved very well, and watched the Major and his family, that he might do in all things as they did, in the way of conveying the food to his mouth; indeed his manners were quite those of a gentleman” (8). Toi Korro’s actions are redolent of his prototype, *Robinson Crusoe’s* Man Friday. Prime assimilationist material, by the next day he is sipping tea and shaking hands instead of rubbing noses. Those of his ilk “adapt themselves very readily to the habits of civilized life” and make useful millers, sailors, innkeepers, woodcutters, or farmers; however, “though they are intelligent, sober, and industrious, they are rapidly decreasing in numbers” (15). Whether hostile or assimilable, readers are assured that Maori are merely a temporary inconvenience to the colonist.

Similar images appear in *Doing and Daring*, where fifteen-year-old Edwin is amused to observe that Nga-Hepe’s whare contains such tawdry, childish treasures as a feathered hat, a gaudy tablecloth, and empty scent bottles. Nga-Hepe’s children are grinding a barrel-organ: the analogy to monkeys is unmistakable. Throughout this text Maori are repeatedly represented as lazy, puerile, ignorant, emotionally unstable, greedy, and untrustworthy, their attempts to participate in civilisation comical (the once-proud warrior Kakiki attempts to “kill” a quivering brawn jelly). *Maori and Settler* too positions New Zealand “Indians” as

insolent, untrustworthy, and gullible, “like children . . . easily excited, superstitious in the extreme” (215).

Under One Standard shows much sympathy towards the native cause but presents an ambivalent overall image of Maori (Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 25; *Oxford History* 528). Its charismatic Bishop Selwyn character advocates peace, yet those Maori who conduct a peaceful sit-in at Waitara are infantilised by the pakeha Chief Commissioner: “We leave today because, like silly children, you do not let us carry through our work, but you have yet to learn that white men cannot be insulted with impunity” (171).

In hero David’s nightmare of “Maoris, strange fantastic monsters, more like baboons than men, who waved glittering green weapons” (62) evolutionary associations are clear. Wi-Kingi is:

. . . a huge Maori . . . over six feet in height and stout in proportion, his only clothing a cloth round his loins, a blanket across his shoulders, and a bunch of white feathers stuck behind his right ear. His colour was a dark brown, his hair jet black; his features, especially his mouth, thick and unprepossessing. In his hand he carried a greenstone axe, with which he had been hewing his way through the bush. With a curious imperious gesture he signed to Jacob Godwin to stop . . . (54-55).

The stereotypical negroid facial features, near-nakedness, blackness, hairiness, and unnatural largeness are gorilla-like. Wi-Kingi’s “imperious” gesture is considered “curious” rather than natural, implying that the Maori is no master in the colony.

Racial Decay

Images of the indigene as a child or ape incapable of caring for itself, as having no standards of hygiene, as being on a lower level of the evolutionary hierarchy, culminate in these texts’ depictions of a race physically and morally enervated, doomed because unable to adapt to Western civilisation or Western diseases.

Such social Darwinist ideas of survival of the fittest and natural selection fill *Amongst the Maoris*. Gilderdale claims this novel is less racist than earlier juvenile texts and that Marryat makes attempts to understand the Maori (“Children’s Literature” 526). Certainly it describes most Maori as good-natured and intelligent, an improvement over more degenerate (and blacker) Aborigines who “seem little removed from the lower animals—utterly mindless” (255). The following dialogue attempts to justify imperial chronopolitics, with Colonel Bradshaw countering Jack’s hesitant questions of conscience with the theories of Victorian progressivist civilisation:

“. . . the Maoris I consider a very intelligent people, who do not at all come under the head of that very generic term, ‘niggers’. Of course you must have read comparative physiology of different races. The Maoris assimilate closely to ourselves, I believe, in the formation of the skull; in other words, they show likeness to the Caucasians. The wonder is that they have continued so long uncivilized.

“I do not suppose they will ever civilize as a nation. Years hence New Zealand will be peopled by the English, and the natural ‘lords of the soil’ will die out: they are doing so rapidly.”

. . . .

“There has always been in every age a dominant race, and no doubt it is so arranged for the advance of civilization. It does not seem so much as if the English nation endeavoured to push the rightful owners from their territory as that the owners become absorbed as it were. I think the settlers in this country have tried to educate, to civilize, and to Christianize the Maoris; but I doubt if anything will be done with them.” (255-57)

Maori, for all the fine qualities resulting from a slightly elevated level of evolutionary development suggested by their similarity to

European cranial phrenology, and their hitherto undisputed status as “natural lords of the soil,” are at core uncivilisable heathens who must “naturally” fall before the “dominant race”—though exactly how this natural process of obsolescence is to be achieved is not stated. Were they capable of civilisation, Bradshaw suggests, they would have civilised themselves by now. This passage is an anti-conquest narrative par excellence, its assimilationist stance masking its actual extinctionist argument.

Similar sentiments lurk behind an assimilationist front in *The Greenstone Door*, which draws parallels between fragile Maori morals and fragile Maori physical constitutions. The reader is told that “. . . from a number of well-ordered communities, the Maori nation had degenerated into a mob whose individual members regarded with equal indifference the law of the Queen and the Ariki [Priest-Chief]” (279-80). Urban Maori sleep in the streets, the men “boisterous and tricky,” the women “bold and worse” (156). Some of this can be blamed on lower-class pakeha modelling the wrong ways and creating what Cedric terms a self-fulfilling formula of “bloody Maoris” (157): this is the simian trope once again, the idea that Maori are, like apes and children, impressionable and lacking in adult rationality. However it is excused, such behaviour implies degeneration from a racial ideal. Tregear observed in 1885: “The degraded Natives who hang about our towns have little of the appearance or the character of the true Maori” (80).

Gilderdale believes *The Greenstone Door* to be the first juvenile New Zealand novel in which there is “a suggestion that the town-dwelling settlers are contemptuous, rather than fearful, of the ‘bloody Maoris’” and which contrasts the degradation of city Maori with the pride of those still in traditional surroundings (*A Sea Change* 47). Yet images of degeneracy proliferate in the novel’s pa settings as well. Cedric views modern tohunga as “but a poor lot of degenerates” compared to the likes of old-style Te Atua Mangu (34); self-destructive “habits of sloth and gluttony” are exhibited in Chief Te Moanaroa’s bathetic end (against better advice, he gorges himself to death in his pakeha’s cucumber

patch); Te Huata, once the “Great One,” has become the pitiable figurehead of a scattered tribe:

As elsewhere, the villagers had descended from the heights to the plains, building for themselves new, but, I am afraid, less substantial and ornamental dwellings among the growing crops. Aloft, amid the ruins of his fortress . . . the Great One dwelt in solitary state, waiting the summons of the Hour to Be. Around him were the hundred dismantled homes of his seceded people, and the closed, ochre-painted doors of the departed dead. (258)

The widespread myth that physically and morally degenerating Maori were prey to disease and early death runs through this novel. When Cedric first visits Te Huata’s pa in the 1840s he notes that the undertaker’s hands are full. Again and again Cedric pauses before the whare of some departed chief, its sealed door daubed with red ochre like the cross-marked houses of plague-stricken medieval Europe. Satchell’s Governor Grey character justifies colonial war as simply another form of disease: it “was already established in the blood of the people before [the pakeha] landed here, and no effort can eradicate it till it has run its course” (297). Only the fittest survive: “For a thousand who fell in the field, ten thousand withered in the airs that blew from the habitations of the white men. The living inhabitants of a country, animal and vegetable, mutually adjust themselves” (278).

The Greenstone Door implicitly suggests a politics of eradication, using ideas from cultural Darwinism and natural ecological processes to alleviate white guilt and tacitly proposing that settlers of conscience should forget the “civilising mission” to Maori and concentrate on building a New Britain in the South Seas. The new European order is justified for bringing not only good things to Maori, but also disease and guns; even the noble Purcell secretly supplies the tribes with weapons (260-61). He believes that “It is the clear duty of all living creatures to rebel against extinction; on that depends the advancement, even the continuance of life” (258)—*pakeha* life, that is. It is considered natural

that Maori should rebel, but not win. The novel's suggestion of a disrupted ecosystem which naturally coincided with the arrival of the pakeha presupposes that Maori will disappear anyway: war merely hastens the inevitable.

The Boy Colonists notes both physical and moral Maori weaknesses. Southern natives are "few and weak," Northerners "altogether a finer and more energetic class of men" to whom the Southerners have traditionally been subject (20). Yet even the Northerners, epitomised in Tairoa the handsome cannibal chief, are disappearing due to their degenerate behaviour (they have all but eaten each other up). Thus *The Boy Colonists* posits Maori as made up of weaklings who are naturally dying out and savages who must be eradicated.

In Kingston's texts the unsanitary, insufficiently evolved natives naturally fall before the onset of Western diseases. Assimilable Maori princesses like Waihoura are removed from the tribe and nursed back to health by settlers with hygienic accommodation and medicine, but the "old-style" pa of chiefs such as Moodewhy are both hotbeds of vice and unsanitary breeding grounds for measles. Major Parry hardly needs to kill the hostile chiefs, as disease appears to be managing the task nicely for him.

Similarly doomed to natural selection is every Maori in *Under One Standard*, who is one of two types of degenerate: the morally unfit (hostile Wi-Kingi), and the physically unfit (noble George, who dies of "consumption, that cruel enemy of the coloured races, developing with awful rapidity the seed of disease which must have hitherto lain latent in his constitution," 187).

Trollope addresses the matter bluntly. New Zealand's "unusually savage race of savages" is dying out, and the sooner the better, he suggests, as "the race was not progressing towards civilisation" (112, 75, 124). According to Trollope, pakeha believe that "when the Maori has melted, here will be the navel of the earth." Trollope continues, "The poor Maori who is now the source of all Auckland poetry, must first melt

... [then] I see no reason why Auckland should not rival London” as a productive economic civilisation (109). The process takes the form of natural selection through disease:

... contact with Europeans does not improve them. At the touch of the higher race they are poisoned and melt away. There is scope for poetry in their past history. There is room for philanthropy as to their present conditions. But in regard to their future,—there is hardly a place for hope. (133-134)

Absence: the Negative Presence

In these texts Maori are represented more often as trapped in a state of evolutionary childhood or as degenerated and dying ancients, rather than as rational adults with free will and the ability to reproduce themselves. Images of depopulation or dying out suggest what Goldie terms “indigenization through absence” or a “negative presence” (158). In postcolonial literature, this trope serves a hegemonic purpose by reinforcing a social Darwinist view of the survival of the fittest which suggests that those (European) races most technologically advanced, morally upright, or “civilised” naturally have rights over land. A negative indigenous presence creates by default an indigenised European colonial community; if an area’s natives are dead or removed, white colonists fill the void and become the new “natives” (Goldie 40, 157).

Building upon the Gypsy-like mobility trope examined earlier, several texts examined here show Maori in the process of rapidly disappearing, or as having disappeared from an area altogether. Europeans in *Among the Cannibals* may be temporarily held captive in hostile pa, but hope for the future is symbolised in the deserted village they stumble upon, symbolising how the “Maori population has been much reduced during the last century” (60). Verne ascribes this to a variety of causes: tribal warfare, maladies connected with alcohol, and defeat in the colonial wars.

Settlers in *Distant Homes* are so prepared to take on the hue of their new landscape and its indigenous inhabitants that the reader scarcely notices the disappearance of both. Three years after settlement, pasture and rose-nurseries have already replaced the bush, the local chief has turned miller and farmer, and his people “try all they can to be like the English” by planting flower-gardens (182). The assumed innocence of the herboriser narrative looms large in these passages, together with the actions of British explorers such as Cook, who released pairs of domestic animals and planted English gardens wherever they landed. Such “symbolic acts of domestication . . . are also acts of appropriation parallel to the symbolic taking over of the country by the ceremonial planting of the English flag” (Obeyesekere, *Apotheosis* 12). Thus the “very bad spirit” Captain Graham senses amongst the natives is displaced by a scent of English roses and a sense of British hegemony.

The Greenstone Door similarly suggests that the indigene has a short course left to run through a landscape where wheat fields, orchards, and flower gardens are steadily replacing flax and bush and signifying “the beginnings of that new order which was to cover the limestone soils of Waipa” (32).

The Boy Settler posits the Maori race as non-threatening and rapidly disappearing. The first Maori Sydney Bartlett meets is jolly, alone, and welcoming. Later he enters a pa occupied only by older women and children; all the men are at a tangi, a prevalent pastime of Maori in this novel. So much funeral-attending reflects a myth of inevitable indigenous demise. Two women disembark from Sydney’s riverboat, also bound for a tangi: “. . . the weird minor notes of their chant of sorrow followed them over the water, and sounded unspeakably plaintive” and Sydney muses, “It almost sounds like the wail of a dying race . . . I suppose the Maoris are bound to go, just as the Indians have before the pale-faces in America” (133). Mid-way through *The Boy Settler* Maori characters drop out of the narrative altogether. While Sydney joins the Taranaki Armed Constabulary and hears “stirring incidents” of massacres and battles, no images of the violent indigene are

provided. Instead the novel concentrates on Sydney's maturation into a farmer, a peaceful leader of a colony now bursting with roses, pansies, and hollyhocks, for "The seeds follow the flag" (147).

Similarly welcoming are the few remaining indigenes in *The Boy Colonists*. Cadet Ernest has read much boys' fiction "in which dreadful accounts are given of the scalping and the carrying off into captivity of people" (41):

Mr. J. had told him of one of his friends in the early days having been left alone, and having gone mad through fear of the wild natives, who were supposed to live on the West Coast. Ernest afterwards found that there were no natives on the West Coast of Otago, but at that time many people believed that there were. (40-41)

He is relieved to meet a few peaceable Maori collecting firewood, not scalps. The text parodies Ernest's fears and reassures the European reader that Maori are fast disappearing; near Ernest's hut is a lonely Maori graveyard, not an occupied pa.

Henty's and Barker's texts present an ideology of a land devoid, or all but devoid, of Maori occupants, to be inhabited or quitted by whites at their pleasure. Characters in *Maori and Settler* rout the native foe quickly, then waste no time in making the landscape look as much like "home" as possible. "My Emigrant Boy" refers to Maori as a potential target for colonists' guns, and scarce game at that: ". . . there are only a few very peaceable Maories in this island, and the fighting natives in the North island would take very good care to keep out of pistol shot" (24). "Christmas Day in New Zealand" parodies the adventure genre with F— (Barker's husband, Frederick Broome), startled by an early morning noise. Grabbing his gun, "as excited as if a regiment of Maoris were encamped on the lawn" (250), he rushes outside to shoot not black men but a black boar which has wandered into his vegetable garden.

It is an Act of God—the eruption of Mount Tarawera—which effectively dispossesses the Arawa tribe in *Doing and Daring*, paving the

way for white occupancy of the thermal district. This indicates an ideology of survival of the fittest brought about by natural selection or divine intervention; the latter is clearly suggested in the Biblical images of divine wrath accompanying the phenomenon. The eruption is a cosmic occurrence in the best interests of pakeha, who are comforted with the belief of being in the “hands of One whom storm and fire obey,” while Maori Whero feels himself significantly “abandoned by earth and heaven” (103, 193). And if colonists’ improvements are buried along with the local pa the damage to the settlements is relatively easily restored; in next to no time the local lord-master has organised a Maori demolition team to begin restoring pakeha dwellings. There is no mention of rebuilding the pa, however; indeed, colonists assist one another for some time before anyone even thinks of rescuing Maori, and those who do are criticised for resurrecting “a dangerous neighbour” (208). A temporary kainga is erected to house Maori survivors but clearly the local tribe is no more. The forest has been wiped out and with it the indigene, signified by the standard commodity of Nature: “All was taken from the Maori when the wealth of the bush was gone” (171). In a poignant image, Whero stands alone atop the sacred hill of his ancestral cannibal feasts, claiming the site as lord and first-born, as an old colonist scoffs in a pun he cannot understand: “It is my lord baron, as we say in England, then . . . but it looks like my barren lord up here” (224). Divine intervention has consigned Maori culture to the past, and Whero, realising he cannot live on his hungry hill alone, revokes tapu from the site and departs for the “Ingarangi’ (English) boarding school.

In *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* New Zealand is shown as now the natural home of pakeha, not Maori. On their magical journey with Santa Claus, Cis and Hal see a whare, from which issue “dark figures, wrapped in loose mats” who run away, apparently terrified of Santa and the children, whose faces are illuminated by a Star of Love which symbolises Christian civilisation. This text, whose avowed purpose is a detailed study of things native to New Zealand, presents Maori as marginal and

outdated, dark both physically and spiritually, fleeing before the European light.

Indigenisation via Justification

The supplanting of indigenous inhabitants could—and did—produce pakeha scruples of conscience, and several texts which emphasise Maori absence address feelings of European guilt about appropriating land and nativeness in speeches of justification. The early *Emily Bathhurst* debates the legality of the Treaty of Waitangi and colonial land purchases. Jack Stanley in *Amongst the Maoris* raises guilty quibbles about the English being a “bullying nation”—as well he might, having shown himself to be a striking exemplar of such behaviour. It is for Colonel Bradshaw, the novel’s voice of imperial authority, to reassure him that Maori are inherently inferior to pakeha, and are dying out in any case.

Across Two Seas expresses matters of pakeha conscience and dismisses them with cursory justification. Joss Vaughan believes Maori should happily share a land they don’t look after: “Their land is too large for them, so we come and live on it; but we don’t mean them any harm” (80). Non-use of land by the indigene is here a synonym for absence of the indigene as well as a justification for imperial conquest. Brother Dick explains how New Zealand came “to be ours,” with examples from Tasman to the *Britomart*—though when he mentions his plans to be a discoverer, Joss innocently suggests that the map seems quite full already.

Most pakeha characters in this fiction consider New Zealand already “theirs” by virtue of British discovery and colonisation, ideology reinforced by the Eurocentric notion that if land is not being visibly used for farming or other profitable exploitation it is not inhabited at all. Other texts insist on the legality of commercial exchange. *Under One Standard* readily admits that the New Zealand political situation is complex and difficult, but its settler characters eventually agree that land should rightfully belong to those who pay money for it: “But the land was

theirs,' said Mary, timidly. 'Theirs once, but much of it ours now—paid for honestly'," replies old identity Uncle Jacob (74).

Doing and Daring examines the topic through the analogy of horse-trading. Nga-Hepe sells his fine horse, Beauty, to Mr Lee to save the animal from seizure by a rival tribe. Yet though Beauty now legally belongs to the Lees (it is emphasised she has been sold, not given) Whero and Nga-Hepe are heartbroken at losing her, and and repeatedly take—or “steal”—her back. Both are, significantly, much better riders than Edwin Lee; more “natural” seats, as it were, just as they are termed in this text the natural “lords of the soil.” Yet though at first they refuse to relinquish Beauty without a struggle, by the novel’s end Whero appears, rather unbelievably, to have forgotten his passion for the horse and contentedly cedes her to the colonisers. The episode signifies a debate of natural rights versus legal ones, with land ownership passing in a foreordained manner to whites, and reinforcing an ideology of nature yielding to law.

Texts draw further justification of the imperial mission from the areas of cartography and nomenclature. In *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* a survey party is shown busily cutting lines through land which “Perhaps not even the Maori has trodden” (190). These, it is suggested, are the real natives: those imperialists who have assumed the power to map, name, and conquer. In *Across Two Seas* the Vaughans quibble over a map of their settlement which, like the world map, already appears rather full. Dick is outraged at the thought of living in such apparent civilisation, but Mrs Vaughan suspects that “these wild lands which Government has so lately redeemed from the Maories” are less cultivated than they appear on paper. Indeed, the family learns “by painful experience the non-existence of these ruled and red-inked roads on the fair-showing maps” (36). The term “redeemed” is well-chosen, carrying both legal and religious implications. Most particularly, the idea is given that western cartography and land ownership puts the country to good use, even if that use is mere wishful thinking at the time of map publication. It is interesting that Forde highlights the dishonesty of the situation, suggesting that despite all justifications a residue of guilt

resides at the base of that vessel Jameson has labelled the political unconscious. The Vaughans' maid's sense of truth and justice is appalled by the "lies" on their so-called map: ". . . in beautiful red ink, too, and so straight" (54). The outspoken, lower-class maid Betsy is frequently permitted to express sentiments the genteel Vaughans dare not utter.

When the family demonstrates possession and belonging by renaming their settlement, Dick is all for "Something sensible . . . not just 'Hoki-poki' or 'Matti-patti,' as the native jabber has it" (56). The Vaughans reject Latin or poetical names as antiquated and inappropriate to a new land, and dismiss Maori names as similarly senseless in a location where Maori themselves are disappearing or rapidly assimilating. "Golden Grove" is their modern, thoroughly pakeha, choice.

As Simon Ryan has shown, nineteenth-century antipodean cartography came to "create and manipulate reality," positing a mythical world view predefined by an ideology of expansionist colonialism. Once the land is reduced to a system of signs or text, states Ryan, "readability" of the land is claimed, together with the ability to exert power over it (115-16, 126). Ryan refers to discovery narratives rather than indigenising ones, as are the majority of my texts. However a discovery episode is found in *Among the Cannibals*, where Paganel camps with his companions near an unnamed mountain—that is, it is not named on *his* map, and is therefore considered unpopulated and unclaimed. Paganel wastes no time in christening the mount after the party's leader, Lord Glenarvan, and writing this name "carefully . . . on his map" (139).

Violence, Dispossession, Degeneration: an Ideological Legacy

As the above examples demonstrate, motifs and tropes of Maori violence, dispossession, and degeneracy recur throughout colonial New Zealand-set juvenile fiction. Clear lines of intertextuality can be traced in these tales' recurring themes and settings: the emphases on aged cannibal chiefs glimpsed "in town" by new chum settlers' sons; on Maori

violence, intemperance, and madness; on motifs of haka-dancing and tattoos; on images of Gypsiness— itineracy, an absurd appearance, dirt, idleness, theft, greed—and childlike or apelike behaviour; on disease, decline, and an absent indigenous presence.

Early New Zealand-set children's novels were prime vehicles for perpetuating imperialistic ideologies. Tropes of violence, particularly cannibalism, Gypsiness, dispossession, and degeneration all served to highlight the territorial imperative of imperialism. Angela Ballara observes that the year 1896 was a turning point in the Maori birthrate and by 1910 the Maori population was obviously increasing, yet the "dying out" theory continued to be believed into the 1930s, not least by Maori themselves (83, 86). "It seems difficult," comments Stenhouse, "to explain the attractions of the dying Maori theory except in terms of some degree of Pakeha wish fulfilment" ("A Disappearing Race" 135).

Clearly, images of an absent or willingly mobile indigenous population helped establish Europeans with a sense of tenure in a land either free or soon to be free of any native presence other than themselves. This, together with these texts' images of Maori violence, degeneration, and demise provided New Zealand colonialist discourse with much material justifying the exploitative aspects of pakeha settlement.

CHAPTER THREE

“DARK-EYED HOURIS IN ABUNDANCE”:

Perspectives on Miscegenation

“The difference in colour is only perceptible through the glass of sex.” (Satchell, The Greenstone Door 253-54).

With so much emphasis in early New Zealand-set junior fiction on the Maori race and its varying degrees of difference or usefulness to the European settler, it is only to be expected that the topic of miscegenation or interracial marriage should make some appearance. So controversial was this topic, however, that publishing houses for children’s literature, many of whom had religious affiliations, approached it with caution. This is characteristic of an era which viewed romance of any kind as inappropriate reading matter for middle-class teenagers, and which attempted to present young readers with unimpeachable, uncontroversial role models. Nevertheless, the literature under examination does reflect several nineteenth- and early twentieth-century views on miscegenation by presenting the sexualised Maori and hybrid offspring in various images of fascination and repugnance.

Colonial Fears

Interracial marriage was a key area of cultural debate throughout the nineteenth century, strongly popular in appeal (Young 6, 92). While views about its acceptability differed, most Europeans were convinced of the existence of a hierarchy of races featuring white superiority. The divinely ordered Great Chain of Being to which many monogenists subscribed placed the African at the bottom of the human family, next to the ape, and polygenist theory suggested dark races were separately-created species fitted only for servitude to whites. In the post-Darwinian era theories of determinism, “types” of man, and scientific racial constructions served to recycle the same themes.

It was in the Civil War climate of the United States presidential campaign of 1864 that the term “miscegenation” first appeared, in a satirical pamphlet entitled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the American White Man and the Negro* (see Montagu 537-38, Young 144-46). Authors David Goodman Croly and George Wakefield defined their new term as being of Latin etymology, *Miscere* to mix, and *Genus*, race. It was, they said, intended to replace the more vulgar word “amalgamation.” Montagu points out, however, that some saw in the word’s first syllable an implied sense of unpalatability or opprobrium, reflecting the disapproval with which many nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxons viewed this practice and its results.

So-called “negative amalgamation” theories (fears that “unnatural unions” would subvert the vigour and virtue of white races and result in barrenness, degenerate offspring, or “decivilised” racial chaos) were widespread and compounded by a colonial tradition which viewed sexual relationships with natives as degrading or debasing to the white party (Young 18; Gilman 107, 125). Some scientists went so far as to link persons of colour to pathological disease and sexual depravity. Gilman’s *Difference and Pathology* examines the association of blacks with prostitution and syphilis throughout the nineteenth century, demonstrating how European projection of fears and desires turned the image of the dark-skinned female—a source of illicit attraction to the white male coloniser—into an emblem of lasciviousness and illness, a corruption both moral and physical.

In this undercurrent of public terror at the potential fall of the British Empire, various legislative attempts forbade colonial liaisons with native women. As early as 1838 an anonymous writer on New Zealand colonisation recommended indigenous extinction as a preferable alternative to miscegenation:

. . . instead of attempting an amalgamation of the two races,—Europeans and Zealanders,—as is recommended by some persons, the wiser course would be, to let the native race gradually retire before the settlers, and

ultimately become extinct This is the natural course of events when a superior race establishes itself in a country peopled by an inferior one. (qtd. in Young 9²⁷)

To the Victorian mind, control of racial intermarriage was a means of both ensuring white superiority and controlling the feared yet tempting Other. Young sees this Other as an alien culture against which Western civilisation defined and defended itself (93): “Fear of miscegenation can be related to the notion that without such [cultural] hierarchy, civilisation would, in a literal as well as a technical sense, collapse” (95).

Gilman views the issue in terms of gender and race, with the sexualised black female having become embodied in nineteenth-century consciousness as a figure of fear and desire: “It is . . . the innate fear of the Other’s different anatomy which lies behind the synthesis of images. The Other’s pathology is revealed in her anatomy, and the black and the prostitute are both bearers of the stigmata of sexual difference and thus pathology” (Gilman).

Hybridity and Fertility

The hybrid offspring of interracial unions were viewed ambivalently throughout the period. Some commentators argued that the half-white could be a member of a new breed superior to the (presumably) degenerate indigene, capable of establishing a civilised colony or even improving white civilisation by the contribution of so-called “hybrid vigour.” Much was written of the beauty of half-caste and quarter-caste females. In the 1859 *The Story of New Zealand: Past and Present—Savage and Civilised* A. S. Thomson prophesied that “The features of the Maori race will disappear from among the half-castes . . . physically they are noble and beautiful and only require an education to develop the force and power of their minds” (II: 305, qtd. in Bentley 206).

²⁷ Young’s source is “The New System of Colonisation—Australia and New Zealand.” *The Phrenological Journal and Magazine of Modern Science* 11, n.s. 1(1838): 247-60.

However more often hybridisation was seen as a threat by an imperial colonising power terrified of the weakening of its own racial superiority. Thus the so-called half-caste or half-breed (though by the end of the nineteenth century scores of denominations of “mongrelity” had been tabulated) was frequently seen as a scapegoat figure for colonial ambivalence, guilt, and uncertainty, and popularised as embodying forms of perversion, degeneration, cunning, and treachery—combining not the best, but the worst, traits of both races.

Whether hybridisation was viewed positively or not, many experts concurred in gloomy predictions of diminished fertility for the products of interracial marriage. While the scientific test for distinct species was infertile issue, and the existence of races of human hybrids thus clearly deflated polygenist claims that the races of man were distinct species, many Victorian anthropologists continued to argue that mixed race unions produced offspring not only morally but physically degenerate, whose fertility declined throughout succeeding generations. Such a hypothesis was, of course, impossible to prove or disprove in the short term (Young 8, 102). Some anthropologists suggested different degrees of more or less degenerate and infertile hybridity between “distinct” and “proximate” species, Europeans and Papuans being examples of the former and Celts and Scandinavians examples of the later (Young 11, 16). Others saw the progress of mankind as an ongoing cycle of diffusionism or cultural mixing, a grafting process producing rich cultures which were nevertheless inevitably destined to decline or die out (Young 41). Of interest in all these views is their repeated emphasis on “pure-bloodedness” and an element of European wish-fulfilment apparent in the desire that hybrid races should die out.

The Hybrid in Early New Zealand-Set Children’s Texts

Only two colonial period New Zealand juvenile texts depict the hybrid issue of miscegenation in glowing terms of physical beauty and courageous dispositions. The adorable three-quarters Maori child Mengi in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* is “a dear, chubby darling, dark-skinned,

but with curly yellow hair all over his head” (234). Indications are that this product of a half-caste father and blonde Maori mother may do much to serve the imperial power: Mengi declares that “when he is a man he is going to be a soldier and fight the enemies of the king” (235). Puhi-Huia of *The Greenstone Door* is an enchanting heroine who combines the mental and moral achievements of her European father and the exotic beauty of her Maori mother.

Yet despite its positive description of Puhi-Huia, *The Greenstone Door* does not allow her to continue her mixed bloodline; she is killed, unwed, at the Battle of Orakau. Similarly, Mengi’s father, son of a white woman and a Maori man, was drowned at a young age. Such images of doomed or dying hybrid issue suggest two dominant nineteenth-century theories: decomposition (the idea that the issue of racial intermarriage is infertile and will die out) and reversion (the idea that hybrids, if fertile, will in a few generations revert to one or the other of the original “species”²⁸). *The Greenstone Door*, emphasising as it does the evolutionary role of natural selection in the rise and fall of civilisations, bears out the words of mid-century anthropologist Robert Knox: “. . . the hybrid was a degradation of humanity and was rejected by nature” (*The Races of Men* 497, qtd. in Young 15). Puhi-Huia looks white, but her standard indigenous commodities of the warrior-spirit (even as a child she fights tooth and claw) and matakite or second sight emerge in moments of crisis. These native characteristics constitute Puhi-Huia’s dark side, indicating that it is to the Maori or inferior species that hybrids will eventually revert. Mengi, a significantly “dark-skinned” child, has already reverted to Maoriness, a process of which this text obviously approves, given that pakeha Bruce risks his own life to save Mengi from drowning.

Other texts present the half-caste as incontrovertibly unsavoury. A disgraceful criminal and beggar character in *The Little Maories* is described as a “half-breed,” a term this school reader explains as one who

²⁸ This theory was based on a scientific experiment in which the mating of white and grey mice produced either a grey or a white—not a parti-coloured—mouse (Young 15).

has an English father and a Maori mother. (This was indeed the most common—though by no means the only—interracial marriage situation). “Thus,” notes Ringer, “are young readers subtly warned against miscegenation” (*Young Emigrants* 29). *The Boy Colonists* too refers to the topic in tones of disparaging generalisation: a settler is “married to a half-caste”; Bobby “the half-caste boy” is the station’s dogsbody.

Romancing the Land?

The texts under discussion are more likely to ponder the idea of settler/Maori romance than the half-caste products of such unions. Romance or marriage between a white male and an indigenous woman is a stock scenario of the adult colonial novel, containing a notable element of racial hypergamy (marriage between daughters of an inferior and men of a superior race), even though the woman is often the daughter of the aristocratic or “better sort” of indigene. In these romances, too, there is an interplay of familiar tropes concerning land, race, and gender, in which the indigenous female is seen as representative of her land, itself symbolised as female.²⁹ In the colonialist text indigenes, regardless of actual gender, are frequently symbolised as feminised or childlike—anything but equal to the presumed superior human form of white adult male. Young notes that nineteenth-century racial theory is defined in terms of cultural or gender difference, with savagery equated to a feminised state of cultural childhood, and the symbolism of full manly adulthood reserved for the culture and civilisation of the European descendants of Adam (94). Spivak sees the colonised female as the key agent in the theory of colonial production, in which the subaltern woman functions as a “symbolic object of exchange” (217). The trope of feminisation thus dominates adult colonial romance, in which a settler hero’s possession of land goes hand in hand with his marriage to a dusky maiden (who may or may not be a landowning princess).

²⁹ Hulme provides a discussion of the classic colonial triangle in which the “New World” is viewed as feminised virgin land (*Colonial Encounters* 1, 158-170).

Fascination and Repugnance: Beauties, Hags, and Waifs

However, unlike adult literature of the era, juvenile texts made fewer attempts to lure young male immigrants to the colony with scenarios of romances with beautiful land-owning wahine. Some texts show attractive young Maori women being clubbed and cannibalised, simultaneously providing the reader with semi-erotic sensational thrills and suggesting that fertile indigenous maidens have already been, or are in the process of being, killed off by their own barbarous kind (examples can be found in *Among the Cannibals* and *The Greenstone Door*).

Other texts provide a counterblast to sexualised adult settler-story images of alluring dark beauties with portrayals of dirty, ugly, aged native hags—the figure Verne terms the “harpie” (*Among the Cannibals* 90) and Goldie terms the “squaw” (71). The only Maori female described in *The Boy Colonists* is a pathetic old woman, “very absurd” in “a long dirty looking kind of night-dress” (18). Maori women in *The Redfords* are “dingy” and “gypsy-looking” (103). In *The Boy Settler* they appear as unladylike ill-dressed pipe-smokers. Hideous old crones mutter curses in *Under One Standard* and *Among the Cannibals*. Even *Six Little New Zealanders* uses this stereotype, reprimanding Jan when headscarfed and untidy as looking “for all the world like a Maori wahine” (93).

When early juvenile New Zealand-set novels do show their youthful heroes taking an interest in Maori girls the fascination of an alluring bare-armed brown maiden is frequently undercut by criticism or disdain, demonstrating the ambivalent dance of “attraction and repugnance between the races [which] became a key issue in the debate about racial difference [and which] was clearly linked to sexuality” (Young 15). Jack in *Amongst the Maoris* ostensibly scorns to enter into any relationship with the unattractive, unhygienic New Zealanders, yet does describe at some length the prettiest girl in the pa, the tohunga’s daughter who ministers to him in his imprisonment. Yuata is

. . . young, and not positively ugly. I am afraid that is the most I can say of her. Her figure was slight and somewhat graceful, being attired in a positively clean and new mat

. . . Her hair was twisted on to the top of her head in a rather grotesque fashion, and in it she had mixed some flowers of a scarlet creeper . . . but her face was too much of the Maori type to excite any feeling of admiration in a European; still, amongst her own people . . . [Jack] felt convinced that the girl ranked as a beauty. (137-38)

The tone of this passage fluctuates between admiration and scorn. Slight, graceful figures and flower-adorned coiffures are conventional commodities of Victorian female beauty, yet Marryat's narrator dismisses Yuata, through use of modifying phrases, as too primitive to attract a British boy of refined sensibilities. Nevertheless it is interesting that Jack, the text's "seeing-man," should observe so minutely a presumably ugly girl. The accompanying illustration, executed possibly in a spirit of verisimilitude, possibly in accordance with the nineteenth-century development of "ethno-porn" (defined by Young as "popular anthropology liberally illustrated by photographs that largely seem to consist of naked, full-breasted women from around the world," 201), shows a topless young woman which a Victorian evangelistic children's writer could by no means allow her boy hero to desire.

A similar admixture of fascination and repugnance emerges in the observations of *The Boy Settler's* Sydney and Parker:

"—oh, look at that Maori! Doesn't she look comical in a red skirt and yellow jacket? And she's got no boots or shoes on! But doesn't she walk with a swagger? And what a pretty kiddie she has with her. Did you ever see such lovely black eyes?"

"Yes, she's a handsome woman; and here comes her husband, I suppose; he's a good-looking fellow too, and not so very black either." (108)

The natives' attraction lies in their European colouring; the lighter the skin, the better. It is not quite clear whether the eyes Sydney praises belong to the woman or her child; while large black eyes in native children were freely admired in mid-Victorian times, a stock motif in the

then-popular “gamine” portraiture vogue, Parker’s reply hints that it is really the “handsome woman” whom Sydney admires. As if to counter the potential effects of this, the woman is simultaneously criticised as degraded in appearance, as demonstrated by her “comical” lack of sartorial taste and barefoot “swagger.”

The friends’ next glimpse of Maori is a girl paddling a canoe down the Waikato River. The clearly fascinated Parker comments admiringly, “Fine hair, hasn’t she?” (121). Sydney does not reply. His own unfeigned attraction to a Maori girl is purified by its object, another waif or gamine through whom adult sexuality could be sublimated: “One of the little girls reminded him of Beatrice, with her magnificent black eyes; and he tried to coax her to come to him, but in vain, she was too shy” (164). Throughout the novel Sydney is wracked by conscience, presumably over sexual desires, on occasions when his thoughts stray to his sweetheart Beatrice. The small child can be admired, however, as a safe, non-sexualised stand-in for a grown Englishwoman.

Kushti in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* is almost European in colouring: much praise is given to her yellow hair—the yellowest, loveliest hair the pakeha characters have ever seen—and she is described as young, copper-skinned, and handsome. However “little screwed-up beady black eyes,” bare feet, and a particularly ludicrous assortment of ragged and smart clothing deflate any suggestion of romantic beauty (48). Kushti’s noble character, light colouring, and semi-civilised status as the widowed daughter-in-law of a white woman make her a potential spouse for pakeha Bruce, whom she shelters, nurses, and serves, but Bruce is not tempted. Kushti is just European enough to make him a satisfactory maidservant and just Maori enough to remain out of bounds.

Cedric in *The Greenstone Door* also describes eligible Maori girls with a mixture of attraction and repugnance. The *whare-matoro* (Maori pleasure house) of Te Huata in which Cedric spends one of the most memorable nights of his life is presented as a species of oriental harem filled with rouged, bare-armed, dancing girls:

There was one girl from whom I could not take my eyes, so perfect was her acting. She rolled her body at the hips, so that it seemed on the point of falling in two; her twisting shoulders were independent of the rest of her; she withdrew her nose and waved her ears; she grimaced and squinted and thrust out her tongue: there was not a young man in the room whose heart could withstand her appeal of perfection. (82)

The description of Ka Heihei's performance is carefully balanced; while it includes the seductive hip- and shoulder-rolling of the orientalist belly-dancer, it also incorporates facial expressions which are ugly, unladylike, even grotesque. Clearly this is no potential bride for Cedric, son of an English aristocrat, who here posits himself as too childlike to be susceptible to Ka Heihei's charms; he is not yet a "young man" and, moreover, all the "young men" present are Maori.

Throughout these passages the sexualised native woman is frequently depicted as in some way prostituted or fallen, signified by images and behaviour which would be considered immodest or lascivious in an Englishwoman. Her hair is often long and flowing (this was an erotic fetish in Victorian art, Bell 143), or bedecked with flowers of scarlet, the traditional colour of the whore. To the Victorian mind her bare ankles imply harlotry. She inhabits a species of seraglio or harem. She crosses boundaries of gender and respectability by swaggering with a masculine gait, not to mention smoking tobacco. This is a projection process on the part of European men, who cannot legitimately sexualise their own women, but can freely sexualise the indigene. Early New Zealand junior novels present the fertile Maori maiden as not respectable, making a relationship between her and the novels' well-bred heroes unthinkable.

Even *Under One Standard*, which does present a Maori girl as both beautiful and respectable, takes care to render her uninteresting to its teenage protagonist. David knows that the housekeeper Sally, who floats about in romantic white draperies, is "beautiful," and he even shares a

spiritual unity with her. However Sally's low social status, quite apart from her race, makes her taboo; furthermore, neither Sally nor any of the text's pakeha girls holds physical appeal for David, who is destined for a celibate missionary life.

The Fools' Paradise: White Man/Brown Women

Whether the native object of the white male gaze is a beauty or not, many of these works present interracial romance and marriage as undesirable, and practised by undesirables—whites who are morally reprobate or physically degenerate, or both. To this end those portraits of headscarved, gypsyish Maori hags is interesting, directing the reader to a related topic of fascination and horror to Victorian ethnologists: the intermarriage of Gypsies and Gaujo (the Romany term for non-Gypsy³⁰). A common nineteenth-century lament bewailed that relations with Gaujo were killing the "pure" Gypsy race. As Borrow wrote in 1874: "The Gypsy salt has not altogether lost its savour, but that essential quality is every day becoming fainter, so that there is every reason to suppose that within a few years the English Gypsy caste will have disappeared, merged in the dregs of the English population" (182).

It is the "dregs" of English society, not respectable gentlefolk, who consort with the dark-skinned Gypsies, and thus the purity of the Gypsy, lost in intermarriage, is not only racial but moral. Borrow goes on to state that Gypsies living among Gaujo were not improved but rather forfeited their only virtues, female chastity and male sobriety (181-182). Aryans who cohabited with Gypsies were presumably already debased types, eager to corrupt and be corrupted.

Similarly, characters in early New Zealand-set children's fiction who have "gone native" or "taken to the mat" are frequently presented as debasing themselves or as being already debased, immoral, or foolish. As Bentley notes, pakeha Maori "are portrayed in . . . literature as unsavoury, promiscuous characters, overfond of alcohol and violence" (10).

³⁰ Various alternative spellings exist for this term.

Unsavouriness is the characteristic most often employed by children's authors. Whaler Joe the pakeha Maori in *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* is low-class and foolish. Elwell's boy colonists snigger at Captain Fritz, "rather a queer man . . . [who] used to talk rather oddly, shave seldom, dress badly, and had every appearance of shirking clean water . . . he had for many years done what Harry called "pigging it" with the Maories" (*The Boy Colonists* 12-13). The pakeha Maori introduced in *The Boy Travellers* is ruffianly, sinking to the level of his "decadent" indigenous companions (193, 202).

Kingston suggests that only fools and commoners would be drawn to a Maori wife. In the New Zealand wars episode of his *The Three Admirals* (1878) a silly Irish sailor falls in love at first sight with a chief's daughter captured in the fighting. Tim is vulgar enough to trumpet his lusts: "Sure, isn't she a beauty? . . . If she'd be after having me, I'd lave the sarvice and settle down in this beautiful country" (264). Informed that an aristocratic girl is more likely to "be looking after an officer," Tim replies: "I'm a British seaman, and a mighty dale better-looking than many an officer,—no disrespect to my superiors,—and I don't see why a Maori girl should turn up her nose at me or at anyone like me. I'll ask the captain's lave to splice her off hand" (264). Tim's English commanding officer strongly disapproves of such "splicing" and consigns the girl to the care of a missionary's wife, while Tim is comforted by a shipmate: "She's . . . not for such as you or me. If you are a wise man you'll wait for an English or an Irish girl; for though she may have a cock-up nose, and weigh three times as much as this young beauty, she'll make you a far better wife" (265).

While *The Greenstone Door* ostensibly argues assimilationist politics including racial mixing (the pure-blooded Maori is doomed, the reader is told, and his "best hope" is "extinction in the blood of the conqueror," 279), at the same time it presents interracial marriage as degrading to both participants. Most pakeha Maori are low types seeking brown-skinned harlots: "Equally destitute of fear and morals, to most of these the opening of the waharoa [gateway] was as the unclosing of the

gates of a Mohammedan paradise, for here were dark-eyed houris in abundance, to whom alliance with a white man lent a great, if meretricious, splendour" (33). This description lingers over alluring Orientalist harem images while suggesting that only the commonest pakeha would actually give in to such temptations.

The exception to this rule is the great-souled trader Purcell, who sees himself as "colour-blind," claims to belong to the "human" rather than the British race, and marries a Maori slave rather than a princess with lands, thus proving himself no greedy gold digger. Nevertheless, he selects a bride of strikingly Caucasian appearance. Untattooed and "of one of the fair-skinned Urewera hapus, no darker than a South European, with small, regular features," Roma possesses "a beauty that was real by any standard, and a natural intelligence of a quite respectable order" (37). In this way the Purcell marriage is presented as a union of "proximate" races which produces the enchanting Puhi-Huia. However Roma's refined looks are undermined by sub-human behaviour, shown in her spending the entire novel grovelling at the feet of her racially superior spouse: "To her he was the most splendid and worshipful of created beings, and his lifelong efforts to lift her to a more exalted position ended in complete failure" (37).

If, as many Victorians claimed, a society's level of civilisation is reflected in the position of its women, Roma's refusal to allow her husband to raise her to respectability makes her pathologically uncivilisable. She is an embarrassment to Purcell—so much so that at one point he resorts to violence, trying to shake her from her "mental malady"—and eventually she is the unwitting cause of his death. Thus *The Greenstone Door* suggests the ultimate unsuitability of marriage between members of different races, in contrast to the assimilationist logic it argues elsewhere.

Cedric is certainly not tempted to follow Purcell's example of taking a native wife. When the charming Maori girl Pepepe kisses him and says she will marry him, if he will have her, he replies, "Alas, how unfortunate! . . . I like you greatly . . . but Puhi-Huia is my singing-bird"

(83). The child Cedric affects ignorance of the social conventions prohibiting sibling marriage, yet his fierce jealousy of and precocious desire to marry his adoptive sister—whom he sees as white—suggests a love more than fraternal. The process is not wholly unconscious: “There was probably only one person alive who would, in my opinion, have made her an entirely satisfactory husband,” Cedric comments, referring to himself (245). Nevertheless the reader senses that Cedric would find it degrading to unite himself to any girl with non-European blood, and he is soon to claim he never saw true beauty until he beheld the pink and gold glory of English Helenora. This instantaneous attraction to pakeha girls—Cedric is romantically besotted with both the first and the second white girl he meets—and his resistance to the blandishments of Maori maidens in fact suggests a polygenist view of distinct, not proximate, racial species.

The Covert Alternative: White Man/Brown Man

Some texts redirect their hero’s attention from a forbidden Maori maiden to a more acceptable handsome young native man. David Copeland is far more attracted to Maori George than to any girl in *Under One Standard*. In *Amongst the Maoris* Jack expresses repugnance for Yuata but is permitted to admire the “good-looking young man” Marara. Blue-eyed and handsome in a European manner, Marara acts as a double or stand-in for Yuata. Like the girl, he feeds and cares for imprisoned Jack and goes further, stirring Jack’s Christian conscience, freeing him from bondage, and becoming his servant. Indeed, the text states that Marara takes “some rather romantic fancy” to Jack, whom he treats as master and hero (249). Marara thus functions as a safe stand-in for a female romantic attachment.

In colonial situations where anxiety about hybridity was above all a feature of heterosexual politics, homosexuality was viewed ambivalently, both as a practice as degenerate as hybridity itself, *and* as a covert preferable alternative to miscegenation, largely because it did not produce the embarrassment of mixed offspring (Young 26). As Young

points out, if black and yellow races are seen as feminised then the white becomes instinctively attracted to both sexes of these groups: “. . . in the colonial arena, civilization thus begins to merge with an inter-racial homo-eroticism” (109). Young also notes that the power-relation of (white) slave-owner and (black) slave was often eroticised in colonial fiction (152). It is thus unsurprising to find Jack’s admiration for and mastery of Marara containing homoerotic overtones; at one point both boys share a mat (or “take to the mat”) to cover their nakedness. However no type of erotic attraction is allowed to get the better of Jack, who functions in this text as a spiritual, not a romantic, quester. Jack even scorns to make a close friend of Marara, instead keeping the youth on the level of decorative servant.

Similar sublimation of desire appears in Sydney Bartlett’s appreciation of a comely young native man: “What a nice soft voice that fellow has, and what magnificent eyes! . . . If the Maoris are all like that fellow, I’ll like them” (128). Through the eyes of unconscious homoeroticism the Other is seen to possess stereotypical feminised traits of a soft voice and “magnificent” (large and beautiful) eyes. The text presents Sydney’s praise as generous and healthy-minded; Storer clearly has no intention of showing her hero as susceptible to homosexual attraction. What Sydney is not permitted to do, however, is to express such sentiments towards a young native woman with whom he might have children. Indeed, the village he stumbles into appears devoid of such, occupied only by pre-pubescent children and old crones. While an indigenous women’s hut penetrated by a white explorer-figure can be read as a species of seraglio—a trope of orientalist discourse carrying significant erotic overtones—by careful selection of harem occupants Storer preserves Sydney from temptation.

False Positions and Fates Worse Than Death: White Woman/Brown Man

An open abhorrence at the concept of racial amalgamation is expressed in those texts where white women are threatened with alliance

to Maori men against their wills. This was an essential element in the postcolonial captivity narrative (Robert Dixon, “The Unfinished Commonwealth” 137), providing the reader with titillating thrills. In *Among the Cannibals* savage Chief Kara-Tété selects a wife from among his pakeha captives, and lays “his hand on the shoulder of Lady Glenarvan, who grew pale at the contact” (96). So shocking is this idea that the male prisoners immediately agree to kill their womenfolk rather than permit them to suffer such a “shameful existence” (100). The savage’s illicit, adulterous touch is one of many devices this novel utilises to shock the reader; it also fulfils an imperial purpose, giving Lord Glenarvan immediate justification for killing Kara-Tété.

Kidnapped settler girls in *Holmwood* are also faced with the horror of “marriage” (concubinage) to Matangee and his warriors, though Matangee’s father himself frowns on the idea. Pakeha girls, Moodewhy grudgingly admits, might be “fairer” than Maori women but they are insufficiently useful and hardworking, thus suggesting an uncrossable cultural divide between those civilisations which respect women and those which do not.

Across Two Seas uses very young characters and a comical tone to emphasise what the author views as the ridiculous and inappropriate nature of interracial unions. Local Taipara³¹ tribeswomen offer the settlers mats, feathers, and fruit for the purchase of Daisy Vaughan, about four years old, as a bride for Chief Tatau’s eight-year-old grandson. They hope that Daisy will provide the Taipara with a civilising influence throughout future generations. In her symbolic white frock, Daisy stands in this text as a sign of culture, purity, and racial superiority (“fair-haired Daisy, all white, and pink, and golden, like her English namesake, was a goodly picture for any eyes to light upon,” 99) and all the novel’s Maori are fascinated by her. The Vaughans, who may be keen to bring civilisation to savages but who take a dim view of their small angel wedding “Master Hatu,” do not “entertain the idea of such an alliance”

³¹ Also spelled “Taikara” in the novel.

(101) and Tatau, while disappointed, does not press the matter. Daisy's fairness proves so attractive, however, that she is shortly thereafter kidnapped by a rival tribe. While this parodic image of South Pacific romance makes miscegenation a "subversive possibility" in *Across Two Seas*, the comedy with which the episode is portrayed "betrays repressed anxiety; a tear in the fabric of the novel, it threatens cultural rupture" and is therefore summarily dismissed (Marquis 62). The Taipara, we note, attempt to *buy* Daisy and the nomads *steal* her, suggesting barbaric customs associated with the white slavery and female degradation so deeply scorned by Victorian Britons.

Alliances between indigenous men and willing white women were an even more controversial topic for a colonial children's book. Such marriages were commonly considered more degrading and scandalous than the traditional white settler/Maori maiden romance. Women were seen to take class status from their husbands, not vice versa, and thus while a husband could potentially elevate a wife, the reverse was not considered possible. Victorian ideas—and fears—about female sexuality also informed suppositions that while white men may be excused for satisfying their "animal lusts" with native women in a colonial environment, settler women ought to be more self-controlled. Thus, while marriages of willing white women to Maori men did occur in colonial New Zealand they were not widely reported.³² In only two of the texts discussed here is this situation examined.

Bessie Marchant's novels are notorious for their feisty, unconventional female characters, and in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* Marchant introduces a woman of daring and pathos, Mother Te Hone. New Zealand-born to British parents, she was orphaned young and fled cruel guardians to marry a Maori whaler. However now she is old she admits that "intermarriages such as those rarely prosper, and though my husband was ever kind and gentle with me, I was a white woman in a false position" (223). Te Hone dies at sea, leaving a small son, and his

³² Bentley offers a discussion of this (187-89).

wife cuts herself off from the tribe. Of her son, she says, "I taught him all I knew and strove to bring him up as an English boy, but his father's blood ran in his veins, and he was Maori all through, even in skin and hair he was of his father's people" (224). The lad takes a Maori bride, then is himself drowned, leaving his mother a lonely prey to superstitious fears that her grandson Mengi will be the next to be claimed by evil taniwha (water spirits) of the ocean.

The pakeha heroine Margaret is shocked to hear this, and remonstrates: while a true native might be left to their beliefs, she feels it is "not possible to let an Englishwoman sink into heathenism without making an effort to bring her back" (225). Mother Te Hone says she still believes in God, and that her faith has been strengthened since the reappearance of pakeha in her life. Indeed, she never becomes a complete Maori, as can be inferred by her refusal to be nomadic and her failure as an indigenous guide. She retains her manners and is "unmistakably English despite her Maori surroundings" (222). However the poverty and isolation into which her "false position" has led her is an existence unlikely to appeal to many of Marchant's readers.

Concern about false positions also impels *The Greenstone Door's* earnest examination of the proposed union of half-caste Puhi-Huia with the full-blooded Maori Rangiora. Cedric, who longs for utopian nationhood and is convinced of the inherent nobility of his Maori friends, dreams that "In five hundred years the white aristocracy of New Zealand may also take pride in claiming their descent from the Maori gods" (256). At the same time he is doubtful about "the disparity that existed between the inheritor of civilisation and the child of savage parents" (244). For a pakeha trader to marry a Maori slave girl is one thing, but for a European's daughter to marry a chief is quite another matter. Although Rangiora is aristocratic, handsome, untattooed, intelligent, assimilable, and Christian, he is significantly very brown—"he had not inherited his father's fairness" (245)—and this novel equates whiteness with superiority: "True that Puhi-Huia was a half-caste; she was yet a white in her ways and instincts, and neither in colour, form, nor feature did she

favour the savage half of her descent. The dark blood had lent a subtle glow to her beauty, no more” (244).

Cedric is vastly offended by Rangiora’s father’s objections to the marriage on the grounds that Puhi-Huia is inferior because half-white and not of rank, an episode which echoes Cedric’s childhood sensation of insult when the boy Rangiora decides on first sight that Puhi-Huia “shall become one of my wives” (51). Two opposing scenarios—desire by a Maori and rejection by a Maori—are here equally insulting to the pakeha, and both serve to justify Cedric’s apparently instinctive repugnance at the match.

While Purcell rebukes Cedric for the prejudiced origins of his doubts, he goes on to make a curious statement: “The difference in colour is only perceptible through the glass of sex” (253-54). This appears to admit that racial tolerance or “colour-blindness” is achievable, but only up until such time as a member of another race wishes to marry one’s own daughter or sister. Then hitherto smothered polygenist views of ethnocentric or speciocentric difference refuse to be ignored.

At last Cedric decides to lend his support to the Puhi-Huia-Rangiora match (significantly, this can occur only once Helenora has displaced Puhi-Huia in his affections). Rangiora is eager to introduce “the tribal territories . . . to the methods of the white man” (254-55) and interbreeding, decides Cedric, will be good for the colony’s new order. The affair is never resolved, however, and like other assimilationist issues in the novel is soon nullified by the lovers’ deaths.

The Assimilationist Alternative

Rangiora and Puhi-Huia are not permitted to reproduce, and few of these texts’ authors present positive images of Maori marriage and fertility. An exception is Kingston, who frowns on interracial marriage but suggests an alternative to it in the Maori weddings which end *Holmwood* and *Waihoura*. None of his beautiful, fair-skinned, pious Maori maiden characters is ever considered by his settler heroes as a potential mate. There are no half-castes in Kingston’s novels. He

nevertheless implies that Maori and Europeans are not so racially dissimilar that the inferior cannot come to resemble the superior. By marrying his friendly, noble, pale, indigenes to one another, Kingston suggests the establishment of a new breed of pure-blooded Maori who have internalised British values and become like them in appearance and behaviour. Their English improves (as Marquis notes, by the time Waihoura marries “even [her] language has turned white,” 65), they build houses “after the English model” (*Waihoura* 127), and settle down to repopulate the colony with a race of etiolated, fully-assimilated Maori.

The topic of miscegenation and its hybrid offspring was highly fascinating to writers of the era, and also highly controversial. It provided opportunities for authors to present New Zealand as the uncontested possession of the superior white emigrant through almost uniformly consigning to impossibility any suggestion of successful European-Maori marriages, let alone the creation of a mixed-race population. Textual meaning here comes to the service of power in presenting images of an overwhelmingly pakeha-dominated future New Zealand.

CHAPTER FOUR

SETTLER, FAMILY, HOME:

A Middle-Class Threefold Cord

"I must remember that I am now in a democratic God's own country, where every man is equal in God's sight, and a dashed sight superior in his own." (Peacocke, Dicky, Knight-Errant 59)

Emigration as Remedy

The idea of emigration to the colonies as an answer to Britain's social anxieties was proposed by many reformers throughout the early nineteenth century. The first systematic colonisation schemes were proposed in the 1820s and '30s, mainly to divert the tide of Irish paupers away from England. However it was John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) which stamped orthodoxy upon emigration as the means to prosperity not merely for the emigrant or the mother country, but for "the collective economical interest of the human race" (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 115). The British popular press disseminated a barrage of texts and images emphasising the financial and social benefits of emigration. A particular target for this propaganda were the middle classes, who possessed the financial resources and respectability deemed essential for the formation of a stable colonial society. This chapter will examine the emigration messages contained in early New Zealand-set children's fiction, messages directed primarily at the aspiring middle-class reader,³³ which focus upon the twin blessings of financial gain and domestic happiness. These messages are concerned

³³ Definitions of the terms "middle class" and "bourgeois" are complex and have been contested by historians (see Gunn 3, 14-24). The protagonists of early New Zealand-set children's fiction equate to Gunn's configuration of the middle classes in British industrial cities between 1850 and 1914: ". . . large manufacturing, commercial and professional families" unified by a shared social culture (22, 24-26).

with power—in this case, in supporting the ascendancy of the middle class over lower classes and the aristocracy.

A Middle-Class Fiction

Children's literature in England was "almost entirely a product of the large domesticated middle-class," produced in response to a blossoming national literacy engendered by the influences of evangelical religion and utilitarian education (Darton 5, Altick 99). Widely-held evangelical principles directed the Victorian middle-classes' increased leisure hours towards the family reading circle in preference to morally dubious pleasures of cards, dancing, or the theatre (Altick 86), and colonial era "children's literature," being both instructive and entertaining, was thus designed to appeal to the entire middle-class family. By the late Victorian era, adventure novels were being consumed as eagerly by fathers as by sons (Darton 302, 321). The capitalistic and emigration messages contained in such fiction were clearly designed to influence all members of a middle-class household, from the paterfamilias to servants who were permitted to listen to household readings or borrow the family's books.

Middle-Class Piety and Domestic Blessings

Early New Zealand-set junior fiction clearly upholds the preservation or attainment of a comfortable middle station in life. In colonial times middle-class status was highly valued precisely because it could not be taken for granted: the bourgeois family's wealth was dependent upon business, all forms of which were precarious (Tosh 13). These texts present emigration as a saving grace for members of the "anxious classes" wishing to better themselves and for professionals suffering financial reversal, such salvation in all cases being won by the application of values such as industry, thrift, piety, and familial loyalty.

Gilderdale suggests that the protestant middle-class work ethic of these texts is different from that encountered in England, and similar to that brought to New Zealand by Scottish Presbyterians (Barley 4). It

clearly echoes the sentiments of that hugely influential myth of colonialism,³⁴ Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Crusoe's troubles stem from dissatisfaction with his father's position in "the middle state, or what might be called the upper station of low life, which he had found by long experience was the best state in the world, the most suited to human happiness" (28). Crusoe's desire to rise by "enterprise" of a high-risk and possibly immoral nature (such as slave-trading) is punished by his island exile, in which much bodily toil and self-reflection convince Crusoe of the wisdom of his father's values, summarised in the scripture of Proverbs 30:8: "Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food³⁵ convenient for me." Ultimately Crusoe attains colonial prosperity as agrarian landowner with servant. This existence, which approaches old-style gentility based on land ownership rather than business, is the goal of the middle-class migrant families in the texts under discussion, who usually rise to an improved social status similar to a cross between the English yeoman farmer and the landed gentry.

This is achieved by the virtue of hard work. The ideology of "give me neither poverty nor riches" proposes that work creates a truly moral life, one free from the temptations to vice triggered either by poverty or by the luxuries and idleness of excessive wealth. This morality was seized upon by children's publishing houses, who broadened their texts' exhortations to self-help with improving myths of domestic blessings for the pious, hardworking emigrant. In many texts examined here colonial success is created through strong affective family relationships, parents and children working harmoniously to create a prosperous homestead. As Gilderdale has noted, in these books "the parents are invariably warm, sympathetic, courteous, and much-loved . . . and their children tend to be living at home with them" (*A Sea Change* 63). That home is usually an isolated bush farmhouse, which romanticises two mid-Victorian bourgeois obsessions: the sentimental

³⁴ See Martin Green, "The Robinson Crusoe Story" in Richards 34-52.

³⁵ Some translators suggest the Hebrew word means "wealth."

ideal of well-ordered family and cosy fireside, and the industrialist's nostalgia for quiet, unpolluted country life (see Gunn 28, Tosh 32). The middle classes, interestingly, marked success by the acquisition of land (the sign of an older, usually inherited form of wealth), and the settlement adventure story domesticates the disturbing elements of an untamed bush locale through the reassurance of "the manorial domain . . . the ultimate desire of the modern romance of a far-flung Empire" (Marquis 61). The image of the happy, pious homestead made an obvious icon of stability for a young colony.

These emphases on domestic bliss appealed to readers of both sexes. While the domestic sphere was traditionally cast as the Victorian woman's realm, John Tosh has emphasised the frequently overlooked fact that the Victorian middle-class home was bound in a complex way to the image of the successful man. His home was his symbol of financial success, his haven from public life, his temple for instilling moral character in his children, and his arena to dominate with patriarchal authority—his kingdom, fiefdom, or mini-Empire (1, 14, 24).

Providential Setbacks

The middle-class emigrant family in these novels is a holy vessel. Authors present the financial reversals occasioning emigration as almost never the fault of the middle-class parents, who are usually too virtuous to be idlers, gamblers, or spendthrifts. Instead the financial calamity is presented as an Act of God and a blessing in disguise, or, occasionally, a timely warning against overwork or neglect of one's family. In *Distant Homes*, *Holmwood*, *The Redfords*, and *Maori and Settler*, fortunes are lost in bank failures, though usually mamma has been left an inheritance sufficient for emigration purposes.³⁶ This allows the mother, the traditional Victorian hearth-angel, to light the way to domestic harmony abroad. Parents in *Waihoura*, *Across Two Seas*, *Doing and Daring*, and *A*

³⁶ In texts written or set before the Married Woman's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882 this sum was to be spent at the discretion of the husband. Thus Captain Graham

Girl of the Fortunate Isles make new beginnings following the death of a spouse. The Godwins of *Under One Standard* seek help from New Zealand-settled relatives after a vindictive uncle denies them their rightful inheritance. *Amongst the Maoris* explains that Jack's deceased father lost his money in speculation but was duped into the scheme by a rascally companion.

Some texts deem it necessary to distance their heroes from dubiously acquired family fortunes, particularly those carrying a whiff of human exploitation. Squire Pemberton of *Waihoura* loses a fortune amassed in West Indian property (and, perhaps, slaves). Purcell of *The Greenstone Door* is of mysterious origin but Cedric does not dream his foster-father is rich until he is gifted a portion of £50,000. Socialistic Purcell is dismissive of the sum: "Do not give it an importance it does not possess . . . The money came lightly to me. I was not among the poor creatures who created it" (273). "Poor creatures" suggests labourers or factory hands (or very possibly slaves), thus locating Purcell's family within the industrialist classes or landed gentry. *The Boy Settler's* Sydney likewise disassociates himself from his forbears, as "Some people declare that the original Bartlett had made a fortune in the blackbirding trade,³⁷ but there are always detractors about ready to pick holes. Be that as it may, the family was established in the district on lines of solid prosperity" (7-8).

Such prosperity is not so very solid in the evangelical mythology of *The Boy Settler*, where economic and environmental foundations indelibly influence character. These texts scorn old wealth built on human exploitation. The new way is represented by the hardworking middle-class colonial, exemplified in George Hallett of *Across Two Seas*, who quits his father's mill (in whose machines George has lost an arm, symbolic of the crushing of the industrialised proletariat) and makes an independent fortune in New Zealand.

congratulates himself on "having done both wisely and well in embarking his little fortune in New Zealand" (*Distant Homes* 122).

³⁷ Slave-trading.

Hard Work, Family Harmony, and Financial Rewards

In these texts hardworking colonial life brings capital and personal rewards to a family labour pool, in a model similar to that of the British middling sort of earlier eras. Middle-class families in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries frequently lived and worked on the same premises, and the entire household, including servants and apprentices, contributed to productivity (Tosh 15). Early New Zealand-set junior fiction presents the colonial experience as reversing some effects of the industrial revolution, such as the separation of home and workplace, the removal of the paternal provider from his family for long periods, and the distancing of women from methods of economic production.

Thus while reversals of fortune may be initially sobering they are always shown as ultimately conducive to family harmony. This is strongly emphasised in the blessings of status, plenty, and domestic endearment heaped upon the emigrant family of *The Redfords*. The Liverpool of this novel is a class- and cash-mobile society in which Mr Redford, who has internalised the mid-Victorian Smilesian self-help ethos,³⁸ moves easily between social strata. Once considered “almost poor,” he now inhabits the upper middle class and Squire Mortimer’s former mansion. The Redford and Mortimer families socialise together and the healthy little Redfords improve the Squire’s children, who are examples of the decadent upper classes stereotyped in many Victorian novels, too rich, pale, and molly-coddled for their own good. The Redfords are kind to the village poor as well, learning from local artisans skills which will be useful when financial disaster compels them to emigrate. The Redfords are thus the balanced, virtuous centre around which society revolves, perfectly positioned to extend blessings to all; even on the emigrant voyage they educate poor steerage children and mollify rich snobs from their cabin in the vessel’s “intermediate section.”

³⁸ Samuel Smiles (1812-1904) wrote manuals such as *Self-Help* (1859) and *Thrift* (1875), encouraging readers to improve their lots by good conduct and perseverance.

Cupples' text repeatedly emphasises that the middle station in life is the very best for human happiness. When Mr Redford works very long hours in pursuit of riches he has no time for leisure or his family; Bernard grumbles that his father "never takes a holiday. I almost wish he hadn't so much money, for then he might go with us an excursion, as he used to do sometimes" (9). Papa achieves greater, and easier, domestic success in Otago. Here the Redfords start at the top of the social ladder, and while they all toil on their farm no-one ever appears overly tired or busy, presumably because their shared work enhances healthful affective relationships. The Redford children are "so glad" to hear there is a servant shortage in New Zealand, as "it will be such fun doing all the work ourselves!" (56). This idealism is fully supported by a text in which the emigrant family effortlessly wrests a home from the bush, knocks furnishings out of packing-cases, and tackles chores with endless good humour.

The Grahams of *Distant Homes* similarly work hard, cheerfully, and without fatigue. En route to Canterbury Captain Graham, in a species of aversion therapy, takes Tom to a gold diggings, which are dismissed as "dismal" and unprosperous. Against the goldfields' temptation of easy prosperity akin to gambling and notoriety for vice are positioned the sanctioned blessings of piety, honesty, and family-centred work: a cultured middle-class homestead, prosperous farm, family devotedness, rewards both in Heaven and on earth.

"If a family with small means in a new colony wishes to succeed, every member of it must work," stresses Kingston in *Holmwood*, and has Mrs Parry set the example by toiling hardest of all (32). *Waihoura* presents the financial and domestic advantages settlement offers a man who can no longer afford to send his sons to university or into the Navy—a significant source of masculine shame (Tosh 3). Emigration allows the Pembertons to remain together and still enjoy a very respectable standard of living, plus offering brighter career prospects for the boys and marriage hopes for daughter Lucy.

Maori and Settler depicts emigration as the financial, moral, and emotional salvation of Mr Renshaw. Unearned money has enabled him to live as a selfish dilettante; in New Zealand he discovers he can maintain his accustomed respectability at a fraction of the cost, but must also work hard and shoulder his family responsibilities. Indeed, the voyage out provides him with opportunity to examine his domestic ties and find them sadly lacking; he has broken his marriage vows, he realises, by failing to cherish. In the colony Renshaw does his best to make up for these shortcomings and becomes a paterfamilias of exemplary industry, leadership, and domestic affection. The colonial experience heals the family man and the family unit as well as the family fortunes.

When widowed, impoverished Mrs Vaughan of *Across Two Seas* is urged to divide her eight children between relatives; she refuses and emigrates instead. The loyal emigrant family stays together, makes sacrifices, works hard and cheerfully (*Across Two Seas* portrays colonial work and economic difficulty with some realism), and prospers mightily. One-armed George is most cheerful of all, and the work improves his health even as it increases his fortunes. Only Dick, the child most eager for them to “be real colonists . . . lie on the ground, and when we are short of food go out and shoot something,” becomes disillusioned by chores and privations and must learn hard lessons of faithful familial duty (27).

Family work in *Doing and Daring* takes the form of effortless jolly fun, as the boys help their father clear-fell a bush section. However the Lee children are soon made homeless and hungry by the Tarawera eruption, and forced to draw on all their resources, including domestic affections. Audrey enters service to support her siblings, who are shocked at her going “charring.” What would in England be degradation is here presented as an unselfish sacrifice performed for the family good, not that it is permitted to continue for long: order is soon restored to the community and the Lees resume their position in the settlement’s upper echelon.

Margaret and Judy in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* are similarly prepared to take on distasteful jobs such as ferrying and farm labour to support their family and clear their brother's name. Margaret is helped to bear the humiliation of these degrading tasks by the belief that no amount of rough toil can prevent her being a "real lady," and that both the work and its rewards are intrinsically noble: "It is a really delightful sensation to feel that one is independent of other people, and able by sheer strength of hand and will to earn a living for oneself" (123-24, 131). The colonial economic climate in this novel is unstable, with changes in fortune likely to force middle-class girls into the workforce. Margaret works harder than most, and is rewarded by the increasing prosperity of the family holding, as well as by eventual marriage to a wealthy banker.

The outcome of hard family work is rather different in *Under One Standard*, which explores rather than advocates emigration. Yeoman farmer Abel Godwin sees New Zealand as "the ladder which will help us to reach independence, and, please God, prosperity" (2). His irascible Uncle Peter, angry that Abel has married clergyman's daughter Mary instead of a farmer's lass "with big, strong hands for work and money in her pocket" (7), denies Abel inheritance rights to the family farm and attempts to transfer these to Mary's young brother, David. The loyal boy scorns the offer and emigrates with Abel and Mary to New Zealand and the protection of another, emigrant, uncle.

Emigration thus cements and increases the Godwin family, who become part of Uncle Jacob Godwin's extended clan, adopt a foster-child, and have a baby. David, a bookish lad who initially balks at colonial privations and physical labour, learns to work hard for the family and appreciate the blessings of such labour. He is much impressed by Kempe's farm, an Edenic setting with a large gabled cottage and a garden of English flowers: "What do you want more than this? There's room to move and breathe, and you've got the place to yourself. You make your living and a little over, enough to live on when working days are done" (131). However Abel and Mary Godwin never enjoy the charming idyll

of colonial prosperity. Land hostilities threaten their holding and they struggle to make a living until an inheritance enables them to return to England, leaving David to become a missionary, not a farmer.

Bachelor Settlers and the Domestic Myth

Under One Standard takes as protagonists both a family and a single lad. Other novels concentrate solely on the middle-class bachelor settler—a teenage orphan, the son of a father beset by financial problems, or a refugee from an enormous family. Louis Roden of “My Emigrant Boy” is one of ten siblings; he longs for an academic career but realises his duty is to emigrate. Ernest and Arthur of *The Boy Colonists* become Otago farm cadets to avoid burdening their father. Orphans Sydney Bartlett (*The Boy Settler*) and Jack Stanley (*Amongst the Maoris*) leave England after being thwarted out of family inheritances. Virtue, industry, and eventual integration into a new family, are the keys to success for all these climbers upon the social ladder. With the exception of *Daddy Crip’s Waifs*, the figure of the black sheep or remittance man, a bad sort who is packed off to the colonies to obviate embarrassment at home, never features as a hero, though he may appear in a minor role as a moral warning.

“My Emigrant Boy” was, suggests Gilderdale, based on tales Barker heard about idealistic young emigrants (*The Seven Lives* 165). It can also be read as a fictionalised biography of Barker’s second husband, Frederick Broome. The narrator³⁹ insists that she knew Louis personally; both Broome and Louis were the sons of impoverished fathers with large families, and sailed to New Zealand in the 1850s under the Canterbury Settlement Association scheme. Barker emphasises several reasons for Louis’ success: common sense (he has “none of the golden visions peculiar to young colonists, of making large fortunes in a few years—just by changing the air, and without dreaming of such trifles as trouble or

³⁹ In discussing Barker’s books I refer to the tales’ first-person speaker as “the narrator,” both to differentiate this figure from the historical Lady Barker, and to indicate that

hard work," 11); economic history (Louis' story "really happened" twenty years before, and now "the colony has outgrown the time when such a thing was possible," 79-80); and piety (virtuous, sober, hard-working Louis is rewarded with the colonial holding vacated by his intemperate employer).

Ted Strangemuir of *In the Bell-Bird's Lair* may not be an emigrant but he undergoes the improving colonial experience of one. A lower middle-class shop clerk anxious to improve himself, Ted makes a number of career mistakes (including a disastrous attempt to enter Labour politics) but a few years on a bush section won under a land nationalisation ballot moulds him into a prosperous farmer, miller, writer, and lecturer on the puritan "wealth gospel" (summarised as "Put Christ first in politics, commerce, business, social and moral questions, and you will come out on 'Top' every time," 110).

In this fiction the colonial experience moulds lads into well-off men who can afford to marry and whose virtues will ensure domestic happiness. This message is presented tacitly in texts which chastely preserve their hero from romance ("My Emigrant Boy," *The Boy Colonists*, *Amongst the Maoris*) and more clearly in those which end in marriage (*The Boy Settler*, *Maori and Settler*, *In the Bell-Bird's Lair*, and *Across Two Seas*). As Tosh notes, Victorian bachelors held marginal community status, being viewed as scarcely adult or "fully masculine," but the acquisition of a home enabled a bachelor to marry, and both home and wife were essential middle-class qualifications for male status and public importance (2-3, 24, 108). As married landowners, these texts' heroes are transformed from liminal figures into icons of upper middle-class stability.

Fairy Godfathers and Emigrant Failures

Many of these initially impoverished cadet heroes receive benefits from a fairy godfather figure of an heirless old colonist whose bounty was

although the stories are based closely on Barker's personal experiences they are glossed with a veneer of assumed personae.

gleaned in the colony's early days. In *The Boy Settler* Sydney Bartlett inherits Sefton Station, the holding of his employer Ralph Twopenny, who by great coincidence was his father's bosom friend and his mother's admirer. Twopenny functions as a surrogate father, a dispenser of patriarchal fortunes to a worthy son. Kempe in *Under One Standard* emigrated penniless, inherited a friendly squatter's farm, and now stands poised to pass on this favour to young David Copeland, while Uncle Jacob Godwin provides the new chum Godwins with a sound financial start. Wealthy Atherton of *Maori and Settler* enriches the entire Renshaw family.

Showing a young hero singlehandedly achieving rapid financial success might be seen as fanciful, even misleading. The presence of an adult helper figure obviated authors from moral culpability should their young readers sail south to meet disappointment. Many texts also therefore present the possible pitfalls of emigration alongside their inevitable rags-to-riches main plot. Ernest of *The Boy Colonists* is successful, but Arthur finds lonely station life unbearable, becomes ill, and returns home. The naïvely optimistic youths who rave about opportunities for colonial advancement in *Amongst the Maoris* are contrasted with scornful adults who warn that the only occupation to be found in New Zealand is that of starving. As it is, Jack lives modestly as an artist until an inheritance sends him home in style.

Sydney Bartlett's Uncle James scoffs at his plans to emigrate: "What, what, are you mad, sir? Who ever heard of any of our family going to New Zealand! It's preposterous, preposterous, not to be thought of for a moment!" (*The Boy Settler* 93). Certainly it is doubtful if Sydney, who arrives with just £50 and thirty shillings, will ever afford his own holding, even were this possible within the story's time-frame (Twopenny spent thirty years establishing Sefton, starting with considerable capital). Nor would he easily find an office job; Auckland in the 1870s, says Storer, was filled with beggars who emigrated expecting to work as clerks.

In *Under One Standard* Abel and Mary Godwin give up the colonial dream and David does not even try to make a living farming, even though Jacob Godwin and Kempe are displeased that none of the emigrants sticks to the new land. This text casts serious doubts upon the myth of colonial prosperity. The older men's slices of paradise each took twenty years to establish, and even a virtuous multi-skilled settler like Folkes has difficulty finding employment, let alone purchasing a holding. "New Zealand is the place for a boy to start," emphasises Folkes (33), but whether he can remain and succeed is less certain.

Lady Barker knew firsthand the heartbreak of dashed colonial ideals, returning to England in financial ruin after three years in Canterbury. The final chapter of her "My Emigrant Boy" contains this warning: "I mean this to be a very steady and serious chapter, full of information and description, so that you may know exactly the sort of life a young sheep-farmer leads in New Zealand, and decide, before you start, whether it would suit you 'down to the ground,' as they say there, or not" (69). The middle-class reader is told that it is of no use going to New Zealand without capital as there are already a lot of working men there who can outdig a gentleman's son, "however strong and willing he may be, and, after all, I don't suppose you go out there to turn into a working man" (77-78). In case a humble lad should get hold of her book she adds that the colonial labourer who is steady, thrifty, and used to hard work "is pretty certain to do as well as his wildest dreams could foreshadow," but the penniless son of the bourgeoisie will find himself in unsavoury situations "until he is utterly and entirely ruined in both mind and body" (78). New Zealand is a fertile land, but "not the earthly paradise which my sketches may incline you to fancy"; boys need "industry and self-denial" to win significant financial rewards there (80).⁴⁰

Despite these worthy touches of realism, however, the lasting impression this fiction leaves with the reader is that of the colonial myth

⁴⁰Barker repeats these warnings in *Station Amusements in New Zealand*, which prophesies a "blessed" prosperity to the sober industrious working man and corresponding degradation to the penniless gentleman (16).

of prosperity, a reinforcement of the middle-class self-help ethos. Old colonists in *Amongst the Maoris* live in fine style, with “all the elegance and refinement of an English home” (98). Ernest of *The Boy Colonists* is made a station manager by age twenty, and at twenty-four sails home with land deeds in his pocket. *The Boy Settler*’s Sydney acquires Sefton Station and his chum Parker makes a fortune as an Australian mining speculator with “a lovely house in Toorak, and no end of money” (315). And Louis Roden finds significant colonial success as well—despite his narrator’s many warnings.

The Colonial Gentleman and His Antithesis

Clearly, most of the works examined here encourage the reader to become a “colonial gentleman.” The definition of “colonial gentleman” differed somewhat from that of the English “gentleman.” The latter was a term loosely applied to any well-educated member of the middle station or above, though defined in law as someone with no regular trade or occupation (Pool 44). The English gentleman was frequently a landowner, exemplified well-bred manners, and did not need to work. The colonial gentleman was a similarly well-mannered landowner, but one who was known by his capacity for work. Early New Zealand-set children’s fiction emphasises this, making the gentlemanly settler figure inspire his social inferiors by virtue *and* industry. He acts as both the exemplar and the enforcer of colonial social discipline and order.

Once landed in the colony, the middle-class gentleman character sets a sterling example of manners, duty, and industry in an antipodes which, if not entirely “classless,” is presented as a location where any sort of work is an ennobling adventure for one who is innately noble, by virtue of his middle-class status at home. (Working-class characters, in contrast, tend to remain labourers or servants.) Thus, despite the Victorian middle classes’ eagerness to send their sons to the great public schools as a sign of having “made it,” heroes in this fiction are usually the recipients of a practical rather than a classical education and able to turn their hands to any rough rural work. Yet despite their willingness to

toil at grubby chores, all these boys retain impeccable manners and a sense of gentlemanly status, including a nice appreciation of which colonists are beneath their notice. They need only accumulate sufficient capital in order to step from farm cadet to landowner, forming a leading faction within their communities.

The message of “My Emigrant Boy” is that advantages of birth must be seconded by virtue or be forfeited; gin-sodden Thomas Day has not fallen from his gentlemanly origins but “*deliberately stepped down from his position*” (italics mine), thus creating a class vacancy naturally filled by upright Louis Roden.

Across Two Seas suggests that true, inborn gentility is apparent even beneath untoward exteriors. Middle-class emigrants must be prepared to “rough it,” but like automatically recognises like, and when a tramp arrives at Golden Grove Joss can see instantly he has a gentleman’s face and Dick receives him with “the pleasant courtesy of a well-born English lad” (83). The unprepossessing figure is in fact the Bishop of New Zealand, who quotes a Maori proverb: “Gentleman-gentleman doesn’t mind what he does, but pig-gentleman very particular” (84). Colonial gentility is expressly defined by a capacity for work.

While Ernest of *The Boy Colonists* steels himself to accept that in Otago “all class distinctions must be dropped” (35), in practice he upholds a divide between the tastes, habits, standards, and intelligence of labourers and those of the middle-class cadets. One of his first distasteful chores is to prepare a meal for an old shepherd and, what’s more, share it with him: “With the exception of Mr J. the sheep-washers were all ordinary working men. Even this would not have mattered, but some of them were not very clean, and all indulged in smoking, a habit detestable to Ernest. It was not, therefore, pleasant to have to share a pannikin of tea . . .” (42). Ernest grows to tolerate pannikin sharing and pipe-smoke but “never got reconciled to the dirt” (43). However, while “at first a little surprised at being treated merely as an equal by such men . . . he did not take it to heart, for he had wisdom enough to perceive of how little value deference was unless it came from the heart” (36). This indicates that

Ernest clearly expects deference from the workmen, but would prefer this to be sincere. He dismisses the older workers as “fools” while demonstrating his own superiority at farm tasks:

Ernest had to manage with the men himself . . . each individual man kept asserting his own superior knowledge of the butcher’s art. To obviate all this, the next time Ernest asked Walker to leave only two men with him, and he let these two men understand before commencing that he did not want advice, and that other plans having been tried unsuccessfully he now intended to adopt his own plan, and he wished them to carry out his directions without any superfluous remarks. (126)

This is quite a tour de force for a youth who initially describes himself as shy, retiring, and unbusinesslike. *The Boy Colonists* suggests that colonial class distinctions should be made upon grounds of intelligence or practical skill, yet presumes that the lower classes possess neither.

Henty (an industrialist’s son who never boasted riches) emphasises an ideal of active gentility as a prerequisite for financial, moral, and psychological success (see Arnold 4, 31, 65). Henty’s heroes are innately genteel but require Smilesian self-help values of work, perseverance, and thrift in order to succeed. This, which Richards sees as a “central paradox” in Henty’s work (“With Henty” 85-86), is an issue foregrounded in many early New Zealand-set children’s novels. *Maori and Settler* implies that class divisions do and must exist in the colony, for some settlers are disreputable, a “thriftless lazy lot” who drink and complain, and their social superiors must set them an example: “Men will work here for a master who works himself, but one who thinks that he has only to pay his hands and can spend his time in riding about the country making visits, or in sitting quietly by his fire, will find that his hands will soon be as lazy as he is himself” (188).

Nelson views Henty as economically confused, as while his heroes must make their way in the world, too much money appears to sap their manliness (108). However this too ties into the middle-class ideal

eschewing both poverty and riches. Henty is uncomfortable about showering his lads with unearned wealth which, he suggests, is acceptable only in the hands of outstandingly mature individuals like Atherton—and even he, for most of the novel, seems guilty about his secret wealth and status, and proves himself a colonial gentleman by working harder than anyone before disclosing it. In contrast, once Mr Renshaw has been chastened for succumbing to the idleness of riches and has learned the better way of work, he is rewarded with restoration to gentlemanly status in England.

Daddy Crip's Waifs ambiguously suggests both that in the colonies class does not matter as character and actions alone create one's status, and that class cannot be concealed forever and thus matters considerably. Daddy Crip, once of "respectable family," suffered a moral fall in youth and has turned shoemaker and do-gooder amongst the underclass of Sydney's Rocks district. Daddy's philanthropic leanings apparently spring from the (albeit latent) emergence of his native good breeding, and despite his poverty, his "Nest" becomes a haven for orphans, whom Daddy teaches that work and piety equal respectability. However sterling character is of little help when social status threatens the marriage of two of his poor nestlings, the otherwise suited Frank and Rose. After much working and hoping, both are revealed to have well-off origins and a wedding of social equals takes place. While the puritan work ethic is the loudest message in the text ("Each one by God's blessing becomes pioneer of his own fortunes," emphasises Daddy, 33), and the novel's villains are punished for preferring the easy riches of crime, Frank and Rose achieve wealth, status, and happiness by their inherent nobility as well as moral virtue.

Marryat's *Amongst the Maoris* hints that genteel sensibilities may be found even amongst the working class. Jack's Cockney landlady shows him more love and sympathy than does his middle-class guardian:

Jack would have been, perhaps, half-ashamed of acknowledging that, at this juncture, he would have preferred the society of the so-called vulgar old Mother

Bennett to that of the so-called lady, Mrs Denby; but it was a fact that he would have done so, and perhaps, in the real sense, Mrs Bennett was the better lady of the two.

(30)

Despite her tentative praise of “Mother” Bennett and her vitriolic portrayal of the cold, pushy Denbys, Marryat is by no means dismissive of all middle-class values, in particular the virtue of work, which ennobles the already noble gentleman: “A man who dislikes work or is unwilling to work is only half a man, and certainly nothing of a gentleman” (32). Exactly what constitutes work, however, is not always clear. At the story’s end Jack, Bernard, and Maitland assume positions among the English gentry but what “work” they will do there is unspecified.

Other texts examined here similarly accord ladylike status to working-class motherly servants, adding a gloss of Divine approval. In *Patricia-Pat* the small heroine suggests washerwoman Mrs Higgins must be a “lady” because she has clean fingernails: “‘As to that,’ answered the other, plainly embarrassed, ‘I s’pose one’s much the same as another in the eyes of Heaven’” (29). Patty the loving Christian housekeeper in *The Boy Settler* is also praised as being “. . . of the blood royal, a daughter of the King of Kings” (10).

However, elevating epithets which can be safely bestowed upon those with no desire to rise above their station are withheld in regard to lower-class characters eager to climb the social ladder. *The Boy Settler* sanctions Sydney’s father’s marriage to a good lady of poor means, but frowns upon marriages between gentlemen and vulgar women. Sydney despises his new stepmother Winnie Stone, who “was of the people” and “spent all her time trying to cover up the fact” (62). Shallow “tuft-hunter” Aunt Charlotte is similarly disliked; she trails after titled figures, who dismiss her as “Brummagen,” or counterfeit (266). Charlotte and Uncle Herbert married for money and are consequently impoverished in the resources of domestic affection which these texts present as true riches.

The Boy Settler suggests that good character can be independent of wealth, but that it is not to be found in social upstarts.

Banker Karr Gwynne in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* assumes a colonial egalitarianism tempered by notions of innate gentility: he “. . . had the true colonial indifference to social status, and would as soon have taken a wife from the toilsome, drudging life of back-bush farm, provided she were cultured and a lady, as he would have taken one from the drawing-rooms of his social equals ”(157). His tolerance extends to poverty rather than class, and he convinces himself that not only is Margaret respectable but that she looks “a great lady” and may be of “noble ancestry” (123-24). Apart from a family heirloom necklace dating from the time of George III there is no proof of this, but it is a tantalising thought, locating Margaret as a fairytale heroine ripe for restoration to fortune. *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* praises work as ennobling, but those most ennobled are those already well-bred. The nouveau riche are parodied in overdressed, commonly-spoken Mr Arnott, “one of the self-made men, of which there are such a numerous class in the colony, though happily most of them take on more real polish in the intervals of money-getting than he had been able to achieve” (71). Arnott is kindly, and praises Margaret for working rather than relying on her education and manners, but his own deficiencies in both are glaring.

These texts’ emphasis on innate middle-class gentility suggest that birth and breeding deserves financial rewards as much as virtue and effort, and shows characters of low class and low morality who rise to positions of authority being brought down and replaced by a pious hardworking middle-class hero.

One text which deviates from this model is *The Greenstone Door*, in which young Cedric absorbs a knowledge of Maori rank but not of pakeha social class. When introduced to the latter in Auckland he soon realises that his hosts, the Brompart family, are ill-bred upstarts. The antithesis of middle-class piety, the Bromparts are violent, greedy, and unethical (eager to get rich by means other than honest work). They represent colonial riff-raff. Satchell suggests that the pax Britannica

resides in the hands of more noble whites like Governor Grey, Bishop Selwyn, Purcell, and Cedric. However this text aims for realism and thus while Cedric survives colonial troubles, so do the unscrupulous Bromparts.

Appreciating the Unconventional, Resisting the Overfamiliar: Colonial Camaraderie and the Working Class

While early New Zealand-set children's texts are disgusted with upstarts or vulgar behaviour, they do acknowledge the melting pot dynamics created by the emigration process in lauding a more flexible colonial gentility which appreciates the working man's free and easy hospitality, heartiness, and mateship. Colonial manners, states *The Boy Settler*, may be "rough and unconventional" but are the sincere, helpful "touches which make the whole world kin" (185). Genteel emigrant readers are assured that they will quickly adapt to and enjoy them. While Sydney Bartlett is initially surprised to find masters and men on Sefton Station dining together, such informality at length becomes endearing, and if Beatrice Falconer is at first amazed at the informal relationship between colonial ladies and their maids, she soon comes to term it "that delightful sense of *camaraderie* which ignores social distinctions, and makes the Australians charming to those who take the trouble to understand them" (*The Boy Settler* 258). Henty notes with approval that old customs such as formal letters of introduction give way in New Zealand to mutual supportiveness and open house (*Maori and Settler* 176). Marryat praises colonial instant friendships and hospitality: ". . . in the bush, there is not much time wasted in preliminary courtesies and bows" (*Amongst the Maoris* 103).

Several texts allow their gentlemanly heroes to delight in "rough and unconventional" speech and manners, though all are careful to draw a fine line between the quaint or refreshing and the coarse or impertinent. Lady Barker appears particularly fascinated by the freedoms of colonial slang, though she firmly assigns the use of it to her working-class characters. In particular, casual salutations from working class men to

their betters are interpreted as disrespectful. The young Vaughans of *Across Two Seas* are appalled at a cart-driver addressing them by their first names; Ernest in *The Boy Colonists* dislikes the “unpleasant familiarity” of a run-holder who insists on walking and yarning with him; Sydney in *The Boy Settler* takes affront at a head shepherd asking his name, though he finds well-educated Parker, who speaks in a colonial patois sprinkled with “mate,” “bluey,” and “never say die,” uplifting and attractive. The colonial experience broadens but by no means melts the hierarchies of home.

A reprobate colonial urban underclass of ragamuffins, homeless children, and lame newspaper vendors is glimpsed in *My Friend Phil*. These are the “friends” with whom innocent little Phil wishes to associate, all of whom are firmly vetoed by his adult friend Lingard. While Phil’s goodness may well improve them, they are viewed by adults as a potential corrupting influence, social embarrassments who must be kept firmly at a distance.

Kingston was an advocate of emigration for those of all stations, and *Waihoura* shows the lower middle-class English tradesman as a less desirable but unavoidable neighbour, who is open to improvement, and eventually proves himself useful. Squire Pemberton realises that “differences of social rank could not be maintained in a new colony”—such pronounced differences as he has known, at any rate—and believes that if he is kind and mannerly all his neighbours will repay him with respect (38). He even extends courtesy to the ingratiating shopkeeper Spears, an incompetent, conceited busybody whom everyone in this novel tacitly despises. Spears is the text’s figure of fun and the antithesis of every other character from Pemberton to the noble savages. Despite his faults, Spears eventually learns to attend to his own affairs and settles down to run the local trading post. *Waihoura* shows colonial classes as enjoying a form of mutual if unequal interdependence and promises a degree of respectability to every emigrant from squire to shopkeeper.

Thus, despite their praise of a less formal settler lifestyle in which certain social divisions, at least amongst the strata of the middle classes,

appear to blur, these texts repeatedly emphasise that there must be at least two classes in the colonies. To maintain its accustomed levels of hygiene and respectability and make land commercially viable the middle-class family was dependent upon both a labouring and a servant class which knew, and kept to, its place.

A middle-class anxiety about obtaining (and retaining) suitable servants—particularly suitable white servants—is a common theme throughout this fiction. Millen comments that although “It was assumed by many that . . . Maori, would be willing—even delighted—to work for the white-skinned newcomers,” in practice “the Maori people were on the whole too independent, too proud and too assertive to become a substitute working class” (1). While not deflating the fantasy of a ready-made brown workforce, these texts bow to fact by assigning Maori domestics minor or temporary roles. At best they are idealised assimilable indigenes who yearn for the privilege of working for whites (*Distant Homes, Amongst the Maoris, Under One Standard*). At worst they are violent, treacherous, or mad (*The Redfords, Six Little New Zealanders*) or make disappointing employees due to their habits of laziness, dirt, or greed (*A Girl of the Fortunate Isles, Holmwood, Maori and Settler, The Boy Settler*).

Text after text acknowledges colonial shortages of skilled, respectable, respectful pakeha staff and the fact that the rare “nice tidy girls,” as Lady Barker terms them, were soon snapped up by bachelor settlers, leaving families servantless (see *Station Life* Letter XI). An emigrant labour pool of coarse and untrained girls from which dismayed settlers were forced to select their cooks and maids is represented in “My Emigrant Boy” by three hundred Irishwomen who travel steerage, indulging in weekly free fights which make the ship’s officers quiver in their cabins before “an uproar which no pen can describe . . . fiends . . . fighting each other like wild animals” (12).

Capable servants were in high demand and could afford to be selective. Widespread ideas that colonial domestics enjoyed an improved status over their English counterparts sparked fears among middle-class

colonists of a corresponding lowering of standards and class deference. Indeed, notes Millen, the favourable labour market “fostered in some [servants] an inefficient and nonchalant approach to their work” (74). This possibility obsesses *Distant Homes*’ Lucy Graham, who is horrified to see a hotel maid take orders while seated and even more shocked to hear that in New Zealand servants “expect to be treated like one of the family.” In Canada, the maid continues, they even insist on eating with their betters. “Oh, how horrid! I should never like that, I know,” Lucy declares (19). Millen’s historical analysis of working-class conditions in early New Zealand cites this episode from *Distant Homes*, marking the conflation between fiction and fact which characterises many of these texts; as Millen explains, Aylmer’s novel was based upon settlers’ letters home⁴¹ (87).

Lady Barker, who was keenly aware of the servant problem (Wattie 102-03), carefully depicts a well-ordered colonial social hierarchy by differentiating her autobiographical “Christmas Day in New Zealand” from the Broomielaw Station memoirs upon which it is based. In “Christmas Day in New Zealand” shepherds who attend a Christmas service and luncheon at the narrator’s homestead worship on the verandah, dine in the washhouse, and relax near the stables. Yet Barker’s letters suggest a greater level of colonial informality, stating that labourers and even swaggers were frequently invited inside Broomielaw, while on Christmas Day 1866 “. . . a large congregation of thirty-six came trooping into my little drawing-room. As soon as it was filled the others clustered round the door” (*Station Life* Letter XIV). Letter XI of *Station Life* mentions a future proposal to hold church on the verandah in fine weather, but it seems the verandah was not the setting for Christmas 1866. No mention is made, either, of the impromptu Christmas ball at which Barker danced with her servants and working men: “. . . my two maids came with a shamefaced request to be allowed to dance in the kitchen. . . . I found they wanted me to start them. I selected as my

⁴¹ The settler in question was the author’s husband’s cousin, the Reverend W.J. Aylmer of Akaroa (Ringer, *Young Emigrants* 14).

partner a very decent young farmer who . . . is at work branding our sheep all shearing-time . . . everybody danced . . .” (*Station Life* Letter XIV). Broadminded adult readers may have reacted to this with shocked or delighted amusement, but the anecdote would not do for a children’s literature genre demanding images of an ordered society mindful of appointed stations.

The middle-class settlers of *The Redfords* are shown to dispense blessings of employment, education, physical and moral protection to the emigrant servant class, though their philanthropy is spiced with a generous measure of self-interest. They employ urchin stowaway Tim Napper, not just because he is a homeless, wistful, intelligent-looking waif, but because of Otago’s severe servant shortage. Mr Redford indeed views the lad’s origins and morals with great suspicion but agrees to take Tim on trial as

“It is really quite questionable what other employment the boy might get here; and so far as we are concerned, it may be a benefit, for I hear there is not a servant to be had just now. They had all been caught up before I applied. We shall have to wait for the next ship.” (56)

One of the Family: A New and Better Servitude

Tim Napper is a prime example of emigrant propaganda directed at the lower classes. This ragamuffin stowaway “evidently belonged to the lowest and poorest rank, if not to a still worse class” (35); forced to work his passage “aloft,” he is excluded by all the emigrants. Yet Tim’s “fancy” to emigrate is “a light in his dark path—the only guide leading him to something better” (40). He repeats in a prayer-like manner: “I wants to hemigrate . . . I wants out to New Zealand” (35); “I’m told, marm, a cove needn’t neither beg nor steal there, nor even sleep under dry arches . . . he can look to have a hoss of his own in no time, and he can build a house for hissself, and have a sheep and pigs, and no end of things of his own making” (39). There are clear similarities between Tim’s speeches and the Proverbs 30:8 prayer to have neither poverty nor

riches but “food convenient for me”—the Crusoe myth of colonial self-advancement and domestic contentment.

Early New Zealand-set children’s fiction presents the colony as a golden opportunity for the worker, provided he remains respectable and respectful to his employers. Many texts idealise colonial working life with images of servants and workmen revelling in the employ of a caring, morally-improving settler family. The suggestion of their becoming “one of the family” which so appals Lucy Graham is utilised in many of these texts as a metaphor of inducement and retention. Domestic and even labourers who become a part of the middle-class family automatically share in its affection, prosperity, and security. This reinforces the widely disseminated view that a respectable colonial situation would protect and better lower-class emigrants, safeguarding their morals while training them in useful skills (Millen 130). In return, a form of “family” loyalty to the employers is expected from the servants, outweighing any temptations to create an independent colonial existence. Like the idea of the extended family and staff which functions as a bonded economic unit, this is a nostalgic ideal reminiscent of the time before the Industrial Revolution.

Several emigrant families in this fiction both extend the blessings of emigration to the poor and attempt to solve the colonial servant shortage by bringing their own domestic staff from England. The Renshaws of *Maori and Settler* are accompanied by strong young workmen, their former gardener’s sons. Lady Harcourt of *Fairyland in New Zealand* brings her aged maid. In *Across Two Seas* Betsy, a young orphaned under-nurse, accompanies the Vaughan family to New Zealand, seemingly becoming yet another of Mrs Vaughan’s many children. Major Parry of *Holmwood* brings with him Peter Downes (a lad who seems to be combination servant and labourer), a young maid-of-all-work (“as a good servant will make up her mind to be in a colony,” 7), and an old army supporter. These are treated like dear relations and are devoted to the Parrys. An old nurse also “accompanied the family for love of them, though she might have lived in comfort at home” (7). The inclusion of

older servants is strategic, bearing in mind the Victorian dilemma of crowded workhouses and parish relief systems for the aged. At *Holmwood*'s conclusion young Peter weds the maid Jane, indicating that a future generation of labourers will soon be born to replace the elderly domestics.

At the same time that central and provincial New Zealand governments were desirous of importing an unskilled and semi-skilled labour force to serve better-off landowners, nineteenth-century England was eager to be rid of the social, health, labour, and political threats posed by her excess working class. Assisted emigration schemes were implemented and emigration propaganda touted New Zealand as a society in which the divide between Britain's "Two Nations" would be considerably reduced and individual advancement for the poor made possible. The lure of the Otago goldfields led many working-class emigrants to anticipate genuine riches in the colony (see Millen 6, 2, 27), while the now-famous sketches in *Punch* ("Here and There, or Emigration a Remedy," 1848, and "The Needlewoman at Home and Abroad," 1850) contrasted scenes of degrading poverty with images of colonial working-class prosperity and health.

Kingston's New Zealand-set children's novels, particularly *Holmwood*, trumpeted this message. Kingston, Honorary Secretary of the Colonisation Society, believed in emigration as the answer to Britain's class problems, and hoped to see "evangelical Christianity and the efficacy of hard work link all settlers, from all social levels, into an extended England" (Bratton, *The Impact* 116). *Holmwood* was marketed at "the cottagers and humbler classes of England . . . the poorer population of our towns, the inhabitants of our coasts, and our soldiers and sailors in barracks and on board ship" and "in night schools" (*Holmwood* Preface). Its practical asides read like an emigration handbook, and its deliberate attempts to engage the attention of the semi-literate reader pleased such philanthropic concerns as the *Ragged School Magazine* (see Bratton, *The Impact* 132 and note). *Holmwood* is full of encouragement and promises of new starts. In New Zealand Major Parry

employs a young Irish soldier discharged for drink (on condition he reform), who becomes a beacon of hope to even the most abject reader. All are urged that emigration is the “best thing we can do,” for there is work for all in New Zealand, “one of the finest of England’s colonies” (13).

The Grahams of *Distant Homes* employ an Irish cook, two workmen, and a Scots gardener. Their working men do occasionally fight, but Bridget the cook is a gem of kindness and skill, and the Grahams experience none of the problems of high staff turnover or drunken, ignorant maids described by Lady Barker⁴² and other settlers. When Bridget marries their workman Wilson the Grahams’ labour pool, like that of Holmwood, promises self-regeneration. The reader is even informed that Wilson has been so careful with his wages he is able to buy Aps Graham a pony—an unlikely scenario, for the novel elsewhere mentions that Captain Graham himself could not afford a pony for Tom. *Distant Homes* touts emigration with exaggerated images of prosperity across the social spectrum, but combines this with an ideal of loyal, deferential servanthood.

The Pembertons in *Waihoura* cannot afford to bring an entourage of servants with them (although the loyal maid Betsy vows to follow Miss Lucy anywhere, and presumably pays her own passage) but Squire Pemberton quickly establishes a New Zealand feudal system by cultivating a fellow emigrant, the “sturdy English yeoman” farmer Greening. Greening supplies Pemberton with the practical expertise required for procuring and stocking land and all the forelock-tugging he has been accustomed to. He ensures Pemberton’s house is built before his own; Mrs Greening offers herself as cook to the Pemberton household; his sons respectfully address Pemberton’s boys as “Master.” In short the Greenings make a willing labour force grateful to serve such a genteel master: “It’s a great blessing and advantage, Miss Lucy, to be associated with a gentleman like the Squire” (13). Lucy responds that the two

⁴² For example, *Colonial Memories* 15-17, 121-22.

families are mutually helpful—as indeed they are—but the text suggests the Greenings' practical knowledge is inferior to the civil, moral, and cultural leadership provided by the Pembertons.

Domestics in *The Redfords* also exist to define the superiority of their betters, particularly Maud Redford, who acts the part of Victorian mother by exerting her civilising influence upon them all. She educates her example of the elevated masses, Tim Napper, in literacy, the Gospel, and the importance of being “honest, intelligent, and well-behaved,” and he remains attached to her for life: “Miss Maud has been very kind to me, and has always shown me my duty, not to speak of the teaching me to read and write, and I'm not safe away from her, no ways” (127, 109-10). The Irish cook Bidy is similarly dependent upon her employer-family for guidance and support. Maud in particular sets her a sterling example of industry and early rising, and even after her marriage Maud must still visit to assist with the chores; Bidy apparently cannot manage without her.

The working class in *The Redfords* is given token opportunities for liberation or self-advancement—William runs off with his tribe, Tim goes to the gold diggings, and Bidy receives a number of marriage proposals—but it is made clear that none of them is really “safe” away from the Redford homestead. Bidy meets each misfortune with hysterical threats of “getting married, and being mistress of herself” (10), utterances greeted with an amusement which masks a genuine fear that Bidy really might leave. However the girl knows her duty and provides, for the benefit of working-class female readers, an example of impeccable loyalty to the middle-class household, without which she would presumably collapse. Actually, without her *it* would collapse.

Hypergamy is not encouraged amongst the white workers in these texts. Only *Across Two Seas* shows a maid leaving the family and rising in society. Betsy (whose English nationality positions her as slightly superior to the Irish maids in these stories) marries a mill-owner who later opens a district store. Yet even she does not desert her beloved Vaughans until they are well over the hardships of settlement.

None of these texts suggests that emigration is anything but beneficial for the lower classes. Such ideology was a necessary part of emigrant propaganda as, even should they desire to return, most working-class immigrants could not afford the passage money home. It is plain that while they may have had genuine concern for the poor, the majority of these texts' authors present a contented colonial working class in order to further the interests of the emigrant gentleman.

Infantilisation, Comedy, Condescension: Working-Class Images

Despite the ideals of prosperity as a reward for the deserving poor contained in this fiction, almost all the texts are careful to maintain social distinctions by denigrating working-class characters with such devices as infantilisation and condescension. The vast majority of children's books, written in the dominant cultural language and worldview of the English middle class, set working-class characters in minor roles as objects of charity or disdain, criminals, or "menials who were usually funny" (Bob Dixon, *Catching Them Young* 1 59, 48). Indeed, almost absent in early New Zealand-set children's fiction is the Dickensian figure of the "good" working man as a model to emulate or react against, who appears with some regularity in adult Victorian "condition of the people" novels (see Keating 23⁴³).

The childlike status accorded working men and women throughout this fiction suggests an ideology of overarching paternalism in which the lower classes are seen as children to be protected and trained by the powerful, well-educated "parent" classes. Workers are never permitted to "grow up" in social terms and their presentation is frequently combined with an ironic or comic element, which makes the middle-class characters appear, in contrast, serious, responsible, clever, cultured, self-controlled, and superior.

⁴³ For instance Joe Gargery (*Great Expectations*), Stephen Blackpool (*Hard Times*), Daniel Doyce (*Little Dorrit*), Silas Marner, Adam Bede.

“Christmas Day in New Zealand” contains no child characters—an unusual phenomenon in juvenile fiction with a Christmas theme—but their place is supplied by shepherds and labourers, who are treated by their social superiors (the tale’s adults) to a Christmas party. This story suggests an unbridgeable class divide, or generation gap; the well-meaning station owners have little idea how to entertain the men, whose high spirits are eventually channelled into running races. “We were all very polite, but wretched,” the narrator sighs (269). Yet, as mentioned above, the tone of this story is at variance with that of Barker’s New Zealand memoirs. In *Station Life* she praises a shepherd as a cultured, “well-informed and intelligent” person (Letter XII) and *Station Amusements* describes neighbouring shepherds as “without exception” intelligent and articulate fellows (134). Barker fulfilled her desire to be useful to her community with improving missions to neighbouring shepherds and small farmers, including the establishment of a lending library, schools, church services, and infant baptisms. However her weekly Sunday service at Broomielaw “was followed by conversation, refreshments and a ‘library session’,” in which striking social discomfort is not apparent (Gilderdale, *The Seven Lives* 107). Instances of blatant snobbery in *Station Life* and *Station Amusements* are rare.

Barker’s children’s stories, however, highlight the childlikeness of the working man. This is reinforced in the “Christmas Day” yarn about shepherds who devour a cooked mutton leg found in an empty hut, then discover a packet of rat poison nearby. Much self-induced vomiting follows, with the eventual realisation they have not been “poisoned” after all. These labourers appear at best naïve and childlike, at worst as fools. The childlike trope also appears in Barker’s “The Grave by the Rakaia” (1870), whose narrator describes a shepherd’s reception of reading matter from her lending library: “. . . my last glance as I rode away rested on Trew opening a number of *Good Words* with the pleased expression of a child examining a packet of toys” (22).

Yet Barker’s fictional shepherds are mature in comparison to the behaviour of the bullock driver One-eyed Dick in “My Emigrant Boy.”

This “teller of “amusing [yarns], though frightful lies” (30) reaches the height of infantile vulgarity when his laden dray becomes bogged; after cursing and lashing the bullocks unmercifully, he stamps on his pipe and hat, and finally falls to the ground, sobbing and raging in a tantrum.

The Boy Colonists too describes labourers as foolish children mimicking their adult social betters. One is “rather a bumptious fellow, and, for a shepherd, very dressy, trying to ape and be mistaken for a run-holder” (217). Another, a former printer’s assistant, is “a regular cockney, desperate as regards his ‘h’s’, knew nothing whatever about sheep or dogs, but like many others soon learnt enough to be of service as a boundary-shepherd: the work during a greater part of the year being simply to walk two or three times a day along a certain boundary” (78). It is apparently not permissible for such simpletons to aspire to run-holder status, though that is a perfectly acceptable goal for Ernest, who also arrived in the colony “ignorant of the merest trifles of every-day business life” (3) but with gentlemanly manners and his h’s intact.

The crudely-spoken bushwackers in *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* do not try to ape their betters, but are content to be comical, simple-minded, and childlike. Funniest of them all is Whaler Joe, from whom Dinkums and Mac glean their bush lore. By his position on society’s margins Joe might be seen as an icon of independence and adventure, but he is presented here as little more than a figure of fun at whom the young heroes—and reader—are encouraged to snigger.

Peacocke’s children’s novels actively encourage the reader to form condescending judgements about lower-class characters, reflecting the middle-class mistrust of the “mob” prevalent in Edwardian times (Bristow 182). In *Patricia-Pat* the Wairata country folk are stereotypical fools, from the “great gooby” farmhand Rufe to the maid Maggie, “a big, strong lump of a girl” (235, 188). The New Zealand of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* is supposed to be classless but isn’t, for although at Dicky’s Board School “sons of doctors, lawyers and clergymen sit at the same desks with sons and daughters of ploughmen, butchers, bakers, etc, and suffer no deterioration from this levelling process,” this is apparently because

the professionals' children are innately well-bred rather than because the tradespeople are genteel (76). Peacocke makes housekeeper Binks in *My Friend Phil* and washerwoman Mrs Higgins in *Patricia-Pat* into emblems of stupidity, with mouthfuls of malapropisms and misunderstandings, fears of modern technology, and slapstick clumsiness.

A similar low-class comic turn—with a surprising twist—is Sam Sloper of *Across Two Seas*. This slow-witted cart-driver, unlettered and uncertain of his family history, thinks he came from England but believes he has no relations, and cares “very little” (78). The Vaughans take pity on him and attempt to improve him with education and Christian conversion. One day Sam receives a letter informing him he is actually “Mr Sloper, Esquire,” possessor of an inherited fortune, and away he sails to a prosperity his own efforts could never have procured. Sam’s fairytale transformation affords a pleasant fantasy to even the lowest of readers, though the figure such a man will cut in English society is a question this text does not presume to address.

Celtic Commoners and Jargons of Vulgarity

A notable element in this fiction’s depictions of the working class is a racial perspective positing emigrants of ethnic minorities as pathologically violent, stupid, and coarse. The black workers who appear occasionally, such as Tom in *The Boy Colonists* and Sam in *Daddy Crip’s Waifs*, are presented with class and race condescension as pathologically greedy, stupid, or immoral.⁴⁴ However it is more usually Celtic emigrants who are targeted as the signifiers of violence or comedy, as the feared Other or the inferior Other.

Male Irish emigrants emerge in the worst light, as brutes and fools. Millen notes that Irish working class emigrants were historically

⁴⁴ Verne’s *A Long Vacation* (1888) features a Black cabin boy with the Maori name of Moko. In the 1967 translation available to me Moko is presented as intelligent, even ingenious, and is for the most part treated respectfully by the schoolboys with whom he is cast away. However a discrepancy in length between the 1888 *Deux ans de vacances* and the 1967 *A Long Vacation* indicates that much has been expurgated in the later edition. Because I have been unable to sight a copy of the original English translation

seen as undesirable, having “a reputation for being ignorant, dirty and lazy, with a tendency to over-indulge in alcohol and to be not entirely honest—that is, in comparison with their Scottish counterparts” (90-91). The Irish emigrants in “My Emigrant Boy” are stupid, violent, and coarse in a slapstick comedy manner (Irish Larry is also dangerous, going hunting with an old fowling-piece loaded with rubbish). Irishmen Tim Grogan in *Holmwood* and Tim Nolan in *The Three Admirals* are foolish moral weaklings. *The Boy Colonists* presents Irish labourers as volatile, rebellious, and often drunken. The ringleaders of bloody brawls in this text are invariably Irish, and an Irish driver even attempts to murder a cadet with an axe.

Millen comments that “Irish girls . . . were often [considered] prettier, more affectionate and more fun” than their Scottish or English counterparts (91), and in these texts settler family’s Irish maids are generally kind and pretty, if silly. Bridget provides *Distant Homes*’ comic turn, with her irrational fears, outlandish accent, and hysterical behaviour. The young Grahams laugh at her, suggesting that “the children of upper society are smarter than working-class adults” (Jennifer Thomas 8). Yet Bridget works hard, is kind to the children, and prepares for Christmas “the happiest of them all, although she had the greatest share of the work, and the smallest share of amusement” (97). Biddy in *The Redfords* is “rough,” scatterbrained, and lazy, but soon improved by Maud Redford to a high level of usefulness and likeability.

Scottish servants in these texts are either faithful old retainers, touchy, quarrelsome types, or ridiculously mean. Labourer Sandy in *Distant Homes* has a propensity to fight his workfellows. *The Boy Colonist* discusses a Scots shepherd, “a terribly troublesome, boastful man . . . if not watched and checked, brutal to the animals under his charge”—whom Ernest feels compelled to “keep . . . respectful and in his place” (229). In “Christmas Day in New Zealand” two Scots shepherds, M’Nab and M’Pherson, are admitted to be sober, industrious, and

Two Years’ Holiday (1889) it has been impossible to accurately assess the original ideological messages embedded in this text.

“exceedingly intelligent,” but are located as social inferiors, “excellent specimens of their class” who “thoroughly enjoyed the privilege of an invitation to attend our Sunday services” (260). The terms “invitation” and “privilege” suggest that association with one’s socially adult betters, even in worship, is a treat permitted to extend only so far. M’Nab and M’Pherson are presented as parsimonious simpletons whose experiences are trivial and amusing. When the narrator discovers they have been taking turns attending church because they share one suit of “claes” cut “between size,” she laughs. Her dismissal of the shepherds’ attire as “very nice” when on close inspection it must have been comical (one man is short, the other tall) indicates that working men do not demand her close attention, or that polished manners permit liberties with the truth, or that a ridiculous appearance is appropriate for the lower classes—or all of these. Again, a contrasting tone emerges in Barker’s other reminiscences of the incident; in *Station Life* the Broomes appear sensitive to rather than amused by their guests’ plight and offer them the use of Frederick Broome’s own clothing (see Letter XIV).

A significant reinforcer of the vulgarity of the working-class in these texts is the use of dialect (Scots, Irish, Cockney, or North England), frequently represented by a kind of phonetic transcript (*Catching Them Young* 1 48). Inspired by sincere attempts to create authentic characterisation, these instances of non-standard grammar and colourful exclamations contain a condescending amusement factor which entertains the middle-class reader whilst denigrating the working-class character. Examples are found in Barker’s Scotsmen, Storer’s Scots schoolboys (whose speech is rendered in increasingly obscure phonetics), *The Redfords*’ Tim Napper, and the cooks Bidy and Bridget. Foston crams a variety of lower-class discourses into *In the Bell-Bird’s Lair*, in which New Zealand working men’s speech is differentiated from that of more educated characters by a variety of dialects evocative of rural Northern England.

Whaler Joe of *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* is given a speech packed with presumably comical colloquialisms and malapropisms:

He had “heard that the young gents had been extinguishing themselves by winnin’ a schollard or somethink or that sort,” and he had “coomed over to wag their flippers for it: but, blow his billy, if he knowed what hanky-panky business this schollard was. Hang all these new-fangled machinises,” said he. “What were they wanted for in the bush, he’d like to know. *He* hadn’t had none of them, and he reckoned his old ‘chipper,’” that was what he called his well-ground axe, “would lick them holler.” (138)

The address is class-specific: “young gents” lets everybody know their place, while Joe’s speech locates him as an uneducated buffoon.

Peacocke litters the *skaz* of her novels’ hoi polloi with dropped h’s and flattened vowels, undoubtedly an influence of the popular “Cockney School” novelists of the 1890s (see Keating 161, 199). Keating observes that regional accents and dialects have a long history in English fiction but Cockney is unique in having been repeatedly employed to establish lower-class characters as vulgar or comical (247). This is clearly Peacocke’s intent, as the malapropisms and mispronunciations of servants Binks and Mrs Higgins serve to socially locate and infantilise them, making them appear as uninformed as their small lisping friends Phil and Pat. In *Dicky, Knight-Errant* Dicky tells his English Uncle Darley that Mr Hudson, the grocer, will collect his luggage from the station, then horrifies Darley by remarking that Mr Hudson lives opposite and is the family’s friend. However the startling equality of “a democratic God’s own country” suggested in this is undermined when Hudson appears, complete with Cockney accent and propensity to argue leftist politics: “. . . with ‘your Bonar Law’ and ‘your Mr Arskwith’ and ‘wot I say’s,’ and much emphatic pounding of his counter” (60).

Working-Class Heroes, Working-Class Villains

Early New Zealand-set junior fiction presents the working class without condescension only on rare occasions. One of these exceptions is

Three Xmas Gifts and Other Tales, which depicts profound disappointment in Western civilisation and contains the earliest reference to poverty among pakeha settlers in New Zealand juvenile fiction (Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 116). Bright paints the colonial experience not as the traditional myth of a lucky country but as a litany of demoralising work which crushes families. Thirteen-year-old Dicky is silent, hardened, and “old beyond his years.” His father is not in evidence; he may have died or deserted the family. His mother, on whom devolves all the work of home and farm, is coarsened and worn. Their slab cottage houses frail, complaining grandparents who were once pioneers. With little food and smaller hope for the future, the family faces a miserable Christmas until fairies offer them gifts of hope, imagination, and creativity. These hint at a better future through Dicky’s efforts, but fail to transform the family’s plight immediately.

In the Bell-Bird’s Lair also attempts some realistic portraits of urban working-class hardships, and this text sounds a sustained note of political consciousness. Although Foston believes socialism is wrong (“There must be masters and there must be employees,” 72) he convincingly details the social injustice and “sweating” which incline his hero towards militant unionism. Shop assistant Ted Strangemuir is dissatisfied with his wages and conditions, but knowing jobs are scarce he dares not ask for a raise so tries to improve working conditions, for instance by supplying chairs for shop-girls. These measures are opposed by his “inconsiderate and domineering” superiors, who inform him “that ‘Reformers’ are not wanted in the establishment” (8). Fired with crusading zeal, Ted becomes a Labour leader, forms a union, and instigates a major maritime and industrial strike, with disastrous consequences for the Christchurch economy. Ted’s campaign fails before the Independent Liberal candidate, who advocates free trade, private land ownership, and “Christian” labour relations based on “Love.”

This novel mixes history with fiction; the Christchurch strikes of 1890 indeed decimated fledgling unionism and returned a victory for the Liberal Party under Seddon (see Millen 148-49). The Liberals’ industrial

conciliation and arbitration system, introduced in 1894, earned New Zealand a reputation as a “working man’s paradise” and “a country without strikes”—just the sort of utopia Foston paints in this novel. What Foston does not add is that the Labour Party slowly recovered during the mid-1890s (when Ted Strangemuir is discovering godly industrial relations at Bell-Bird’s Lair) and by 1910 industrial unrest had re-emerged, and the Liberals were in decline, soon to be replaced by a Reform Government (see Belich 87-91).

Ted, however, accepts that Liberal ideals are best and his idea of “‘social equality’ was but an enthusiast’s dream,” for since some are naturally lazy spendthrifts and others thrifty and industrious, “Everyone knows that if the wealth of the world were equally divided to-morrow, in less than one year we should have drifted back to very much the same position we occupy to-day” (71-72). Ted is rewarded for his conversion to political conservatism with economic, domestic, and social success—including a knighthood.

Eldred-Grigg notes that in practice land nationalisation helped few in Ted’s situation, with those who benefited already having capital, or access to it (*New Zealand Working People* 31). Even more farfetched is this novel’s rags-to-riches tale of Barnados boy Walter Marsden, who discovers he is heir to an English Lord and returns home to assume his position in society. Foston’s text begins as a work of social realism but declines into an increasingly romantic utopian fantasy which both retains the kernels of the settler text’s puritan self-help ethos and expresses an element of fear about the consequences of enfranchisement of the lower orders, as evinced in the disastrous maritime strike episode.

Few other texts examined here concern themselves with the realities of the suffering poor. *The Redfords* sentimentalises the plight of Tim Napper, but his miseries cease once he sets foot on colonial soil. Tim is little more than one of the stock “street Arab” figures who proliferated in popular Victorian novels about winsome urban ragamuffins rescued by evangelistic charity. Like Tom of Charles Kingsley’s *The Water-Babies*, his desire to improve himself is rewarded

in fairytale fashion; he is even permitted to find success at the gold diggings.

It is far more common for colonial period New Zealand-set children's texts to direct warnings *against* the prospective emigrant of lower social station, by the depiction of a reprobate colonial underclass all too eager to strike easy riches or rebel. Foston does this even while exposing the suffering of urban workers.

Ernest of *The Boy Colonists* knows there are some settlers with whom a gentleman should not associate, like shearers' gangs, full of a rough lot of "old lags," escaped convicts, and ticket-of-leave men. These are not only morally corrupting, they are the types suspected of potentially turning upon the middle and upper classes. Upon his promotion to station manager, Ernest remains on watch for socially inflammatory behaviour amongst the workers. In one episode station hands "greatly dissatisfied" that their new employer, Sir Henry Young, refuses to supply them with brandy or rum, burn him in effigy (205). Sir Henry is "terribly annoyed" and the protest does not earn the men extra grog. The labouring classes, suggests Elwell, are inherently incendiary and morally weak. Their betters have a duty to keep them in line and demonstrate superior behaviour, and therefore the colonial social strata must be maintained.

In Reginald Horsley's *In the Grip of the Hawk* (1907), *Among the Cannibals*, and *Daddy Crip's Waifs* the rebellious low-class moral weakling is signified by common sailor types, against whom the heroes' middle-class gentility shines supreme. Cedric of *The Greenstone Door* also recoils in disgust from the foul-mouthed sailors who are his first experience of white colonials. Such episodes impress upon readers that only the well-bred make good colonial leaders.

Curious messages warning against lower-class rebellion appear in *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, which is aimed at a middle-class readership; although Cis and Hal's father is (presumed) dead and money is tight, the children live in a large, "fair" house with servants, and are escorted through New Zealand by servant-like fantasy creatures who

suggest messages of class and race conservatism. The little black gnomes, who work in a “cauldron” at Wairakei, *seem* happy, but some are discontented and it is feared they will strike, causing “a grand blow up, and I don’t know what will happen to our King and Queen and their beautiful fairy realms” (39). Such a rebellion, the reader is informed, resulted in the Tarawera eruption of 1886.

Suspicious against the working class are more subtly suggested in other texts, which present workers as unsavoury untouchables. *Doing and Daring* contrasts worthy settlers, educated gentlemen’s sons who combine a “well-bred manner” with “the hearty hospitality of a colonist,” against an underclass of working men, rabbiters and itinerants (37). Their rugged ways fascinate the Lee boys but their lack of education and coarse behaviour establish them as undesirable role models, a semi-criminal element on the fringes of decent society. This riff-raff element is also present in *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*. Much is made here of New Zealand’s “free-and-easy” hospitality and social gatherings where “differences of rank and station are comparatively unknown” (48), but the families of Dinkums and Mac and their friends are a cut above the general run of millers and bushmen, whose crude lives cry out for improving examples and conversion from sin.

These examples show that a hegemonic social function of these texts is to loudly assert a middle-class ascendancy over other classes, though with some degree of fear of the underclass. Depictions of servants or labourers as loyal comic turns assure the working-class settler that colonial prosperity will allow him ample leisure to enjoy himself, in a morally and socially acceptable manner. They also reassure the middle-class reader by presenting the colonial gentleman’s family as not only an arena for the articulation of pieties but as a site for the enactment of social control. While servants may advance themselves, they are admired only if they maintain the habits of deference and dependence notably expressed in Tim Napper’s “I’m not safe away from her, no ways.”

Old Aristocracy, Brave Young Future

Bob Dixon suggests that children's literature, beginning as it did in Puritan times, is ultimately concerned with the final consolidation of capitalism, and that the crucial class conflict in these texts occurs almost exclusively between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The monarchy and aristocracy, when they do appear, provide a mere smokescreen or background to this central action (*Catching Them Young* 1 70, 78).

Indeed, the fiction examined here seldom takes aristocrats as protagonists. Lord and Lady Glenarvan in *Among the Cannibals* can scarcely be considered settlers. Although Lady Barker wrote as a member of the so-called "migrant gentry," Barker herself was far from wealthy and returned to England in financial ruin after three years in the colony. Pemberton of *Waihoura* is a member of the English squirearchy: gentry, but far removed from the blue-bloods of the peerage. Walter Marsden of *In the Bell-Bird's Lair* is revealed as a peer of the realm, though only in order to deliver the text's middle-class message to England's upper echelons. The same novel rewards Ted Strangemuir with a knighthood, but for good works rather than for breeding.

The fact that these novels include aristocratic protagonists at all suggests a middle-class fascination with wealth and status and an ambivalent approach to the upper classes, who may be seen as effete yet who irresistibly exemplify social success. Two texts more seriously explore the role of the aristocracy in the colony. In *Fairyland in New Zealand* Earl and Lady Harcourt select New Zealand as a healthy place to raise their boy, who indeed develops fine character. His noble breeding is in no danger of ever being eliminated by colonial associations, thanks to such signifiers as a hereditary birthmark, "vivid red . . . resembling a coat of arms" (6). Even the penniless girl Rangi marries is revealed as really an Earl's granddaughter, while his political career appears a natural progression from his privileged birth. *The Greenstone Door* may demonstrate a significant rejection of British upper-class values—Cedric Tregarthen turns his back on his birthright status as a peer of England—yet it does not permit colonial egalitarianism to supersede all the

hallmarks of gentle birth, repeatedly emphasising that the new colony must be governed by the noblest of pakeha. Wilson believes the “excessive gentility” of Satchell’s protagonists may reflect the author’s inability to break free from “an outmoded English literary tradition” (14).

The 1917 novels of Peacocke and Glen suggest that even the idea of a colonial gentry signified by servants and a dignified lifestyle was, by the time of the Great War, coming to be seen as less appropriate to a young country, pretentious or even dangerous. Glen’s Malcolm children travel from their suburban Auckland home to their uncles at Kamahi Station, making a journey not only geographical but temporal and cultural, to a privileged lifestyle extant in the Canterbury back country. Kamahi and surrounding homesteads are run in formal manner by maids, shepherds, a cook, and the ubiquitous elderly housekeeper with a black dress “which rustled with dignity” and “a face as starched as her cap” (*Six Little New Zealanders* 19). Much of the novel’s comedy revolves around the Malcolms, who represent a new era of youth and energy, making social gaffes at dinner parties and society balls, thereby ringing a death-knell for the formal past. Similar sentiments are felt in *Patricia-Pat*, where wealthy Mrs Rutherford, with her grand old home, rigid deportment, inflexible manners, and nightly ceremony of secreting the family silver, has but a short time left to reign. Relatives pressure her to sell old-fashioned Te Mata and buy a small functional villa. Although washerwoman Mrs Higgins still comes weekly out of an ingrained sense of respect (she “believed in the Rutherfords as she believed in the Royal Family,” 26), even she now insists on her independence, and the idea of loyal servants who exist to run the colonial homestead and benefit from their masters’ care and example has disappeared. These texts suggest that at a time when hard labour to tame the land was no longer required (but defeat in the Great War was a potential threat) the New Zealand middle class could not allow its strength to be sapped by such aristocratic vices as luxury, idleness, and enervation.

Many Happy Returns?

Most early New Zealand-set children's fiction holds itself responsible to offer the prospective emigrant of middle or lower class sober advice on the values of thrift, industry, morality, respectability, and family loyalty. These messages are designed to be enticing, presenting pioneering as the way of the young and the future. Enormous families of teenage children emigrate eager to abandon the old ways and start afresh. Marion and Wilfrid Renshaw enthusiastically tell all their friends they are going to New Zealand, even as their indolent father pretends the scheme is a nightmare which is not happening. In the cover illustration of *Under One Standard* old, inflexible Uncle Peter farewells a ship loaded with young, go-ahead emigrants; that Mary Godwin returns to Devon in defeat after being informed she is not "go-ahead" enough, after all, is not evident in the cover image. As Roland Barthes has pointed out, the most lasting and immediate message of an image is discovered in its first glimpse: ". . . it does not matter if one is later allowed to see through the myth, its action is assumed to be stronger than the rational explanations which may later belie it" (130).

Yet the way of the future, while alluringly different, is never presented as entirely alien to the secure social mores of home. Avery notes that Victorian children's literature often presented ideas of fixed social caste as an ideological check to the real class fluctuations of nineteenth-century life (*Nineteenth Century Children* 194). The fiction examined here presents colonial New Zealand as having slightly more flexible social divisions than Britain, yet where a clear demarcation still exists between the working class and those of middle station.

Of the emigrant characters in this fiction, Gilderdale comments, "There is no evidence that any came through dissatisfaction with general conditions in their mother country, and indeed the happy ending is often that they are able to return there after a legacy has improved their circumstances" (*A Sea Change* 68). Yet while a legacy does improve the fortunes of some (examples are found in *Amongst the Maoris*, *The Redfords*, *The Greenstone Door*, and *Under One Standard*), many of

these works indicate more than a passing dissatisfaction with the mercenary customs of what *The Redfords* deridingly terms “the stiff old country” (91). Themes of unjustly distributed inheritances and rebellion against arranged marriages designed to bolster family fortunes reappear throughout the genre. Abel Godwin, Sydney Bartlett, and Mrs Redford are denied birthrights by unsympathetic uncles. Tregarthen of *The Greenstone Door*, Edward Bartlett of *The Boy Settler*, Abel in *Under One Standard*, and Mrs Redford are disinherited for marrying impoverished sweethearts. *The Greenstone Door*’s Cedric and Purcell both pointedly reject Old World wealth and status and choose to become Maorilanders who are somewhat (although not altogether) less trammelled by social constraints.

Moreover, while several texts do culminate in a triumphant return home, in others a permanent return is not desired. Pioneers in *Distant Homes*, *Holmwood*, *Waihoura*, “My Emigrant Boy,” and *Doing and Daring* come out to stay. The Redfords have the opportunity, in the form of a large inheritance, to quit the colony, but go back to England only to claim their money, then return to the New Zealand good life. On only one occasion does any of the family yearn to return. Helen, musing that “if the wool turns out well, and papa makes money . . . we shall soon be able to go home again,” is swiftly silenced by Lily: “I like this place ever so much better. It’s such a dear, jolly place. Far better than the stiff old country; and I am sure we are all happy here. And papa never looks worn-out and tired as he did in Liverpool” (91).

No surfeits of gentlemanly ease are permitted to corrupt the new-made Redfords, who in any case know their duty to their adopted land. Mr Redford feels “. . . it would be hardly fair to run away from the colony that has served us so well in our days of adversity. Dunedin has been good to us, and it is my duty to stand by her now” (123). Charley Redford even declares they don’t want the money, which has come “when they had got to learn to do without it, and had only brought trouble and separation” (126).

Although Rangi in *Fairyland in New Zealand* becomes a politician, goes to Britain, assumes his title, and inhabits a Scottish castle, the beauties of New Zealand induce him to end his days here. None of the Vaughans in *Across Two Seas* even contemplate returning to England. By the story's end Mrs Vaughan is enjoying a comfortable new villa and the government, "most anxious to colonise this district with a superior class of settlers, and . . . offering great inducements to men of education and influence to take up the land" (165) has made Mark a district magistrate, while George and Phil have established a successful timber company. *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* does not reveal what prompted Mac's father to emigrate, but stresses that the Scottish farmer has found permanent prosperity in "thoroughly profitable" bush country (47).

The Renshaw family in *Maori and Settler* do return "home" in happiness and material success, leaving a Napier trading company to be run by Wilfrid's New Zealand-born sons. As Arnold comments, "The height of Henty's ambition for his young heroes is that they come back to England . . . and become comfortably-off squires, M.P.s should they wish and undoubtedly Tories" (48). Yet while *Maori and Settler* appears to posit the colony as a stepping-stone to greater things at home, for those who stay, Henty implies, there is prosperity to be gained, not least in the lucrative botanical specimens waiting to be discovered in New Zealand's forests (329).

Amongst the Maoris shows a fortunate financial reversal and return home occurring once its settler hero has learned to forego luxury, work hard, and build character. Although Jack develops his artistic talents, urged by Bradshaw to labour in the field which "his Maker has fitted him for," art appears to be an interim employment only, his divinely-appointed station being that of wealthy English landowner. Maitland is similarly convinced by a missionary of his duty ". . . to return to the position you have left. You are a man of wealth and influence: you must use both influence and wealth to the glory of God and the good of men. You have no right to avoid your work" (364-65). Like *Maori and Settler*, *Amongst the Maoris* posits New Zealand as a training-ground

where young people are sent to be “straightened out” before being entrusted with monetary and social responsibility at home (Ringer, *Young Emigrants* 15).

These two novels aside, however, the overwhelming message found in the majority of early New Zealand-set children’s fiction is that middle-class emigrants should come out to stay.

On the whole, suggests R.M. Chapman in his 1953 essay “Fiction and the Social Pattern,” by the early twentieth century New Zealanders “had arrived securely at the economic equivalent of the English lower middle class” (37). This approximates to the middle station free from poverty or riches which these texts repeatedly laud as the best and most fitting for human happiness, the natural path to domestic and public success. The pieties of Proverbs 30:8 articulate the point at which middle and lower classes might meet ideologically in the colonial context, united ethically by the morality of work which makes one’s breeding seem less significant—at least in theory. Eldred-Grigg debunks that theory by arguing that middle-class colonial comforts were created by a large and predominantly voiceless working class: “It was a world where the money won from work was controlled by a very few people. Three out of four people in the colony . . . never grew any richer or better off Hard work, sober and saving habits, could not guarantee them a good wage” (*New Zealand Working People* 14-15).

Although these texts appear to suggest a colonial free-for-all of wealth, social advancement, and domestic bliss, closer examination reveals that that freedom is really extended only to the middle classes, although suitably deferential members of the working class may come to share in their betters’ blessings. Above all, throughout this fiction the middle-class settler, the united family, and the pious, comfortable home, are presented as the building blocks of a stable colonial society—a colonial threefold cord which, this fiction assures us, is not soon broken.

CHAPTER FIVE

“THE FAITH WHICH COULD MAKE THE WHOLE WORLD KIN”:

Emigrant Evangelisation

*. . . the black hand of the Maori deacon linked with the others.
Christ’s touch made all men kin. (Bedford, Under One Standard
205)*

The Children’s Text as Religious Vehicle

History, observes Rowbotham, sometimes overlooks the central place religion occupied in middle-class ideology: “. . . it was part of the [bourgeois] subscription to society” (78). Stenhouse agrees, observing that religion mattered more to Victorian New Zealanders than has generally been acknowledged (“Religion, Politics” 21). The power of the Victorian middle-class home rested on the twin authorities of biological nature and religion: the home was the domain where children were produced, and where, many believed, parents were divinely empowered to morally guide them (Tosh 29). The British religious revival which coincided with the accession of Queen Victoria was so far-reaching that most members of society felt pressured to conform, at least outwardly, and the middle classes, anxious to appear respectable and reap blessings to themselves, were most dutiful at teaching their children to pray and read scripture. Chapman argues that the moral outlook of religious evangelicalism,⁴⁵ focusing on grace and sin in relation to individual effort, was firmly and unconsciously assumed in most mid- to late-Victorian Britons emigrating to New Zealand, and this “high rate of emotional acceptance of the proposition which connected immorality and failure as cause and effect” provided the distinct flavour of the colony’s

⁴⁵ Throughout this chapter the capitalised term “Evangelical” will refer to the religious movement within Protestant Christianity emphasising the authority of the Bible, personal conversion, and faith, or to a member of this movement, and the uncapitalised

“social pattern” into the following century (36). Although Chapman concentrates his observations on working-class and lower middle-class emigrants, and early New Zealand-set junior novels are usually written for those of slightly higher means, the pattern holds true, as can be seen in the fiction’s repeated exhortations to puritan virtues and rewards.

The need to teach religious, moral, and social obligations had been an important element in the children’s book trade from its very inception, whether expressed as puritan tales of holy dying or as guides to etiquette (Kinnell 26). Nineteenth-century technological developments, which improved the quality and cost-effectiveness of printed reading matter, contributed to a flood of wholesome literature for children, fuelled by concerns about the violent or vulgar material in chapbooks, crime-sheets, and “penny dreadfuls” widely perused by youngsters of all classes. As the moral evils of industrialised society came increasingly to public notice the novel, long frowned upon by Evangelicals as lies of a frivolous if not dangerous nature, was recast as a respectable, indeed vital, vehicle for disseminating messages of Christianity or social reform (see Cutt 186; Avery, *Nineteenth Century Children* 82, 94). In particular, the religious novel or tract aimed at children became an essential tool in the great Victorian concern known as “the elevation of the masses” (see Bob Dixon, *Catching Them Young* 2 127; Cutt 48).

Yet although “the masses” were the tract tale’s original professed readership, evangelistic fiction also worked to standardise popular reading matter across class boundaries. British Sunday Schools, which catered to children of all classes (not only the poorest), disseminated tract novels through lending libraries, and as reward books (Bratton, *The Impact* 15). Publishing houses such as the Religious Tract Society, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Darton and Harvey, and others were quick to see the financial opportunities presented by the opening of this market amongst the moneyed middle classes.

“evangelical” will refer to the teaching, especially the fervent teaching, of the Gospel or Christian religion.

Colonial Fiction and the Tract Tale

The tale of family life held a significant place in this popular crusade for moral elevation: “The domestic sphere had its own particular trials to offer, tests of patience, generosity, and altruism that were no less significant for taking place in a familiar setting” (Briggs and Butts 133). The “domestic adventure” of pioneering fiction was a popular sub-genre of the family tale (Reynolds 94). Thus the settler or domestic adventure tale can be seen as a part of the tract literature phenomenon. As Marquis has noted, the image of the homestead as a spiritual centre of order amidst the disorder of a bush environment resonates throughout New Zealand settler tales (61). The domestic adventure often (although not always) has a strong evangelical thrust which allows it to double as a tract tale.

Nancy Cutt, in her study of nineteenth-century children’s religious fiction, notes the connection. Tract literature, she says, “formed until after 1900 a large proportion of children’s literature in the Dominions” (xii, 46, 52, xi):

During the settlement of the dominions, remote districts often lacked church services or Sunday Schools, children receiving what religious instruction they got from their parents and their family libraries, if any. The Religious Tract Society and the S.P.C.K. continued to supply books very cheaply, sometimes free, to schools, Sunday Schools and libraries in new lands. Since for two generations or more the hardships of pioneer life allowed neither time nor opportunity for writing, little fiction for the young came out of Canada, New Zealand, Australia or South Africa for many years. In 1930, children of the commonwealth were still reading Ballantyne, Kingston and Henty; contemporary children’s literature of the lands of their birth hardly existed. The always available, cheap and copious supply from Paternoster Row explains in part

the long failure of commonwealth countries to produce their own children's literature. (179)

Children's literature with evangelical themes and a New Zealand setting was written throughout the colonial period, in a greater quantity than Cutt is perhaps aware of. British authors such as Aylmer, Kingston, and Marryat selected the colony as a site for the Christian conversion of heroes or "savages." New Zealand-based Kate McCosh Clark's spiritual allegory, *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, appeared in 1891, and by the early twentieth century local authors such as Bright, Thomson, Storer, Foston, Bedford,⁴⁶ Satchell, and Glen were producing confidently-written tales with evangelical themes. Thus the tract tale genre encouraged rather than hindered a developing New Zealand children's literature.

The evangelistic themes in early New Zealand-set children's fiction serve several forms of power relationships. Few of these works (apart from *Holmwood*) are true "cottage tract fiction"—a style of simple and frequently infantilising literature aimed at the poor—but most implicitly reinforce social quietism by suggesting that workers should be humble and grateful towards their divinely-appointed betters. Those betters are urged to practise piety, temperance, thrift, and industry, and are promised in return blessings on earth and in Heaven. These texts assert the hegemony of one generation over another by exhorting child readers to obey their elders and emulate the texts' good moral examples. Moreover, the missionary messages in this fiction serve both to uphold and to disguise the hegemonic imperatives of imperialism by justifying such things as settlers' land appropriation, the replacement of indigenous culture with Western values, and even, in some cases, colonial warfare.

In Praise of Protestantism

Early New Zealand-set juvenile fiction focuses firmly on the Protestant beliefs and practices to which the middle classes subscribed. In some cases this is emphasised through the disapprobation of Papistry

⁴⁶ I have been able to discover little about H. Louisa Bedford, but her familiarity with Maori terms suggests she resided in New Zealand.

characteristic of much early English children's literature: "No popery!" was a rallying cry in England for centuries, and could whip mobs into anti-Roman frenzy" (Avery, *Beginnings* 23). The cry was particularly fierce in the mid-Victorian era, kindled by the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, the "Papal Aggression" of 1850, and various movements within the Church of England, such as Tractarianism and ritualism, all of which threatened to undermine Evangelical belief (Cutt 47, 90-91). So widespread was the prejudice that in colonial New Zealand advertisements for servants frequently stipulated "Churchwomen preferred" or, occasionally, "Irish [meaning Roman Catholic] need not apply" (see Millen 28).

Unsurprisingly, therefore, some texts examined here mock the Roman Catholic religion as a stupid, unhealthy, superstitious foible of Irish maids. In moments of crisis faith hinders rather than sustains Bidy in *The Redfords*. The girl cannot pray, for she has lost her beads, ". . . and the paters get all one a-top of the other. Ochone! What would the old father say to it?" (97-98). Bidy's concern with objects, rituals, and pleasing a priest is designed to highlight the superiority of Evangelical belief in a personal relationship with God. Like Bidy, Bridget in *Distant Homes* is characterised as silly and needlessly fearful, and her absurdity ensures her beliefs will not appeal to readers.

Even *The Boy Settler*, in which Sydney Bartlett is on a Holy Grail-like quest, scrupulously avoids any preaching of Papistry: "His healthy young mind, carefully trained in sound Protestant beliefs, substituted the Person of Christ for the sacred chalice" (83).

The disapproval of Roman Catholicism understood, the majority of these texts appear relaxed about exactly which religious denomination characters—and readers—should adhere to. Lineham sees colonial New Zealand as a sectarian society in which "the division into denominations, at least in the towns, was reasonably sharp" (71) and Stenhouse emphasises that relationships between religion and the state and between religious denominations in the colony were fraught with diversity and conflict ("Religion, Politics" 21, 29, 32). However—perhaps influenced

by market concerns—many early junior New Zealand texts tend towards a species of Protestant ecumenism, with any denomination except Roman Catholicism a portal to salvation in a colony lacking a state church.

Only *Distant Homes*, *Across Two Seas*, and (to a lesser degree) “Christmas Day in New Zealand” advocate a tone of High Anglicanism, expressed in insistence on the importance of formal liturgy and parish life (see Bratton, *The Impact* 165-66, 171). *Distant Homes* and *Across Two Seas* echo the tone of mid-Victorian girls’ fiction produced by such Churchwomen as Harriett Mozley, Elizabeth Sewell, and Charlotte Yonge in the ways their teenage characters make heroes of missionaries and bishops, seriously plan for confirmation, and find recreation in such matters as the construction and consecration of a new church (see Avery, *Nineteenth Century Children* 105).

Methodism provides a focus for Foston’s tract tale *In the Bell-Bird’s Lair*, in which hero Ted falls away from a city Presbyterian Church, rediscovers God, and helps establish a rural settlement as a Methodist community. Methodism is here seen as more evangelical than Presbyterianism.

Most other colonial period New Zealand-set texts only vaguely suggest the religious affiliation to which their heroes subscribe. In *The Boy Settler* (a manuscript submitted to The Religious Tract Society through the Auckland Sunday School Union) the seeds of conversion are located in a variety of Nonconformist sources. On one occasion the “simplicity, solemnity and deep reverence” of a Scottish Church service touches fourteen-year-old Sydney Bartlett (46), but it is never made completely clear to which denomination Sunday-School teacher Sydney or his Christian mentors belong. Neither is it clearly specified which denomination David Copeland, the hero of *Under One Standard*, represents. A Devonshire clergyman’s son “saturated from childhood up with religious teaching,” David must yet witness the examples of a Maori boy and a New Zealand bishop “before ever the spirit of worship touched him” (93). We might presume he remains an Anglican, though his scornful attitude towards church attendance puts this in doubt.

What the texts do emphasise is “sound Protestant beliefs,” which are frequently interpreted as middle-class habits of industry, respectability, abstinence, private family domestic worship, and a concern for sharing the gospel with servants or lower-class neighbours. Observes Tosh:

. . . the mark of a fully Evangelical household—whether Anglican or Dissenting—was that the family bolstered the faith of its members by enforcing certain common disciplines. Early rising was practised in order to fend off the threat of idleness and to discourage too great a taste for bodily comfort. . . . Sundays at home [were] a means of identifying ‘domestic tenderness’ with religion, to the advantage of both. Above all, family prayers expressed the idea that the godly household was a divinely appointed institution for promoting the spiritual life. (36)

Early rising, Sabbath-keeping, family prayers, and Bible reading are part of daily life in *Distant Homes*, *Holmwood*, *Waihoura*, *The Redfords*, and *Across Two Seas*. Pioneers in the early texts often consecrate their new house or land by kneeling together in prayer. Settlers in *Across Two Seas* and “Christmas Day in New Zealand” set community examples by inviting local shepherds and bachelor colonists to Sunday and Christmas Day services.

Nature and Worship

A number of New Zealand-set juvenile texts written from the late Victorian era onwards are not only nondenominational but include an imaginative, Romantic, or even Pantheistic approach to evangelical matters, with the immersion within Nature offered by the colonial experience seen to point settlers towards spiritual things. Ted in *In the Bell-Bird’s Lair* is converted through hard work in the Edenic bush, during which he gets “in touch with nature” and hears bell-birds chirp incessantly, “Get right with God.” *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* is a nature fantasy doubling as a religious allegory of faith and resurrection.

Hal and Cis lament that they do not understand the sermons of “the old clergyman,” who ignores them because they are small, and they find spiritual comfort in an imaginative journey through the natural landscape in the presence of a Christ-like Santa Claus figure. This reflects an Evangelical concern for childlike spirituality which itself sprang from Romantic concepts such as Nature, childhood, impulse, and individuality (Cutt 23). *Three Xmas Gifts and Other Tales* is a similar fantasy drawing on elements of folklore, Wordsworthian Pantheism, and the beauties of hymnody to suggest a spiritual experience. Its story “The Music of the Bush” contrasts harsh city life with the psalm-like healing notes of Nature, while in the title story a fairy’s Christmas gift of music gives impoverished Dicky the ability to set melodies to biblical texts. A broad and free spirit of worship is evident here; indeed, at times Bright dismisses Christianity as merely one link in a chain of dubious Western progress. Similar ideas are found in *Six Little New Zealanders*, where church is extemporised outdoors and a Romantic closeness to Nature rather than formal liturgy comforts the children. “Somehow,” says Ngaire, “out there on the lawn, with only the blue sky overhead, we seemed very near to God” (178). This text says little about formal religion but does examine Ngaire’s developing spirituality. A ghostly vision of a settler’s child leads her to save her brother’s life, and while this may be merely an illness-induced hallucination or dream, then again, “Perhaps the dream came from God” (189).

An Increasing Secularisation

As the nineteenth century progressed another kind of modulation was felt in children’s literature, from a focus on evangelical Christianity to a greater emphasis on the work ethic and expansionism (Bratton, *The Impact* 115). Lineham notes that a spirit of secularisation and modernity flourished in late nineteenth-century New Zealand:

Ideas circulated freely in the new colony, and many ideologues were sceptical about the merits of the Bible and the authority of Christianity. Moreover there was a

heritage of anticlericalism and radicalism in Britain which was strong among the sectors of the population which emigrated. So the New Zealand community experienced the alienation from religion which characterised the poor in British society.

. . . . The modern mood increasingly viewed religion as a matter of individual taste. (70-71)

This spirit of anticlericalism and radicalism adversely affects Ted in *In the Bell-Bird's Lair*, but while Foston damns the “specious sophistry” of freethinking, many of his contemporaries acknowledge the trend even in texts which promote Christian conversion.

Sometimes in keeping with this spirit of secularisation and sometimes in keeping with an evangelical tradition which elevated the individual as the temple of the Holy Spirit, some early twentieth-century New Zealand-set children's texts see traditional weekly church attendance as not essential to salvation, or suggest that while churchgoing might have been appropriate in Victorian England it is less relevant in a land where church buildings are few but God is present everywhere. Chapman notes, “The Churches . . . had not been essential to confirm the pattern [of puritan morality] as it was brought off the ships” (36). Eldred-Grigg estimates that no more than twenty-eight percent of pakeha in late colonial times attended places of worship (*Pleasures of the Flesh* 247). Deeply religious Sydney Bartlett attends church in Scotland and England, but not after emigrating. Upstanding Louis Roden and Ernest of *The Boy Colonists* (himself destined for the ministry) do not attend divine service here either. *Under One Standard* contrasts two kinds of piety, the churchgoing and the non-churchgoing. Clergyman's daughter Mary weeps and pines for church, but her equally virtuous cousin Margaret does not care to go: “To work hard and be kind seems the best way of being good,” she rationalises (85). David agrees: “I expect grown-up people like church-going better than boys. I don't see how they are to like it much, do you?” (84). Although David is later moved by hearing Bishop Selwyn preach and observing Bishop Patteson's consecration, in this text

pure religion is a quiet matter of the heart not reliant on formal worship. Similarly, we never see Margaret in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* attend church, though her mother encourages her to pray.

Peacocke's novels of the 1910s treat religion almost irreverently. Although Millicent Lynn of *My Friend Phil* teaches Sunday School neither she nor her suitor Lingard are saintly; indeed, Lingard thoroughly detests the hymn-leader who is his rival for Millicent's affections, and selfishly opposes young Phil's desire to attend Sunday School. Phil's nightly prayers are considered amusing but do not convert the adults; when the young hero is near death everyone worries and sobs but nobody prays. More commonly in this text, religion provides opportunity for humour. When told that God does not love naughty little girls Olivia is unperturbed, and her ". . . that doesn't matter . . . Father Christmas will do me" (232) makes a charming saying from a six-year-old scamp in 1914 (though a sacrilegious bombshell if uttered by one of the little Grahams in 1862). The title heroine of *Patricia-Pat* is similarly irreligious, devoid of guilt over her inability to understand or remember her Catechism and comical in her lack of respect for the visiting Reverend Mr Edgar. He takes a broken chair and crashes to the floor while Aunt Althea listens in amusement: "Hulloa! There goes the parson!" (192). In *Dicky, Knight-Errant* secular moral teachings such as the Scout Code have replaced religious dogma altogether, yet while Dicky endures countless scrapes and many of his judgements are treated with authorial irony, in matters of morality he still provides an unfailing standard of inherent goodness. He may rifle the pockets of German spies, but takes care to return their money and even asks if he may borrow their motorcycle to summon army assistance. Thus the later texts still retain strong strands of Christian moralism, if they scorn apparently outdated forms of worship.

Religion as a Tool of Social Order

Whether they emphasise the formal religious life or an internal conversion only, almost all these works are concerned with the preaching

of particular hegemonic imperatives, including the prescription of appropriate behaviour for social classes. Bob Dixon's analysis of political themes in children's literature identifies how "religion acted as the psychological arm of the ruling classes to terrify the people into submission" and pinpoints themes in nineteenth-century children's literature which propound establishment political views and social quietism, teaching children the rightness of a so-called God-ordained hierarchical social system (*Catching Them Young* 2 128, 123-24).

Examples of this appear in this fiction's presentations of effortless religious conversions made by childlike, simple-minded working men. In *Across Two Seas* and "Christmas Day in New Zealand" middle-class settlers provide labourers with church services as improving alternatives to working or drinking on the Lord's days. This makes a deep impression on some: "Madam, God will bless you for reminding us of heaven here, in this far corner of the earth" (*Across Two Seas* 88). In *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* working-class farmers, sawyers, and bushmen are soundly castigated by their community's minister for their Sabbath-breaking, levity, cursing, and similar godlessness. In this novel, which subscribes to a Romantic—and class-consciously paternalistic—construction of inner childlike goodness, these sinners are presented as rustic innocents, easily touched by a scripture: "Like a keen edged sword that Word pierced the souls of those rough bushmen One and all they stood stricken with shame at that first word falling on their ears. They knew what their lives had been, forgetful, thoughtless, thankless, worshipless" (152). Thus repentant, they will presumably respect and obey the middle-class parson and other community leaders.

Similar ideas appear in *In the Bell-Bird's Lair*, which preaches a model of labour relations featuring the evils of socialism (likened to atheism) and the rightness of Christian capitalism "based on 'Love'." Here is the puritan wealth-gospel at its most vocal. Foston assures the reader that "Everyone knows" God has ordained a social hierarchy in which the industrious are "sure to succeed" and the idle "certain to fall" (18). Integral to Ted Strangemuir's religious conversion and ensuing

financial and personal rewards is his acknowledgement that "There must be masters and there must be employees" (72). Ted becomes a model master and provides his grateful lower-class employees with a host of morally improving facilities, including a church, games, picnics, and educational societies.

Christian Britishness

Throughout these texts the Christian religion provides colonials with a means not only to spiritual salvation but to an ordered, controlled society which in these novels signifies imperial Britain. From the late-Victorian era onwards, children's evangelical fiction began to emphasise a quasi-religious belief in the British Empire (Bratton, *The Impact* 115). Thus when Mary Godwin of *Under One Standard* weeps with longing to attend church she is also weeping with homesickness for England; loss of one connotes loss of the other. Mrs Vaughan of *Across Two Sea* admits to a visiting Bishop her relief that "though we have left our native land, our Church has not forgotten us; and that her ministers seek us out, to care for us and bless us" (85). In this novel religion *is* England: ". . . the good old words of hymn and catechism . . . seemed such clear echoes of the dear fatherland days" (132).

Mary Godwin (the religious overtones of her name are surely significant) and Mrs Vaughan may be staunch advocates of Anglicanism, but even in texts lacking a High Church tone connections between British superiority and Christianity are unquestionable. Gilderdale suggests that post-1900 New Zealand children's texts jingoistically relate religion to being British (*A Sea Change* 58). Certainly *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*, written by a clergyman in 1905, aims to inculcate a specifically British, Arnoldian, style of Christianity in its New Zealand heroes. Dinkums, who springs from Irish stock, and Mac, whose parents are Scots, are viewed here not as Celtic commoners, but as part of an inclusive British stereotype. The national melting pot of the colony is here moulded into a myth of Anglo-Saxonism. As "Britons and brothers," Thomson avows, "New Zealand boys are British boys after all" (Preface,

35), and must exemplify both Christian virtue and imperial valour. (English George and Irish Terence in *In the Grip of the Hawk* fulfil the same function.) At times Thomson's imperial values pull ambiguously against his religious ones; while he exhorts bush boys to fight, dare, and never give up, he also suggests that these very qualities can be spiritually dangerous. Thomson appears particularly concerned that godliness may be extinguished by coarse male settler life, and urges boys to keep themselves unspotted from the world—though this does not, apparently, exclude their ability to win at violent games or fist-fights.

The Imperial Civilising Mission: Converting the Natives

A significant aspect of this “essentially religious appeal of imperialism” (Ringer, *Young Emigrants* 29) was the ideology of the British “civilising mission,” which justified acts of cultural eradication under the guise of redeeming native souls.

The first step in this mission as represented in these texts is the suppression of the indigene's heathen practices, by force if necessary. Enclaves of sinning Maori are displaced by settlements dominated by pious pakeha. Some texts present Maori as evildoers so weak and superstitious they are crushed by the mere appearance of British Christians. *In the Grip of the Hawk* depicts a fierce imperial Christianity which suppresses Maori demonism, as soldier heroes George and Terence fight Te Kooti (known here as Te Karearea and presented as a Hau-Hau leader) in a battle of spiritual as well as physical good and evil, symbolised by the possession of a greenstone mere (war-club). George acquires the mere through worthiness (saving a man from death); Te Karearea tries to snatch it by force and guile and is denied it. The talisman, reputed to have supernatural powers, appears to perform a number of miraculous feats. George, the British rationalist, changes the subject whenever this topic arises: “. . . his healthy mind revolted from the constant association with the apparently supernatural which circumstances forced upon him” (165). Eventually he attributes the mere's saving power to Providence, saying the Christian God has given it

to him so that he can win the good fight (208, 241). Terence has a slightly more open mind about it (presumably due to his Irish extraction, connoting beliefs in Celtic folklore). Both lads however stand firm in their belief in a good Christian God who is on the side of pakeha.

Maori, in contrast, are presented in this text as superstitious and evil. Hau-Hau rites are depicted in which “skeletons, gouted with blood, dancing round the wild fires of a witches’ sabbath” utter “the most appalling mixture of frenzied prayer and blasphemous incantation”; animalistic yelling, raving, orgiastic dancing, and chanting occurs; worshippers have convulsions and faint or seem to “fly like witches and warlocks through the air”; an atmosphere of madness and hatred abounds (127-29). Good counterpoints evil in strident tones, and Te Karearea is presented as an evil Satan or dragon-figure to be slain by rational British Saint George.

Maori religion in these texts is presented as a way of cruelty, evil, and “Darkness.” The powers of the feared tohunga Te Atua Mangu in *The Greenstone Door* are invariably used to blight, maim, or kill, while a tribe’s “vicious” old tohunga is the prime villain of *Amongst the Maoris*.

A Southern Cross Fairy Tale posits British Christianity as a light so forceful it routs not only Maori heathenism, but heathen Maori themselves. At the appearance of Santa Claus and the colonial children Cis and Hal, all illuminated by the Star of Love (a radiant wand symbolising both the guiding Holy Spirit and the light of British civilisation), “weird” Maori figures flee from their whare and vanish from the text.

A few novels suggest Maori are simply incapable of comprehending the truths of Christianity. *In the Grip of the Hawk* shows Maori as unable to interpret scripture without corrupting it. In *The Redfords* the servant William Tarakua cannot understand the purpose of family worship: “It was curious . . . that Maori William evidently considered he had a right to be present, and knew quite well how to behave, though his manner conveyed more an impression of self-importance than of devout feeling” (63). William is portrayed as so bad

he is scarcely worth wasting energy preaching to. Similarly the Vaughans in *Across Two Seas* enthusiastically evangelise their pakeha neighbours but decline to invite the potential Maori thieves from “half-Christian” Chief Tatau’s tribe to worship at Golden Grove.

More commonly, the British Christian way is expressed in these texts through an evangelistic missionary fiction narrative, in which Maori are led from sin and superstition by good pakeha. This is an anti-conquest strategy in which the idea of Maori being spiritually born again precludes an honest recognition of their cultural, if not physical, eradication.

Priggish Edwin Lee in *Doing and Daring* sees it as his duty to pull up his Maori friend Whero on every instance of bad behaviour or giving way to superstition. Although this novel is coy about overt evangelising, Whero does have his moment of conversion, due less to Edwin’s constant moral reproof than to his good example. When Whero casually leaves his enemy to drown Edwin demonstrates the way of self-sacrifice, leading Whero to muse, “Yes . . . there is something greater than killing, and I want the greatest things.” (290).

Many early New Zealand-set juvenile texts advise that where missionaries have failed, God-fearing middle-class emigrants have a duty to complete the task. Missionaries in *The Greenstone Door* are well-meaning but weak meddlers who are less than effectual in solving the colony’s complex racial problems; settlers like Purcell and Cedric accomplish more. When converted Christian Rangiora feels unease at the heathen practices he learns in the Maori college, it is in Cedric he confides, and eventually Rangiora refuses to cast a death-spell, even if this means enduring an arranged marriage as punishment.

Kingston’s texts present missionaries as intelligent and kindly but unsuccessful; in his novels neither assimilable Maori girls nor savage chiefs are truly converted until taken in hand by settler families. Settlers’ responsibilities to witness to and convert Maori are also emphasised in *Distant Homes*, where the local clergyman urges even the youngest pioneers to set “a good example of obedience . . . letting the little natives see how happy it made them to obey their parents and live kindly with

each other” (114). Beatrice and Lucy Graham help their mother teach at a Maori school, which they do so well the Bishop foresees a time soon coming when local natives will cast aside the last of their customs and “worship the true God in purity and sincerity” (165). As Gilderdale observes:

Mrs Graham’s anxiety to do good to “the poor ignorant natives” genuinely expressed the missionary spirit which is much in evidence in all the early books about the settlers. There is a security of faith which many might find enviable today, and a commitment to the bringing of Light into the Darkness of a heathen land. (*A Sea Change* 56)

The missionary texts paint the civilising influence of British women as crucial, with elder daughters taking on the mantle of missionary zeal. Lucy Pemberton, anxious to convert Waihoura in case she dies “in her present heathen state” (*Waihoura* 28), preaches lengthy sermons which the girl does not understand (although the family cook, listening in the background to these “beautiful things,” is convinced). Kingston, in the persona of Lucy, is honest enough to admit that “Christian” Britain is not an entirely good place and that the proportion of the British population practising undefiled religion is small, but he nevertheless “felt that the British way of life carried with it the truths of Christianity and that there was a sacred duty to convert the natives” (Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 14). Thus, with the aid of a scripture picture book, Waihoura finally understands what redemption means: “Just as if Maori girl put on Lucy’s dress, and hat and shawl over face, and go in pakeha house, people say here come pakeha girl” (64). The idea of being spiritually reborn is here translated as ethnic rebirth—or, at least, assimilation—into Britishness.

Kingston’s brand of conversion to the natives emphasises pacifistic pakeha who practise the cheek-turning and forgiveness they preach. When Lucy is imprisoned in a pa she prays her father will not cause “loss of life” in effecting her rescue, and the Parrys of *Holmwood* forbear the use of force to recover their abducted womenfolk:

“Oh no, no! my dear boys. Do not on any account hurt the people,” answered Mrs Parry. “Remember, ‘whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed’ . . . if enemies, they are more likely to be won over by gentleness and kindness. We must remember that they are savages, and that if even they are disposed to quarrel and fight, we, as Christians, should show them the holiness of our religion, and not resort to force till all milder measures have failed.” (51)

Bratton observes that although his early works centred on the glories of imperialism, the tone of novels written after Kingston suffered a near-bankruptcy in 1868 became increasingly religious and its heroism increasingly non-violent (*The Impact* 130-31). The theme is also an anti-conquest strategy carrying a clear hegemonic imperative. In Kingston’s New Zealand-set novels friendly Maori tribes deal to their rebellious brothers with minimal need for European intervention. Valentine Pemberton, seeing evil Hemipo shoot a defenceless girl, cries, “I must punish the villain.” “Stay, my boy,” counters his father, “he deserves punishment, but not at our hands” (*Waihoura* 82). Indeed, a friendly chief soon appears to take on the task. Thus the vengeance (or eradication) which ostensibly belongs to the Lord is carried out by “savages” while the white characters keep their hands clean.

The Greenstone Door also ostensibly advocates the ideal of the pax Britannica brought by settlers like Purcell, an agnostic who nevertheless sees the “religion of love” as an important element in the civilised British alternative to cannibalism and war. The conversion of the tribe in which Purcell settles is almost instantaneous, becoming the basis for its involvement in trade and agriculture: here acceptance of Christ automatically translates into acceptance of Victorian capitalism. Much is made of Maori desire for guns and ammunition, and Purcell’s supply of these is presented as a merciful shortening of the violence with which the colony was actually established. When hostilities break out

even the “good” Maori in this text die, while the pakeha Christian hero Cedric survives (again, without having had to fire a shot).

Similarly ostensibly pacifistic is the Christianity of *Under One Standard*, which repeatedly paraphrases the scripture in Zechariah 4:6: “Not by power, nor by might, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.” This text suggests that only through Christian pacifism (“the Faith which could make the whole world kin,” 190) will colonialism succeed. Its Bishop Selwyn character preaches arbitration, withstands taunts of “crank,” and is praised as “quietly heroic” (36). Deeply religious settler Folkes is troubled at the thought of war and doubly uncomfortable at the British beginning it. Maori convert George refuses to fight on either side of the Land Wars, for to George, Christ and pakeha are dual gods. “God so loved, so loved poor George,” he repeats on his deathbed, “He brought him to the white man” (187). So inspired are Folkes and David by this that they become missionaries themselves. However Bedford’s text, which strives for realism rather than sentiment, is forced to admit that missions cannot work miracles and that making the whole world kin is more difficult than it sounds. Folkes, despite all his attempts at arbitration, is betrayed and captured by the very tribe whose cause he pleaded; Wiremu Kingi forces George from St John’s College back to his tribe; a Christianised pa is disaffected by a rebel native; and though David is filled with evangelistic zeal, he soon realises that Maori like George are the exception, and his 1872 letter from the mission field is a narrative of “frequent failure and disappointment” (215-217).

Missionary Boys

Elder daughters fulfil their missionary responsibilities from their domestic base, but many young men in these texts are, like David and Folkes, exhorted to the vocation of missionary or minister. Though these boys invariably receive a “calling,” the clergy was widely considered as a respectable career for the middle-class Victorian boy of limited means, regardless of his tastes. Moreover, there is a specific hegemonic element apparent in these examples of the boy settler turned missionary. As Gunn

has discussed, the Protestant minister stood as an authoritative figurehead of middle-class culture by exemplifying “forms of ‘mental’ labour which were crucial to the idea of the middle class as a moral and cultural force” (108). This “mental” labour is a spiritual counterpart to the physical labour by which the landowner simultaneously wrested a Britain of the South from an untamed country, and proved himself a gentleman.

Early New Zealand-set children’s texts are anxious to make the role of preacher attractive by infusing it with muscular Christianity, creating an image of a hero who combines manly physical courage with acute mental labour. The missionary among cannibals is prepared to die heroically for a cause (missionary martyrs such as John Williams, killed on the Melanesian island of Erromanga in 1839, were popular mid-century icons), while the bush preacher must “rough it” outdoors. In this way heroes are offered a respectable alternative to a military or adventuring life, in which potentially dangerous boyish recklessness is translated to spiritual faith, courage, and zeal.

For this reason Tom Graham in *Distant Homes* is quick to scorn a clergyman’s son destined for the ministry, who, “grave and serious, was set down by Tom as a muff at once” (109). The boy’s “merry, likeable” brother is a better role model. Most of the parsons, bishops, and missionaries in these tales are positive manly ideals. All the young Grahams admire Samuel Marsden, and when George Graham completes his theology degree the Bishop (how often these novel’s characters have the ear of an influential Bishop) promises to find him work in the colony. In *The Boy Colonists*, the fictionalised memoirs of a real-life minister, a Parson Adams is lauded for having “one quality which all men admire, pluckiness” (156). In *the Bell-Bird’s Lair* mentions that young Jack Struthers has been awarded a copy of *The Life of James Chalmers*⁴⁷ for raising the most money for the school missionary box; soon Jack himself enters the Methodist ministry. Harry McMillan, this novel’s bush preacher, cuts an attractive figure similar to that of the courageous young

⁴⁷ James Chalmers was a late-Victorian missionary to New Guinea.

bush parson of *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*, who inspires fourteen-year-old Mac to be a minister by risking “even his life to carry the blessed Gospel ordinances to these lonely uncared-for sons of the bush” (172). Missionaries Mr Wake and Mr Hall in *The Greenstone Door* are ineffectual due to their ignorance of Maori culture but nonetheless determined and brave. *Across Two Seas*’ Bishop (presumably Selwyn) thinks nothing of trudging miles through bush in ragged shoes bound with flax, and so entrances Dick Vaughan with his tales of peril by land and sea that Dick too becomes a missionary, and suffers a heroic martyrdom on a Melanesian island.

Selwyn makes a popular icon in colonial period children’s texts. *The Greenstone Door* presents him as a figure of superlative, if misguided, zeal, while *Under One Standard* describes him as manly, noble-looking, independent, and brave; this text goes to great lengths to convince a male readership that preachers need not look, act, or speak like milksops. Bishop Patteson is a similarly charismatic missionary figure employed to capture children’s imaginations in *Under One Standard* and Barker’s “My Missionary Boy.”

Short-Lived Maori Martyrs

Outstanding Maori Christians in general pose a threat to these fine examples of British godliness, and frequently they are employed in these texts to save pakeha lives or goad errant settlers into better behaviour, and then are swiftly removed from the scene. A proudly iterated belief in the Lord Jesus Christ by Maori George in *Under One Standard* leaves David Copeland feeling “half shy, half ashamed,” yet “to doubt or sneer was impossible” (71). “George is better than any English boy I’ve ever known,” David admits at last (181). This situation is not allowed to continue, and once George has saved David’s life and prompted his conversion he makes a holy death which inspires the toughest of old colonists to repent of their sins, and creates a space in which David may outshine him in Christian goodness.

Jack, the hero of *Amongst the Maoris*, is a nominal Christian motivated by a spirit of revenge which has taken him far from God. The shameful nature of this conduct (“you seem to talk more like a heathen than a Christian,” reproves Bernard, 62) is highlighted by the example of the converted Maori slave Marara, who risks his life to help Jack. However, soon after rescuing Jack, Marara is removed from centre-stage to a life of servitude and Jack’s focus is redirected to the exemplary piety of his fellow emigrant Hope Bernard. Playing Hopeful to Jack’s Pilgrim, young doctor Bernard dispenses care and comfort to all and never forgets to say his prayers and read his Bible, thus making a more fitting English example for Jack to follow. Jack begins to read his own Bible, a present from a missionary’s wife. He remembers how “he had been taught the truths of the Gospel when a child, and these things . . . came back him by God’s grace, and entered his heart” (324). In this way Jack’s conversion is attributed to the ministry of pakeha rather than to a Maori slave.

Frank Howard in *Daddy Crip’s Waifs* is helped to escape from captivity by Wainui, “the noblest Maori [he] ever saw” (152). Thanks to his evangelical upbringing by Daddy Crip, Frank is able to convert his friend, leading Wainui “as a little child” towards the light, and is well rewarded when Wainui sacrifices himself in a noble Christian death (132). Fraser’s text perceives Maori beliefs as not entirely dissimilar from Christianity: as a warrior chief, Wainui has been taught to die for his friends. However Frank must inform him of the Christian promise of hope in Heaven, and the sooner the better for, as the text suggests, he and his bloodthirsty race are doomed to extinction.

Cedric in *The Greenstone Door* similarly plays moral guide to the Maori Christian Rangiora, reproving him for even believing in, let alone considering casting, a Maori death-curse. Rangiora is another martyr-figure; like Wainui he saves his text’s pakeha hero from death (twice) before giving his own life in a contribution to pakeha victory in the colonial wars.

These Maori function as surrogates or enablers, being used as instruments by which pakeha find themselves, then disappearing from the

text. This fiction indicates that it is not really acceptable, from the perspective of British imperialism, for even noble, Christian Maori like Rangiora, Wainui, or George to found a “new order” in New Zealand. Even these good natives are therefore removed from view, taking to their graves a faith in a Christian Heaven which provides a post hoc⁴⁸ assuaging of pakeha guilt; though extinct in New Zealand, they may live on in an afterlife.

Sunday Sermons, Imperial Justifications

Thus it is pakeha rather than Maori who live to make the greatest use of the churches which are built in these texts as symbols of the civilising mission’s double quest to bring light into colonial darkness and justify imperial appropriations and excesses. *Distant Homes*’ Captain Graham, notwithstanding all the other demands upon his time, secretly constructs a raupo church, presented on Christmas morning as a surprise to the community. Later, Lucy Graham plans the construction of a more substantial chapel and school-house, with a permanent minister and teacher, bringing what Gilderdale terms “genuine delight” to the settlers and “much purpose to their existence” (*A Sea Change* 56). An outward sign of Ted Strangemuir’s inner conversion in *In the Bell-Bird’s Lair* is his donation of land and timber for a Methodist church. The settlement of *Across Two Seas* eventually boasts its own church with a clergyman offering bilingual services.

Two frequent themes of the prayers, hymns, and sermons offered in these churches are thankfulness for colonial land (possession of which is seen as a divine blessing) and warnings lest such privileges be withdrawn from the ungodly. Settler and politician Alfred Domett avowed that New Zealand was “first, God’s, who made it, next, theirs to whom he has given skill to use it best and strength to hold it fastest” (qtd. in Stenhouse, “Religion, Politics” 36⁴⁹). This theme is inherent to *In the*

⁴⁸ Most of these texts were written after the colonial wars period.

⁴⁹ Stenhouse’s source is E.A. Horsman, ed. *The Diary of Alfred Domett 1872-1885*. London, 1953: 16.

Bell-Bird's Lair, where Ted's relationship with the land motivates his repentance and sermons preached at Bell-Bird's Lair emphasise that civilisations which refuse to honour God are subject to downfall and ruin. *Distant Homes'* clergyman also selects an apt text for the inaugural message of his church, Deuteronomy 6:17-18 (“... that thou mayest go in and possess the good land”). *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* emphasises that pakeha gifted with this Eden-like Dominion should be more grateful: “They had wrought even in God's Temple, taking of his gifts and enjoying His favour, yet without a prayer, scarce even a thought to the Creator who made all things and beneficently reigns over all His creatures” (153).

All this clearly demonstrates how the recurring tropes and values of colonial period New Zealand-set junior fiction echo the influence of *Robinson Crusoe*, which uses themes of the middle-class puritan work ethic, presumptions of a Divine Providence ensuring pakeha success (so long as they believe), and a godly life being rewarded with a goodly land to conceal the violent and extortionate means by which colonial land was actually taken.

The Pure in Heart: Colonial Temperance

In this ideology of the pure in heart possessing the promised land, temperance themes play a significant part. Temperance, touted as the way to both physical and spiritual purity, was a concern of tract writers from the 1830s and '40s onwards, who revived the then-declining doctrine of human depravity (Cutt 42). Later in the century a temperance focus on internal cleanliness from polluting evil provided Evangelicals, who rejected ritual and liturgy, with an expression of religious belief which found a popular outlet within juvenile culture (Bunkle 67). The nineteenth century saw the formation of many prohibitionist societies, adult and juvenile, which provided social life within working-class and middle-class communities. Colonial prohibitionists generally hailed from the lower middle classes and “respectable” skilled working-class; the movement was primarily a Dissenting one (Eldred-Grigg, *Pleasures of*

the Flesh 185-86). Thus while the High Anglican *Distant Homes* shows its settler family enjoying wine on Christmas Day, the majority of later colonial New Zealand-set children's texts were produced by Nonconformists, and never depict alcohol as a pleasure.

In a colonial environment notorious for violent drinking habits, societies such as the Rechabites, the Good Templars, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.) boasted vocal memberships (Dalton 18). The W.C.T.U. was prodigiously active in New Zealand after 1885, especially in Southland, and even before the W.C.T.U. became established New Zealand women had petitioned parliament asking for the right to vote at licensing polls (Bunkle 58, Dalton 5, 20). Bunkle notes that "the Unions were particularly assiduous in their attempts to reach the young" and in particular the W.C.T.U.'s campaigns linked alcohol to sexual sins by locating it as a particular preserve and temptation of the male: ". . . the very essence of male sexual energy, of uncontrol, and destruction" (Bunkle 60, 71).

This perceived threat to society by young male drinkers is addressed in a number of texts examined here. In *Holmwood* Tim Grogan is reformed after Major Parry offers him work on the condition he give up drink. The eponymous hero of *Daddy Crip's Waifs* is on a mission to help save youth from the demon drink by fostering as many abandoned boys as his small house will hold. This novel has its realistic element, and Daddy's efforts do not always succeed. He exhorts the publican of the Sheer Hulk to clear his conscience and take up farming, which Peter plans to do—one day. At the novel's end the Sheer Hulk is still in business. Temperance exhortations fill *In the Bell-Bird's Lair*, which is dedicated "To the great army of young men in the cities and towns, who in their youth are subject to so many temptations" (64). Foston considers drink as bad as atheism, and makes Ted Strangemuir's candidacy in the 1890 elections fail due to his refusal to oppose liquor licensing. After Ted learns his lesson he proves himself a good community leader by opposing a public liquor licence for the utopian new settlement at Bell-Bird's Lair.

Novels with temperance themes frequently cast those considered as lesser members of society—the indigene, the working-man, or the remittance man—as traditional tract tale “Awful Warnings” for the middle-class reader. An example is Thomas Day in “My Emigrant Boy,” who has ruined his looks, health, mental stability, and future with drink. At age thirty Day is “breaking up fast,” the butt of every joke, and expecting an “early and wretched death” (71). Day flees to Melbourne, symbolically punished for his sins with removal from the promised land, and his sheep station is snapped up by sober, healthy Louis Roden:

I don't want to set him up as a model, or to talk at boys who smoke and drink beer; I am only telling you the story exactly as it happened, and Louis's white teeth, good wind, and strong nerves were certainly owing to the fact of both beer and tobacco being such priceless luxuries at the station, that he seldom or never got them. If they had been within easy reach there is no doubt that Master Louis would have had his pipe and his glass of beer every day.

(42)

Men will not usually give up drink voluntarily, the prohibitionists argued, not even good men. Notwithstanding this, the station is elsewhere described as littered with Day's blackened pipes and gin-bottles, so Louis presumably practises outstanding self-restraint.

A variety of colourful warnings in *The Boy Colonists* demonstrate that drink is a ticket to hell, “. . . the bane of many men in the colonies, even in a worse degree than it is in the home-country” (245). The community's drunk doctor is comical and dangerous; an intoxicated bullock-driver drowns in the Waitaki River; a Christmas Day inn brawl leaves a man severely injured; inebriated station hands fight wildly and one is sacked. In contrast stands pure Ernest, who professes himself disgusted by even a taste of medicinal whisky. A boy after his heart is Sydney Bartlett, who takes the temperance pledge and convinces his entire Sunday School class to do the same. In New Zealand he witnesses several liquor-related Awful Warnings, including a fellow who drowns

himself in a fit of “the dt’s,” all of which make him even more scrupulous in abstaining from drink, particularly after joining the army. *The Boy Settler* especially condemns soldiers whose “noble lives” are transformed by “the drink habit” into “raving maniacs or sordid brutes” (192), and “[Sydney’s] steady, good-natured refusal soon put an end to all invitations to drink with [the soldiers]”—or so, at least, Storer would like her readers to believe (192).

The Colonial Tale as Moral Influence

All this emphasis on temperance suggests the widely-held belief that young people had power over their moral choices and character development. It is true that the Victorian flavour of religious writing for the young inclined increasingly towards “delectando monemus” (instruction combined with delight) rather than fire and brimstone, producing child characters more rounded than their Georgian predecessors (Briggs 169, Kinnell 34). Yet it also focused on equipping the young reader to lead a godly life. Works with an Evangelical slant “stressed the reality of the ‘inner life’ . . . the importance of the individual’s personal relationship with God and Saviour” (see Cody). For those late-Victorians who subscribed to popular science rather than religion, evolutionary theories such as “recapitulation” filled a similar function, positing childhood as a process wherein different stages of human development were progressively transcended until moral and spiritual maturity was reached (Briggs 169). This theme of moral development, achieved either through a relationship with God or by experience within the human community, appears frequently in early New Zealand-set children’s fiction, which earnestly exhorts its readers to search their hearts and control their lusts.

Avery states that the early Victorian fictional child was characterised by “deep earnestness, the preoccupation with conscience, and . . . heavy moral responsibilities,” and notes that family story writers of the 1820-1860 era focused on personalities, showing “children struggling with their consciences, resisting sin, giving way to it, suffering

terrifying pangs of remorse” (*Nineteenth Century Children* 64-66). This emphasis on personal conscience appears in many early New Zealand-set children’s books, which contain much worthy “introspection and examination of motive . . . even if to modern eyes they may appear moralistic” (Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 66). It asserts a hegemonic function by ensuring, confirming, and ultimately justifying pakeha blessings, in particular tenure in that good land which God, presumably, gives to those who please Him.

Lucy Graham of *Distant Homes* is a prime example. Like her namesake in Mrs Sherwood’s famous moralistic work, *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818-47), Lucy is obsessed with her shortcomings and spends most of the novel guilt-laden and self-deprecating. Her sins are those of passion, fear, temper, or socially improper conduct such as tomboyish behaviour. Lucy is scolded by her mother for shrieking during a storm at sea, as such fear springs from lack of faith in God. Mrs Graham, who takes her role as God’s viceroy seriously, preaches a sermon on control of feelings before packing Lucy off to her cabin until she can act sensibly, though Lucy scarcely needs the rebuke as her tears now flow from a sense of self-mortification. The scene demonstrates indoctrination in middle-class respectability under the guise of religious faith.

Distant Homes is filled with similar episodes where Lucy gives way to passion and repents bitterly, a task made doubly difficult due to the presence of her sister Beatrice, who is a paragon of obedience, domesticity, manners, and restraint. Actually, we are told, Beatrice is more sensitive and quick-tempered than Lucy, and has learned to be extremely self-vigilant. Effusive praise is heaped on Beatrice’s “noble struggle,” while Lucy is constantly castigated for her failings.

Duty, industry, fortitude, obedience to elders, and patient suffering are the Christian virtues to be inculcated in the young people of *Across Two Seas*, qualities exemplified in George Hallett, who prefers the outdoors but dutifully obeys his father’s command to keep accounts at the family mill. George’s arm is severed in a machine, and still his

cheerful, dutiful attitude never wanes; he is ultimately rewarded by emigrating to the outdoor life he craves. The character most in need of George's good example is fifteen-year-old Dick Vaughan. Much of the novel documents the idle or reckless escapades which endanger Dick physically and spiritually. Hi-jinks with another boy in ship's rigging result in the lad's death, but even the knowledge that his friend has "paid the penalty of the wild, boyish larking" (18) does not sober Dick for long. His lazy, disobedient, headstrong behaviour is punished with six weeks of painful immobility following a riding accident, and he suffers agonies of remorse after his wild pot-shots nearly kill his brother. In his longings to be noble and courageous Dick swings from extremes of exuberance and determination to sloughs of despondent self-accusation. "It's all my own fault," he repeats after one scrape, the narrator adding that "Conscience had been busy convincing him of sins of laziness, murmuring and recklessness" (71).

Younger sister Joss, the family's most spiritual member, encourages Dick towards a personal relationship with God and helps him learn the virtues of patience and self-control. It is her example of the paradoxical influence of Victorian feminine selflessness, which gains in spiritual power as it increases in worldly self-effacement, which Dick must learn to emulate, and to this end Forde employs the trope of invalidism, much used in children's texts as a vehicle providing heroines with separation from the world and self-sacrifice learned through suffering (Nelson 9-11, 21). Joss, who sees great purpose in pain, suggests that a broken leg has perhaps been sent ". . . to teach you patience, dear Dick" (73). The two begin a religious debate, with Dick complaining that God does not answer prayers and Joss maintaining that everything is part of God's plan. Surprisingly, Dick, the impatient boy who always wants "to know directly," accepts this, partly from fear of worse punishments. By making Dick a temporary invalid *Across Two Seas* demonstrates how a boy can adopt "the superiority of selfless feminine heroism over flamboyant male courage" (Nelson 23). Dick's eventual missionary martyrdom carries the trope through to its logical

conclusion, death being the ultimate social duty and “perfect symbolic manifestation of selflessness” (Nelson 24).

The evangelical emphasis on seeking a personal relationship with God which these novels explore parallels the idea of the quest, a motif pivotal to centuries of Christian thought and literature, as well as to folklore and fairy tales. Bunyan’s quest allegory, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, was widely recommended as Sunday reading for Victorian children, and Mrs Sherwood’s 1810 juvenile version, *The Infant’s Progress: From the Valley of Destruction to Everlasting Glory*, was a best-seller (Banerjee 38, 43). Much imperial adventure fiction too “proves to be organized by the logic of the quest romance,” central to which is “the confrontation with evil” (Marquis 55). Bratton suggests that evangelistic writers may have automatically constructed moral stories upon basic romance patterns such as the quest, thereby unconsciously “reproducing the patterns of dubious trash writing, which they abhorred but did not read” (*The Impact* 28-29, 69). Thus *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* takes the form of a geographical as well as spiritual exploration, and commentators have noted the quest element in *Amongst the Maoris*, in which Jack Stanley’s geographical search for Maitland becomes “a journey of the soul during the course of which he comes to terms with his bitterness” (Gilderdale, *Oxford History* 526; see also Marquis 55). The theme of a young emigrant on a Pilgrim’s Progress is also central to *The Boy Settler*. When his friend’s mother likens him to Sir Galahad questing for the Holy Grail Sydney hurries off to read his Tennyson, and while he will not go so far as to compare himself to Galahad, he admits he might make a tolerable Sir Bors. As Sydney voyages off to the colonies in bright spiritual armour the narrator pleads with readers to similarly equip themselves “for the fight with faith in God, habits of rigid self-control, and an unflinching devotion to purity, truth and honour” (99). Once in New Zealand Sydney is provided with an assortment of inspirational associates, such as the kindly “old stager” Parker, with his nightly regime of prayer and Bible study, and Twopenny, whom Sydney encounters reading Bunyan and realises that he is also “on the quest” (138). At the novel’s end an

observer indicates that Sydney has attained his Holy Grail: “What a fine, chivalrous fellow he is. There is a suggestion of the old-world knight about him that is delightful.” (309). The boy scout hero of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* is similarly pictured as a “Dear little romantic knight,” though his adventures are more comical and less spiritual than Sydney Bartlett’s.

Law and Work

Self-examination and personal Christian journeys clearly contribute to the keeping of social order so emphasised in these texts. Some novels however urge readers towards strict religious dogma and inflexible moral staunchness over and above the cultivation of introspective personal spirituality. *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* lays heavy emphasis on the letter of the law, such as Sabbath-keeping, to counteract the pulls of the flesh and the Devil upon the souls of boys, signalling the turn-of-century change noted by Gilderdale from Anglican to Presbyterian ideas in New Zealand children’s writing (*A Sea Change* 56-57). The novel espouses a Kingsley-like brand of muscular Christianity, warning against excessive caution in this “new country where life demands energy and boldness” (43), but stressing that boys’ energy must be channelled in right directions. “Poor boy so ruined that he cannot be true to his better, nobler, heart within,” comments the narrator: “Who will say there has been no ‘fall’ in the history of Man?” (75). No falls must be permitted to sully the Edenic bush represented here, although forbidden knowledge of foul thoughts, deeds, and language lurks even amongst the trees. To counter this, shining examples of Christianity are provided in the characters of the young parson, schoolmaster, doctor, and surveyors, brawny colonists who effortlessly haul oxen out of ditches on their way to Sunday service. Equally rigorous standards of Christian behaviour are advocated in *In the Bell-Bird’s Lair*, and both these nearly contemporaneous texts resonate with urgent exhortations of stringent purity for young men.

A current of less fastidious but equally brawny Anglo-Christian rationalism characterises *Doing and Daring*, its preachers the model

settler Mr Lee and his exemplary son Edwin. In this adventure tale God is never mentioned by name. However the reader is informed that faith is “the strongest power within the human breast” (189)—Edwin’s rational, civilised Christian faith, which empowers him physically, that is, not Whero’s emotional belief in ancestors and spirits, which provides not comfort and strength but terror. While it is not acceptable for Edwin and his brother Cuthbert to cry in trying circumstances, they are encouraged to pray, and in his constant struggles to save lives and do good, Edwin is fortified by “the eternal presence of the Unseen” (132, 189).

The greatest Christian virtues in *The Boy Settler* are “habits of rigid self-control” and the divine blessing of work: this is the ticket, we are told, to “yonder high and heavenly places” (99, 7). To this end Sydney Bartlett is both an ideal hardworking settler and an exemplar of purity in body and soul, whose conscience is wrung at the slightest suggestion of wrongdoing. When a young lady sneers at the Bible and twits Sydney about keeping company with Christians he proudly stands up for both. Given his exemplary piety, it is perhaps appropriate that Sydney’s crisis of conscience takes the form of neither sexual temptation nor alcohol but is a matter of signs and voices. While pining over his lost love Beatrice, Sydney claims to hear a voice telling him to ask for a sign, which he refuses to do; the next day he is rewarded with the arrival of a letter informing him of Beatrice’s whereabouts.

Daddy Crip’s Waifs presents unending labour as the way to cure grief, ennoble oneself, and reach Heaven. The novel’s villains are indolent, and Daddy Crip blames his own moral downfall on the sins of pride and weakness which led him to “contempt for honest labour” (14). He now makes amends by working like a Trojan and convincing everyone else to do the same: “Daddy worked and thought, worked and hoped, worked and prayed, worked and believed” (15). Daddy trains his rescued waifs in the middle-class Victorian moral virtues of industry, duty, truth, and honour and they become successful model citizens, as is revealed in the examples of Captain Garnet who, amidst deathbed visions of heavenly bliss, leaves his fortune to Daddy Crip who led him to the

Cross and the Saviour, and of Frank Howard, whose fine sense of duty enables him to brave voyages to cannibal coasts. Frank's uprightness is too much for some, however: the villain Vane terms him a "nuisance—always in my way—pushing the *right* down my throat" (119). Vane's hostility is good for Frank, as in this novel trials and tribulations are beneficial, even necessary, to the development of godly character. This is demonstrated by the analogy of Daddy the shoemaker: even as Daddy hammers "another refractory sole . . . into such tenderness and pliancy that he could do what he liked with it" so are human souls, we are told, moulded by their Creator, and His plenipotentiaries on earth (159).

The Pure in Body: Social Hygiene Messages

This exhortation to moral uprightness clearly incorporates matters of sexuality, and warnings against sexual sins make no infrequent appearance throughout this fiction. Most children's texts of this era are coy about acknowledging the existence of adolescent sexuality or romance of any description, reflecting their production in an era of strict moral conventionality, as Mahy has demonstrated in her examination of colonial children's fiction, "Attitudes to Childhood." At the same time, however, sexuality was a topic of grave concern to social reformers and educationalists.

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century campaigns for social and moral purity—organisations such as the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, the National Purity League, Temperance leagues, and the London Council for the Promotion of Morality—influenced public consciousness, with moral reformers seeking to protect youth against habits of "solitary vice" and other sexual experimentation. Notes Smith-Rosenberg, "There is much evidence suggesting that male moral reformers might well have used masturbation as a code for homosexuality" (163). Reformers presented the dispersal of sexual fluids, except for reproductive purposes, as enervating and emasculating. It was feared such behaviour would result in a population of moral and physical degenerates, and European physicians even coined a "disease," called

spermatorrhoea, from this idea (Eldred-Grigg, *Pleasures of the Flesh* 44-45).

Smith-Rosenberg analyses such fears as a social consciousness of the potentially anarchic disorder of a youth culture freed from such traditional forms of control as apprenticeship. Society, she suggests, focused upon sexual expression as a symbol of the rebellious, uncontrolled power of the young man which threatened establishment values: “. . . moral reformers constructed a physiological model that condemned male orgasm as the source of physical, mental, and social deterioration” (Smith-Rosenberg 161).

In this way the hegemony of a parental generation was imposed upon children. The moral reform movement should be seen less as a reflection of the actual social behaviour of youths than as indicative of the nineteenth-century concern with “social control and a desire to contain institutional and familial fragmentation” (Smith-Rosenberg 163). The social purity societies advocated alternative regimes for youth of cleanliness, mental self-discipline, and the avoidance of restrictive clothing, rich diet, or stimulants. These would, supposedly, enable young men to grow up in superior health and with their “animal lusts” firmly under control.

Most of these messages were aimed specifically at adolescent boys. While some Victorian social scientists saw women as being equally open to corruption by their sexually assertive sisters, many others viewed females as asexual, free of the passions of the “lower nature” (see Smith-Rosenberg 168 and Nelson 33). Infants were seen as born female in thought and behaviour, and thus Victorians who deemed sex dangerous and debilitating desired to keep boys as well as girls in an infantile, feminised state of asexual purity, the “holy ignorance” expected of the Angel of the House (Nelson 17, 35, 40). In colonial children’s literature, this ignorance came to assume the fictional creation of a sex-free society. At the same time as domestic themes of marriage and family began to fill the space in Victorian juvenile literature formerly occupied by religious faith, the threatening or disruptive sexual component of that very

institution was anxiously hidden, along with removal of all potential contaminants of the “Eden before the fall that was puberty” (Briggs 167).

The New Zealand Women’s Christian Temperance Union was one of the most persistent voices amongst those crying for moral purification in the Dominion, and attempted “to eliminate any influence that stimulated the sexual imagination and all forms of sexual expression except for purposes of reproduction within marriage” (Bunkle 62). In their efforts to elevate the status of women by dispelling the sexual double standard, their belief in the importance of the Christian family unit, and their hopes for a social utopia of purity and self-control, the W.C.T.U. advocated a single standard of morality for both men and women (Dalton 4). Yet the loftiness of this standard led not to openness about matters of sexuality but to concealment. Although the W.C.T.U. advocated sex education to counter ignorance or schoolyard “filth,” its turn-of-the-century messages emphasising the body as the Holy Spirit’s pure temple can scarcely be considered enlightening (Dalton 138-39).

Victorian authors often took their perceived responsibility to advocate moral standards for youth so seriously that their texts assume total ignorance of adolescent sexuality. Even in the Bildungsroman aimed at an adult audience, the protagonist is usually removed from centre-stage during his adolescent years, or brief references to awkwardness in girls and gangliness in boys “have to do duty for the physical adjustments required in this period of life, while humorous memories of calf love may be the only hint of emotional turmoil or sexual awakening” (Banerjee xxviii).

The settler story, with its isolated frontier locale, must have proved a godsend to the Victorian children’s author hesitant to meddle with adolescent love affairs. In the earliest New Zealand-set juvenile fiction adolescent pioneers remain within the secure structure of the family homestead or the bracing isolation of the shepherd’s hut, where they are afforded scant opportunity of meeting young people of the opposite sex. *Distant Homes’* Tom, Lucy, and Beatrice undergo much moral, social, educational, and emotional growth during their first three

years in New Zealand, but romantic attachments form no part of their development. In Kingston's novels servants and Maori may marry, but middle-class teenagers are too preoccupied with pioneering responsibilities to concern themselves with romance. Young cadet heroes aged fifteen to eighteen, such as Jack Stanley, Edwin Lee, Louis Roden, and Elwell's boy colonists, lead an existence of hard work, spare diet, and fresh air, with scarcely a young lady in sight—not that the absence is often regretted by these healthy-minded lads. Indeed, the only girls encountered by Louis Roden are brawling Irish hoydens guaranteed to inspire disgust rather than desire, while fifteen-year-old Dinkums and Mac of *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* pointedly eschew the society of “frocked creatures” (50). It is implied here that the power of youth should be put to the use of the empire, either in physical labour or military service, rather than wasted in sexual desire or experimentation.

In order to provide their protagonist with some social interaction, some novels show settlers developing deep emotional intimacy with their (frequently numerous) siblings or cousins. Other heroes fill the place of a sweetheart with a male friend. In Chapter Three I discussed how friendships with Maori boys may function as stand-ins for heterosexual affairs. Similar instances of sublimated romantic relationships occur between texts' male pakeha friends, such as *Amongst the Maoris'* Jack Stanley and his settler chum Hope Bemard, who is “young, rather fair . . . very good-looking, with a rather sad expression of face” (16). Bemard's Christian name can be taken by either sex; his role in the text, that of angelic nurturer, is one traditionally undertaken by a Victorian heroine; and just in case there is any doubt of his feminisation, the reader is told that Bemard tends Jack's dying father “with the gentleness of a woman” (17). Physically Bemard is not a woman, and thus in an era whose children's writers assumed ignorance of homoeroticism he makes a safe companion for Jack, typifying what Nelson terms the “androgynous manliness” of the angelic boy (see Nelson 2, 37-38).

Similarly, David in *Under One Standard* adores old colonist Folkes, and finds Folkes' “outer man . . . very attractive” (31). While

David does enjoy close, equal friendships with girls and women, this is permitted only because he is presented as innocent and asexual to the point of feminisation. His sister comments that he has “ways like a girl” and is “a kind of sister and brother all in one” (105). David indeed identifies with females to the extent of refusing to view them according to a traditional male perspective. He does not see his beautiful foster-sister or cousin as “women,” and is disgusted to find Margaret and Folkes are in love: “It was odd that a man and a girl could not be good friends without making fools of themselves, he thought, a little fretfully. For the time being his hero-worship had suffered a grievous shock” (151-52).

In making David a celibate missionary Bedford insists she is writing a realistic tale, not “story-book sentimentality”; it also appears she is trying to keep her boy hero pure forever. The virile and handsome Folkes is permitted to fall in love—he is twenty-five years old, after all—yet even he has to discipline himself with years of theological college before an inheritance makes his marriage possible. Adolescent David, however, is permitted no knowledge of sex at all. He has no idea his sister, in whose house he resides, is pregnant, being flabbergasted to return home from a brief journey and see a baby on Mary’s lap.

Joseph Bristow notes that while the imperial boys’ story deplored homosexuality as perversion, the hero-worship of such texts often “bore a precarious relation to same-sex desire” (82). Homosexuality, says Eldred-Grigg, was “encouraged by the social facts of colonial life” (*Pleasures of the Flesh* 49). It is quite possible to read homoerotic overtones into David’s rejection of marriage and see his choice of the mission field as a sublimation of sexual energy in religious service. It is also possible to read his rejection of marriage as stemming from the author’s feminist resentments over the inequalities of the marriage institution, as will be further discussed below.

Chaste Courtships: Settler Brides

The tendency to associate sexual appetites with sin broke down somewhat under the opinions of post-Darwinians who established

sexuality and reproduction as natural (Nelson 46). At almost the same time the middle-class “family story,” incorporating chaste romances, became an established literary form in Britain and America. In response to these late-Victorian trends some New Zealand-set children’s novels do permit their middle-class teenage protagonists to fall in love. Henty, who was less shy than many of his contemporaries about providing sweethearts for his fictional “lads,” provides a glimpse of Wilfrid Renshaw’s future wife in *Maori and Settler*. The youngest daughter of a settler to whom the novel devotes small space, Wilfrid is too busy subduing rebel Maori to look twice at her during the course of the story. However his sister Marion, who “is a kind of female ‘lad’” (Gunby 55), is permitted to marry gentlemanly landowner Atherton. Henty apparently thought that boys needed plenty of time to be “lads,” but that girls matured earlier. The romance is supposed to be a surprise—after all, Marion is just seventeen and Atherton more than twice her age—and due to the age difference the courtship is essentially paternalistic, with Atherton constantly infantilising Marion. Marion is however permitted the last word: “Men are foolish creatures sometimes, even the wisest of them” (*Maori and Settler* 351). “Although it is easy to mock Henty’s manly heroes’ lack of interest in girls,” notes Arnold, “he is in fact straightforward in his treatment of a trope which was almost universally regarded as not suitable for a boys’ book” (58).

All these texts emphasise female chastity in the potential bride. In *The Greenstone Door* Sarah Brompart is rejected as an inappropriate wife for noble Cedric; although a kindly girl, she is the daughter of unethical social upstarts, and Cedric should marry according to his rank. More than that, her ready response to Cedric’s romantic advances reveals her moral unfitness to be his wife. In contrast stands the impeccably self-restrained, aristocratic Helenora, who is childlike, cool, and all but sexless, the neuter “Mädchen” of the couple’s German lessons. Such characterisation is not wholly unrealistic, considering that Helenora is only twelve when Cedric first proposes to her. It is also ideologically expedient, establishing Helenora as a fit bride for Cedric. Eugenicists keen on

populating the Dominion were more interested in quality than quantity of offspring (Dalton 106). *The Greenstone Door* concurs in the racial and eugenicist theories of its day by presenting civilised (white) races as reaching sexual maturity at a later age than less civilised (Polynesian) races. The indigene is seen as egregiously and sinfully sexual, precisely as the Briton is not (we remember how naturally impervious Cedric is to the blandishments of teenage “houris” at Pahuata). By these standards Helenora must be very civilised indeed, as her feelings for Cedric are not permitted to blossom until she is twenty.

Throughout these works it is frequently the eldest daughter of the pioneering family who is permitted—or restricted to—courtship or marriage. Mahy notes that *Six Little New Zealanders*' Kathie, a “grown-up” woman of nineteen, has few sources of amusement apart from the establishing, breaking, and re-establishing of an engagement (“Attitudes to Childhood” 430). Kathie, whose courting antics provide amusement for her siblings, is an updated version of Maud Redford, who weds English settler Harkom after a romance of model discretion. The younger Redford children have no suspicion Maud is to be married until mamma tells them. The news is not wholly welcome: Maud's loss means harder work for her sisters. Madge calls Harkom “a great big naughty thief, to steal our Maud away” (*The Redfords* 121).

Across Two Seas documents the marriage of three of its young characters after ten years in New Zealand. Mark Vaughan saves the life of a settler's daughter, not by a medical miracle—Alice is too consumptive for that—but by a rather wooden declaration of love. Once restored to health Alice becomes, significantly, “completely the elder sister,” helping run the Vaughan household (149). In case her close proximity within the homestead should prove too great a temptation for Mark, Alice is relegated to safe sibling status until the wedding takes place. In contrast to this affair is posited the more innocent, fraternal union of Juliet and George. No marriages take place, however, until the pioneering homesteads are well established and the characters well out of their teens.

Under One Standard raises some social concerns about the marriage institution itself in its portrayal of Mary Godwin, who suffers misery upon misery when her domineering husband Abel forces her to emigrate against her will. Her plight pointedly undermines the male authoritative role in marriage and presents wifely submission as needlessly pathetic. A better way is suggested in the marriages of Uncle Jacob Godwin (where “if wife thinks one way and I another, I bluster a bit and give in,” 175), and his daughter Margaret, who at first claims not to believe in such “nonsense” as love at first sight but who, after deciding Folkes will do after all, instigates an equal and physical relationship. “There could be no shyness or reserve between this man . . . and herself,” Margaret rationalises, collaring Folkes and planting a kiss on him (167). “A woman goes where her husband goes,” parrots Mary, but Margaret goes wherever she pleases, and leads her husband off to wild regions inhabited by her beloved Maori. Thus Bedford does address the topic of teenage sexuality and romance, but reserves it for nineteen-year-old Margaret, keeping fifteen-year-old David in asexual ignorance. *Under One Standard*, with its combination of a virtuous yet sexually assertive New Woman and a pure, non-threatening boy hero, must have won approval from social feminists of its era.

These texts suggest that a pioneer girl has two God-given imperial duties: to help establish her parents’ homestead and to marry a God-fearing settler and found another respectable middle-class home. Thus these texts locate romance as acceptable only in the service of Christ, empire, and middle-class domesticity.

Innocent Boys: Worthy Bridegrooms

Few early twentieth-century children’s texts could still pretend to ignorance of what post-Darwinians saw as a normal biological sexuality. However the moral purity and eugenicist movements of this era still advocated ideals of chastity and innocence, motivated by fears that the Anglo-Saxon race was doomed to extinction if morally and sexually weakened by homosexual, unchaste, or “self-abusing” males, by the

masculinised New Woman, or by any unsanctioned sexual practice, even intramarital “lust” (see Dalton 137). By this time the angelic mid-Victorian boy hero had come to be scorned as “muffish” and while Edwardians still required purity of boys, this had now to be a purity beyond any suspicion of effeminacy, with chastity reinvented as a male strength rather than a sign of weakness (Dalton 141). Emphasis in children’s fiction fixed upon inculcating a healthy, “normal” boyishness (Nelson 29-30).

Thus New Zealand-set juvenile texts produced between 1900 and 1917 are more outspoken than their predecessors on the subject of sexual sins, though authors clearly still felt uncomfortable at approaching a subject so delicate. The science books of Edith Howes made a valiant effort to overcome ignorance with correct knowledge; her 1916 *The Cradle Ship*, written “in the hope of permanent benefit to children” (Dedication), presented the facts of life within the framing structure of a “flower fairy” fantasy. Novelists writing for an older audience could not hide behind allegories of flowers and fairies and resorted to veiled references to “temptation,” “purity,” and “self-control.” *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* contains dark but vague warnings that boys must be occupied with wholesome outdoor activities or “the mischief and vileness placed in their hands by the sable serpent will win them to his committal” (135). Thomson appears to be trying to address some dubious sexual temptations here, such as masturbation and homosexuality, but his oblique references may well have mystified some readers.

What many of these early twentieth-century texts do produce is a teenage hero who takes some interest in the opposite sex and who is occasionally permitted to fall in love, though remaining essentially pure. Sydney in *The Boy Settler* is one of this newer breed of romantically-aware lad. Although Sydney’s New Zealand adventures are devoid of eligible girls, he has a sweetheart in England with whom he falls in love at first sight and at age fourteen, no less, and he spends most of the novel eschewing “doubtful pleasures” to keep himself pure for Beatrice. Ringer notes the connections in this text between a young man’s sexual feelings

and obsessive cleanliness: “In one scene, Sydney Bartlett’s thoughts are allowed to dwell briefly upon his beloved Beatrice, and thus he is reminded that he has not washed all day. He immediately goes off to fetch soap and towel” (*Young Emigrants* 28).

Sydney is eventually rewarded with Beatrice, although she is presented as an example of female frailty in contrast to his own unimpeachable morals. Instead of guarding her affections as Sydney does, Beatrice sets her sights upon a faithless lawyer, and this one romance consumes her with such feelings of impurity she feels reluctant to marry stainless Sydney.

Like Sydney, Cedric in *The Greenstone Door* experiences love at first sight and at a tender age, in his case fifteen. In what must rank as a rarity amongst children’s texts of the era, *The Greenstone Door* presents teenage Cedric’s feelings as intense and mature. On three occasions he actually embraces Helenora Wilde. What is more, after Helenora’s departure to England he is permitted to exchange “passionate kisses” (235) with Sarah Brompart, whom he does not love—although he does resist the temptation to marry her, saving himself for the higher prize of Helenora.

In the Bell-Bird’s Lair preaches the high standards of sexual purity advocated by the W.C.T.U. and Richard John Seddon, leader of the Liberal Party so admired by Foston (Eldred-Grigg, *Pleasures of the Flesh* 119-20). Ted Strangemuir’s engagement is broken after his sweetheart Bessie learns he has renounced churchgoing and temperance for socialism and atheism. Bessie, a Band of Hope member, heeds the W.C.T.U.’s eugenicist admonitions that young women should not “marry a man to reform him” (26-27). Fathers with loose morals, the W.C.T.U. believed, would create degenerate offspring (Dalton 140). Thus Ted is not permitted a second chance until he has morally improved. This new courtship is one of puritanical self-control. Ted and Mary Struthers live in the same small community for years, and Mary even nurses the injured Ted for months, and all this time their friendship remains formal. When Ted at last dares “unbosom” his soul, Mary receives more a sermon than

a declaration of love, and her answer reveals a relationship of religious guru and infantilised disciple: “Yes, Mr Strangemuir, I will be your wife. Your writings have made me feel a better woman, and I have been in love with ‘Rimu’ ever since he first wrote for the ‘Auckland Weekly’” (94).

The pair seal “the compact in the orthodox fashion,” this being the nearest the text ever approaches to depiction of physical passion. A scarcely warmer romance develops between the community’s preacher and schoolteacher. According to social purity campaigners, lust could be a danger even within marriage. Foston’s young couples therefore exemplify what the W.C.T.U. referred to as “the white life for two”—a Christian “companionate” marriage in which partners cohabited “as chaste companions other than for the purpose of procreation” (Dalton 130; see also Eldred-Grigg, *Pleasures of the Flesh* 128).

Imperial Romance

More physically passionate romances are enjoyed by the young adults of Peacocke’s novels, which can be attributed to the impact of the Great War. The small hero of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* plays Cupid to a number of soldiers and sweethearts, transforming despondent cannon-fodder into men determined to win and return. *Patricia-Pat*’s Althea dithers between two suitors, the dazzling airman Ronald Rae and Geoffrey Seton, an intellectual semi-invalid. Seton is romantic in a poetry-writing, rose-bestowing manner, but sexually timid to the point of lavishing hugs and kisses on little Pat in substitution for her more fascinating aunt. Althea’s affection for him is pitying and maternal. Ron is passionate but irritatingly masterful. Althea chafes at Ron’s domination, but while Seton offers a safe alternative his refusal to press his advantage ultimately rouses her contempt: “She might have loved him better, she felt, had he been . . . more insistent on his rights as a lover, had he demanded rather than pleaded” (243). Ron demands, and wins. In a wartime setting the imperial fighting stock must be repopulated by the bravest and fittest, and thus the novel ends with Althea honeymooning with Ron while Seton accepts that the world needs more virile fellows

than him. *Patricia-Pat* extols the biological healthiness of the red-blooded heterosexual male, although within clear moral boundaries; Ron is praised for kissing without asking leave, but has to prove his worth with military heroism and forbearance of desire first.

A Puritan Tradition

The above examples demonstrate how three substantive kinds of hegemony are asserted through the religious and moral messages of early New Zealand-set children's fiction.

Firstly, the dominance of Protestant morality over other religious alternatives reinforces the politics of class discussed in Chapter Four. This fiction is a middle-class phenomenon, deeply concerned with social control, reinforcing social quietism amongst the poor as well as suggesting a degree of self-doubt among the social elite. The pietistic superiority of the settler of middling status is repeatedly emphasised throughout these works, which confirm the ideals of Proverbs 30:8.

Secondly, the religious doctrine and ethics in these texts reinforce an imperial hegemony. A puritan prosperity doctrine underpins the capitalist impulse that encourages globalism, notions of manifest destiny support the acquisition of Maori land and other resources, and an insistence on the civilising mission of Christianity provides a post hoc justification for military expansion, even while it enacts a symbolic cultural extinction in the death or removal of Maori characters.

Thirdly, these texts attempt to influence the moral training of the young by asserting the hegemony of one generation over another, with young readers urged to adopt specific values of piety, self-control, temperance, and acceptable social and sexual behaviour.

Eldred-Grigg notes that recent New Zealand social historians are questioning Chapman's view of a puritan moral heritage. Many colonials, insists Eldred-Grigg, ridiculed church-going and puritan ideals, and although thousands of colonial children signed temperance pledges, most broke their promise in later life (*Pleasures of the Flesh* 179). The puritan Evangelicals, he suggests, were actually a minority loudly declaiming a

moral code which “seemed to be under threat and in need of defence” (*Pleasures of the Flesh* 2). Be that as it may, a puritan vociferousness resounds throughout early New Zealand-set children’s fiction, and the most striking feature of the works examined here is the authors’ belief in their messages. Writers of these texts believed strongly in “the regenerative potential of the young, and made every effort to harness it to their own causes” (Banerjee 163). Colonial period junior fiction with religious content may have been written with more or less subtlety and skill, but the writers’ sincerity—indeed, at times, their sense of urgency—in presenting moral and religious messages cannot be overlooked. It is, to paraphrase Storer and Bedford, the touch which makes these works kin.

CHAPTER SIX

WERE I A LAD:

Gender Perspectives for Young Emigrants

“... it is the way of the world, you know, for the brothers to go off into the cities and nice places, while the girls have to stay at home and drudge.” (Marchant, *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* 42)

Ideologies of gender in early New Zealand-set children's fictions assert several versions of meaning in the service of power. Authorial and narratorial urging of gender-specific behaviour, together with examples of model mother and father characters, uphold the hegemony of a parental over a junior generation. The works' emphases on the development of young ladies and gentlemen asserts a hegemony of middle-class gender ideals over working-class values. Moreover, while almost all the texts assert the hegemony of patriarchal values over females, a number, interestingly, endorse the adoption of traditional feminine ethics and values by boys, thus plotting the points of an implicit gender debate.

Settler Adventures and Mixed Messages

The mid-Victorian period saw a burgeoning of separately gendered children's literature designed to offer wholesome role models to junior readers, of which the primary examples were the boys' adventure story and the girls' domestic or family novel. Although many critics see Victorian girls as having had limited access to a variety of fiction, Reynolds suggests that later Victorian middle-class boys' reading matter was actually more restricted than that of their sisters, being confined to the healthy “masculine” tales at the so-called “high” end of juvenile publishing,⁵⁰ while girls had access to a separate girls' literature as well

⁵⁰ Chapter 2 of Reynolds' *Girls Only?: Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880-1910* analyses the social and educational factors contributing to “high”

as to boys' and adult novels. While ambiguous divisions existed between what it was suggested girls should read, what they actually read, and what reading was tacitly accepted, it was generally believed that habitual reading of wholesome girls' fiction would give females the ability to fish sagaciously from the wider literary sea (see Reynolds xix, 92, 100-105; Ruskin 66). A *Girls' Realm* publication of 1914-1915 admitted that "Hundreds of girls . . . read their brothers' books and leave their own untouched"; such reading enabled girls to indulge in dreams of boyhood freedoms (Mitchell 111⁵¹).

Settler stories or "domestic adventures" appealed to both sexes by combining the domestic realism and affective relationships which had become established female fictional fare with the travel and outdoors adventure themes traditionally aimed at boys. Henty expected his works to be read by girls. *Amongst the Maoris* contains apostrophes to readers of both sexes. Reynolds believes that the domestic adventure genre filled a market niche by catering both to boys and to girls who demanded exciting reading but who, adults believed, should also learn the feminine domestic ideal (94).

It is unsurprising therefore to find settler tales frequently containing varied or ambiguous gender ideologies. Early New Zealand-set children's fiction reflects models of domesticity and boyishness (or tomboyishness) for both boys and girls. The texts emphasise middle-class domesticity as a goal and a source of moral stability for both sexes, and they laud the attainment of physical health, strength, and vigour for all settlers. A colonial setting gave authors opportunity to extend or challenge a heroine's traditionally limited domestic sphere. At the same time many texts' authors endorse a species of feminine domestic piety in male as well as female protagonists, an idea reflecting two major

boys' and "low" girls' fiction. Reynolds admits that occasionally girls' books were accepted into the "high" literary canon but refuses to accept that some of these texts (such as *The Daisy Chain*, *Little Women*, and the *Alice* books) were written exclusively for girls (26). Rowbotham, in contrast, considers that girls' novels of the period were viewed as an important contribution to society in their own right (7).

⁵¹ Mitchell's sources are Dorothy Marsh, "Girls' Reading," *Girls' Realm* 17 (1914-1915): 386 and Edward Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is* (London: Drane, 1888).

influences on the children's book trade: the proliferation of women writers and readers, and low church evangelism, which frowned on adventure stories redolent with physical violence.

Writing the Ideal Girl

The ideal Victorian fictional girl, says Gillian Avery, was thoughtful, devout, devoted to her family, obedient to her father, educated, serious, submissive to the Divine Will, sensible, self-controlled, and domestically-inclined (*Nineteenth Century Children* 75-76). She is a middle-class ideal: a "lady" in manners and habits, but unafraid of working hard at tasks considered appropriate to her gender. This ladylikeness is cultivated, in the works under examination, through socialisation of girls' speech, movement and deportment, role-enforcement and dress, and the reward of domestic marriage for conformity (see Bob Dixon, *Catching Them Young* 17).

Pioneer Girls: A Matter of Agency

Perhaps the most apparent socialisation device in the texts examined here is a lack of female agency. In most of this fiction a gender dichotomy appears which has been expressed as "men act; women appear" (Berger, et al 47) and rephrased as "girls *are*—boys *do*" (Bob Dixon, *Catching Them Young* 12). Many texts echo John Ruskin's 1871 essay *Sesame and Lilies*, which ostensibly argues that girls should enjoy education, exercise, and heroism, but actually presents a model in which the male "is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender," while the female is restricted to home affairs (59).

Most early New Zealand-set children's texts emphasise that girls should be confined to the homestead, both for physical protection from hostile Maori and a harsh environment, and as a moral safeguard from the corrupt ethics of workplace and marketplace. Heroines in these texts are frequently passive onlookers dependent on male salvation from fire, flood, kidnap, or attack, even though the girls themselves are often physically capable types. Marion Renshaw of *Maori and Settler* can shoot

as well as a man but is relegated to helping her mother cook for the male defenders, and though physically strong, is banned from house-building and instructed to learn domestic arts instead. Maud Redford is also eager to help construct the “warrie”: “Maud spoke of the fun it would be building their own house, and doing all sorts of work, both indoors and out” (*The Redfords* 24). Instead she is sent by her father to the kitchen.

“You won’t leave us girls much to do, papa!” said Maud laughing. “We must really be allowed to do something!”

“And don’t you do a great deal, dear?” said Mr Redford. “Could we work so well if we had to cook our own food, and look after the house? There will be plenty of work for you all, pasting the paper, and tacking on the calico inside the walls when we get the roof on.” (68-69)

Maud may decorate the homestead’s interior but not construct its exterior walls, which symbolise patriarchal protection and shelter and constitute the start of the outside world; the distinction between interior and exterior spheres is here pinpointed to a nicety. Neither is she allowed to help fight a bush-fire, for this would signify taming of the wilderness, an action reserved for men. When she does wander alone into the bush she becomes lost and must be rescued by her fiancé and brother. Similarly, in *In the Bell Bird’s Lair* a girl who strays from home into the bush enters dangerous territory, sprains her ankle, and has to be carried home by a chivalrous male . . . who eventually marries her.

A dichotomy of danger/security is encapsulated in *Holmwood*’s twin settings of the cultured English “Holm”stead and the forest, domain of the Maori, where the civilised security of girl settlers is inferred from the dangerous freedoms of their Maori counterparts. “Women in New Zealand are allowed a good deal of liberty,” the narrator comments (50), and the Maori maidens Yeda and Madu can easily outrun Harry and David Parry through the bush.⁵² However their liberty and athleticism

⁵² Although the competition is difficult to judge as Kingston does not provide the respective ages of his characters. Emily, considered “grown up,” must be at least

goes hand in hand with savagery and degradation. When Madu admits the English value their women “far more” than Maori do because “They are their equals and friends, and never their slaves, as are most of the Maori women” (54), female readers are expected to count their blessings.

Marquis suggests that in colonial children’s texts an axis runs between girl characters and Maori figures, with the “savages” marginalised in order to open up a “limited but real space” in which young pakeha women can act (65-66). However the portrayal of Maori girls in these texts serves not to alter but to reinforce the subordinate, passive condition of European females, even as this is disguised as equality. For this reason Puihi-Huia of *The Greenstone Door*, who is raised as a pakeha, must remain in her rural village while her brother Cedric enjoys all manner of bush treks, adventures, and city careers. Ladies forfeit liberty.

In settings where dangers are not an issue, these texts make plain that a girl’s proper place is the home, even while acknowledging the frustrations this expectation may bring. (Female anger and frustration in these texts will be examined in depth, in a later section of this chapter.) In *Waihoura*, Lucy Pemberton’s dreams of the colonial life—being a dainty shepherdess with a crook—are shattered by the reality of domestic enclosure. “I suspect Miss Lucy would find home duties more suited to her,” comments the community’s doctor (41), in one breath dismissing girls’ ability for practical thinking and their hopes of physical agency.

Lucy Graham of *Distant Homes* chafes against her lack of agency and is consumed with jealousy of her brother Tom’s right to it. When Captain Graham takes Tom to a goldfield Lucy begs “to go too; but, could not persuade her Papa to take her, and most reluctantly had to be content with Tom’s promise of bringing back a nugget as big as his head” (13). The ironic metaphor satirises Tom’s masculine pride under the circumstances, at least from Lucy’s perspective. Later Lucy, bitter at being left out of selecting and clearing land, bemoans not being born a boy. Tom teasingly offers to cut her hair and lend her his clothes, then

eighteen, Yeda and Madu appear slightly younger, and Harry and David seem to be around thirteen to fifteen years old.

suggests that since she cannot wear his things she can mend them, “. . . to amuse your fingers with while Papa and I are clearing. Girls are not fit for rough work. Papa and I shall wear out no end of clothes, so you and Beatrice will have lots of easy, quiet going work to do” (68).

Similar frustration arises when Tom is taken on a bush trek: “Lucy thought herself very unkindly treated, because her father laughed at her entreaty to be allowed to go with him, boldly asserting, she was quite as strong and able to ride or walk as Tom, and, though younger, she was sure *she* could make the journey as well as he could” (21). Lucy’s mother is almost prepared to let her go and thereby discover that “girls were really not so well calculated to face trials of this kind as boys” (22), but Tom scoffs and retorts “rather unjustly . . . girls were only meant to make shirts and puddings, and that he thought the Indians were quite right, who made the women work, while they hunted and fought” (22).

Orphaned Beatrice Falconer in *The Boy Settler* is shuttled between the protection of various relatives, and in her Melbourne uncle’s home is denied social opportunities of any kind except charity work. This text suggests that for a genteel woman, any independence may be hazardous. Working-class housekeepers are born with sufficient sturdiness to labour into old age but genteel young ladies require protectors and providers. When her aunt turns her out of the house Beatrice is unable to find work and becomes impoverished and gravely ill. She is rescued by hospitable squatters, who engineer her marriage to Sydney Bartlett. Thus while Beatrice may outwardly resemble the heroines of the late Victorian/Edwardian “new girls” story examined by Mitchell, bachelor girls who experience jobs, adventures, or academic success, or the working-class “virtuous but friendless and bereft” protagonists of halfpenny serials, her situation contains few of the feminist “whiffs of quiet subversion” Mitchell identifies in these works (63, 151). Independence merely makes Beatrice realise her reliance upon men.

A focus upon improper female agency in these works may be combined with an endorsement that girls cultivate a ladylike deportment

and modest dress. In *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* Cis modestly follows her brother Hal, who brandishes the powerful Star of Love and leads the siblings' bush journey. When Hal frolics naked in the Wairakei hot pools with some jolly little gnomes Cis must remain fully clothed onshore. The small heroine of *Patricia-Pat* is not permitted to remove even her footwear at the beach—indeed, she has been forbidden to go near the beach, though her cousin Laurie naughtily leads her there (and nearly to her death in the ocean). Pat envies Laurie's physical freedom: he sprawls on the rug, waves his heels in the air, climbs trees, and has appalling table manners, all of which are forbidden to Pat. Even this novel's example of a modern young woman, the assertive Althea who golfs, gardens, and tramps "as untiringly as a boy" (125), is kept within socially acceptable bounds. Althea must be healthy and active, for she epitomises the sturdy pioneer woman who will produce fine young Maorilanders. However Althea, who constantly reproves Pat for transgressing social and gender boundaries, is ladylike in manners and essentials, accepts her position in relation to men, and eventually submits to a masterful sweetheart.

A frustratingly confined female sphere is explored in the Malcolm sisters of *Six Little New Zealanders*: Kathie falls short of the domestic ideal, Jan fails in the areas of ladylike dress, deportment, and manners, Pipi likes to smoke cigars, and Ngaire finds it all but impossible to maintain her appointed place: on one occasion she is imprisoned in the specifically male jail of Uncle John's office for daring to challenge his authority. Yet the fact that girls require this patriarchal authority and protection is clearly shown in the episode where in the absence of all three uncles from the homestead mad Tairoa attempts to kill the children.

The intelligent, talented Vaughan women of *Across Two Seas* are clearly unhappy when confined to the homestead while exciting male adventures take place. Juliet fumes at being denied information; Joss, who is told what is happening because she possesses the supposedly male virtues of courage and coolness, is not allowed to assist practically, although she can shoot and ride as well as a man. Frustrated and desperate to "do something," yet forbidden to move, her only permissible

action is prayer. The family's "strong adventurous mother" (Gilderdale, *Oxford History* 528) sets her daughters an example of forbearance in this, meekly accepting son Mark's orders not to leave the settlement's boundaries even to search for her injured or abducted children, though she is tormented by visions of their suffering. By the time Maori attack threatens Golden Grove Mrs Vaughan has subsumed her personal desires under socially acceptable behaviour and, rather than choosing to stay or flee, asks Mark to make the decision for her.

Audrey in *Doing and Daring* is, like Joss and Juliet, eager to save lives but banned from participation in her brother's adventures. At first she fears she too can do no more than pray, until she hears a relief gang ride by, singing in "manly voices":

What lads e'er did our lads will do;

Were I a lad I'd follow him too.

He's owre the hills that I lo'e weel. (124)⁵³

Adopting this theme as her own, Audrey stokes a watchfire to aid rescue efforts and then goes "charring" to feed the family. Her brothers react to this with a mixture of guilt and gall, crying, "Let us do; we are twice as strong as you" (152). She replies, "Strength is not everything . . . There are some things which only a girl can do" (152).

From this point on the plot concentrates on Edwin's adventures, thus screening the spectacle of the independent woman. Audrey is glimpsed again at the novel's end, back in the domestic sphere of the reordered homestead, still singing "Were I a lad I would follow him too." Stredder permits her heroine a flash of independence in a society turned temporarily topsy-turvy by disaster, but returns her to domestication and submissive acceptance that, despite her desires, she can never be a "lad."

The Invalid Girl

While Audrey Lee is strong and capable, her sister Effie is a weakling who spends most of the novel ill or fainting. She reflects an

⁵³ A Jacobite ballad by Scottish songwriter Carolina Oliphant, Lady Nairne (1766-1845), who collected folk tunes and wrote new lyrics for them.

example of the trope of invalidism, a literary device which socialises girl characters by curtailing their movements. Gilbert and Gubar, among others, have discussed this trope in Victorian texts in connection with the patriarchally-promoted goal of female sickness or “dis-ease.” Reynolds notes that girls’ fiction uses temporary paralysis to reform rebellious characters, making them unlearn tomboyish codes of masculinity and abandon the urge to challenge the patriarchal hegemony (128-29).⁵⁴ The invalid trope can also be read as a covert reference to the menarche; it has been suggested that girls’ desire to be like boys may stem from post-Freudian sexual revulsion, fear or rejection of pregnancy, birth, or menstruation, and some commentators read the invalidism trope as an author’s suggestion that adulthood figuratively cripples girls (Mitchell 136, 161).

In early New Zealand-set children’s fiction delicate health inculcates in a heroine a sense of ladylike breeding, “natural” biological female weakness, and a need for patriarchal protection within the homestead. Thus small, headache-prone Beatrice Graham and delicate Juliet Vaughan are more naturally ladylike and homebodies than their strapping sisters Lucy and Joss, and Beatrice Falconer’s innate femininity and gentility are suggested by her being insufficiently healthy to earn her own living.

The effectiveness of the invalid trope is somewhat diminished in settler fiction, however, for the imperial ethos demanded fit, vigorous pioneers. Thus relatively few females in these texts are presented as incurable invalids; most are at least strong enough to tend to the homestead and poultry-yard. Mrs Malcolm in *Six Little New Zealanders* is seriously ill but recovers. Only two texts deal with permanently paralysed women. Mrs Alford of *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* is crippled but still exerts a strong moral influence over her daughters; indeed, she represents moral strength transcending weakness. *Six Little New Zealanders* presents, in contrast, tomboyishness punished by weakness in

⁵⁴ Examples are found in *What Katy Did*, *Pollyanna*, and *The Daisy Chain*.

Denise McLennan, a witty, active sixteen-year-old crippled in a riding accident. Denise tells Ngaire, “Once I used to be always out, riding over the hills and the river bed for miles and miles—even the men wouldn’t venture where I went . . . I want to go again. I want to be free. I can’t—I *won’t* lie still for ever” (56-57).

The girl who dared to usurp male privileges has been made *invalid*, removed from the male sphere of action and forced to assume the traditional feminine weaknesses of pain, confinement, and fear of danger (she is now powerless to run from Tairoa’s murderous axe). By the novel’s end Denise appears to have repented of her unladylike desire for agency and is internalising womanly acceptance, evinced in an ability “to bear her pain patiently . . . looking forward cheerfully to the day when she will be ‘quite well’ again” (198). This hints that Denise’s punishment may be removed once her lesson has been learned.

Clothed in Submission

That girls appear while boys act is highlighted in these texts not only in images of passive, immobile women but by the motif of appropriate feminine clothing, or rather the supply of this by men who possess the all-controlling male gaze, economic power, and the physical agency to shop at cities. The occasion when Captain Graham buys Lucy and Beatrice dresses as a reward is described as “a marked epoch of their lives,” a metaphor for the onset of womanhood (*Distant Homes* 164). Hitherto, we are told, only mamma has received dresses as gifts from papa. In *Six Little New Zealanders* the uncles who stand in for the children’s father also give dresses as tools of socialisation. Tomboyish Jan’s appearance receives the most attention, as Uncle Stephen undertakes to teach her “. . . to be dainty and tidy . . . beginning at her head and working down. It showed how clever he was” (132).

“Beginning at her head” indicates that Stephen’s purchase of an inordinate number of ribbons for Jan symbolises more than concern over untidy hair. He has instigated a battle for mental and social mastery which Jan is fated to lose. We are reminded that Jan resembles Allison,

the fiancée Stephen failed to control: he is apparently desperate to succeed with her doppelganger.

Mitchell suggests that by the Edwardian period popular girls' fiction had relegated neat, ladylike types to the status of unlikable characters and made true heroines of untidy careless girls, but this is not the case in *Six Little New Zealanders*. Jan might be strong and courageous, but her scruffiness fulfils the role it would have held in girls' fiction of an earlier period: the outward sign of a moral flaw (Mitchell 131). Yet while Jan is the uncles' most obvious target, none of the Malcolm girls escapes their sartorial control. The uncles select their nieces' clothing down to evening-wear and accessories. Stephen even supplies Jan with tennis-shoes; she does not care for the game, but he does. Thus these gifts carry connotations far beyond that of providing the necessaries of life: the nieces are their uncle's decorative creations.

The girls appear humbly delighted with each new box of garments, and admittedly, clothes chosen by uncles are better than no new clothes at all; yet it seems surprising that none of them argue for individual tastes in dress. The message of *Six Little New Zealanders* is that adult men are natural providers for and saviours of women. Stephen rescues Jan from the fate of gaucherie and possible spinsterhood (hinted at in her wallflower status at her first ball), Kathie is whisked from the doom of elder sisterhood by marriage to Dan, and rebellious Ngaire learns such submission that by the story's end she is unwilling to describe herself except as an objectified list of items of apparel provided by John:

. . . perhaps if you shut your eyes you will see only the pretty new dress which the dear, gruff old uncle gave her, the watch which he bought one day in town, the pretty collar which came out of his bag yesterday. The dainty slippers with the silver buckles are his present too, and I should like to draw your attention to the prettiest hat, all sweetness and fluffiness, that came from the best shop in town. Also from Uncle John—the hat, I mean, not the shop. (198-99)

As narrator of the text, Ngaire has hitherto kept firm control of viewpoint throughout the novel. Here at the end, a life-threatening fever having purged her of transgressive desires and operated as a “gendering event between rebellious girlhood and feminized womanhood” (Mitchell 161), Ngaire becomes “all sweetness and fluffiness” and abrogates control to the male hegemony governing the adult world on whose threshold she is poised.

A Silent Sisterhood?

Ngaire’s style of narration or speech alters as she internalises patriarchal values, in an example of the ways this fiction foregrounds themes of appropriate language for girls. Whether they like it or not, heroines are instructed to be quiet and self-controlled, particularly in the male-dominated public sphere, in accordance with a socialisation process which encouraged girls from age seven onwards to eschew rough, noisy behaviour (Bratton, *The Impact* 180). An emphasis on womanly quietness echoes the evangelical influence of a long biblical tradition of female silence, stemming from Judaic formal worship in which genders were separated, and the epistles of Saint Paul, which forbade women to preach.

Distant Homes explores this in some detail. In this novel males control situations through speech. Captain Graham circumvents native attack by wielding all the tools of what Lacan terms the patriarchally-dominated Symbolic Order—authoritative speech, reason, and logic. Graham reads a newspaper report of Kingi’s surrender, and delivers a lecture on the Roman conquest of Britain as well as part of the Sermon on the Mount, all of which reduce the local chief to humble submission. Mrs Graham, in contrast, is paralysed by terror and manages to frighten off attackers with silence, immobility, and her ghostly white nightgown. Hers is the action—or rather inaction—of instinct, of the non-linguistic realm of Lacan’s Unconscious. The one word she does say (“Go,” in Maori) is like the subconscious utterance of a sleepwalker; moreover, it is not even in English, the language of the patriarchal ruling hegemony.

Lucy Graham, although she much prefers the activity and company of men, must imitate her mother. She feels free to speak only in domestic situations, as is demonstrated in the episode where she is taken by her mother to a settler ladies' afternoon tea. "Lucy was quite happy now: she could talk as much as she liked; and, as she was very fond of telling stories, she enjoyed her first tea-party in New Zealand very much, and began to think it might be the best plan, after all, for her papa and Tom to go and prepare a house while they remained quietly in Christchurch" (69).

Lucy is made to feel particularly ashamed of any angry outbursts she makes towards men. When Tom mocks her for lack of nautical knowledge—knowledge a girl is not, in any case, supposed to possess—she rages and argues, then is stricken with mortification for being "silly" and begs forgiveness. This pattern of argument, shaming, and humble apology for silliness is repeated frequently throughout the novel as instruction for girl readers who may be tempted to argue with their brothers.

Six Little New Zealanders' Kathie is also forced to admit, following an argument with her fiancé over her ill-baked scones, that "I was the silliest silly after all" (168). "Silly" is clearly a gender-specific word in these texts. Elsewhere in this novel Ngaire rages in anger against Uncle John and later repents of her "silly *little* thoughts" (122). She even pities her antagonist: ". . . for the first time I could see all the tied-up love looking out of his eyes. He seemed tired too, and his voice had an 'old' note in it that made me long to throw my arms around him and tell him I loved him and loved him and would keep on loving him for ever and ever" (129-30).

Audrey and Effie Lee of *Doing and Daring* are characterised as timid and quiet; Effie is particularly shadowy and silent. Yet even they voice a whispered protest at being reduced to silent "dummies" and eavesdroppers in a corrugated iron house where every sound can be overheard. This, Stredder is aware, was the accepted lot of the Victorian

female and she complies with it by giving her tale's exciting speeches and action to boys.

No Slang, Please, You're Ladies

When girls are permitted to speak, their language is expected to be less vulgar than that of boys of a similar social station. Boys in colonial novels seldom swear profanely, but as a concession to high spirits and masculine rough and tumble they are permitted to use slang, which Showalter terms the "wild zone" of language of the dominant (male) language group (Foster and Simons 29). Lucy Graham longs to do the same. Her "All serene, Master" brings down her governess' wrath for "vulgar" behaviour, though Lucy can hardly help absorbing such phrases, which she hears from her sailor father and would-be sailor brother (*Distant Homes* 1). The Malcolm girls in *Six Little New Zealanders* are not supposed to use colloquialisms either. They have two languages, a polite public one and a slangy private one. The uncles believe that "'awful' is 'worse than slang' and 'quite unpermissible'" (37), yet "awful" appears often in the sisters' speeches and Ngaire's narration, while Jan covertly indulges in "unprintable" grumbles.

When Madge Redford begs to be allowed "just for once, to say, 'O how jolly!'" like her brothers, she is immediately rebuked:

"Well, but you know you mustn't," said Bernard authoritatively. "You're not to use such words; they're only for boys."

"Yes, I know," said Madge, with a toss of her sunny hair, "but there is no other word for what I mean."
(*The Redfords* 61)

That defiant head toss expresses the frustrations of a gender divide which consistently denies girls utterance of the mot juste.

In contrast, boys in these works take obvious delight in their linguistic freedoms and ensure their wild zones are preserved as male domains by "protecting" their sisters from the masculine coarseness of liberated speech. As the typical settler parents announce emigration plans

their sons leap about, crowing “Whoop!”, “Hurrah!”, and “How jolly!” while their sisters must express a more decorous “quiet and cheerful” attitude (*Distant Homes* 7). Long portions of *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* are written in a vernacular schoolboy idiom riddled with “toff,” “jiggered,” “spiffin’,” “chump,” “My Crummy,” and much, much more, thus encoding parts of this paean to juvenile masculinity in a language from which girl readers are excluded.⁵⁵ The attitude continues into the 1910s, where the “hulloas,” “decents,” and “boskers” lisped by Peacocke’s Phil and Dicky are presented as specifically boyish utterances. Patricia-Pat is denied the slang Laurie uses; Granny warns her not to say “eh!” and Althea reproves her for saying “what cheek!”:

“Ssh! That’s not a nice way for a little girl to talk.”

“Laurie says it.”

“Laurie—a great rough schoolboy!”

“You say it sometimes, Auntie.”

“Do I, Pat? Then it’s very naughty of me,” said

Althea, trying to keep the twinkle out of her eye.

(*Patricia-Pat* 23)

Clear differences exist between what little ladies are taught and what older ladies occasionally get away with, but the only woman in any of these texts to revel openly in slang is Lessie Lestrangle, the American vaudeville dancer in *Dicky, Knight-Errant*, and she is presented as a vulgar, low-class foreigner—someone a girl reader may secretly admire but would not openly emulate.

Transgressive Configurations

Lessie is an example of an alluringly transgressive female character. The idea of female gender transgression is important to these texts, for even as they reinforced the domestic ideal, settler tales provided opportunities for authors to challenge traditional female expectations.

⁵⁵ Although girls’ school stories incorporating girls’ slang were written from around the turn of the century (Angela Brazil published her first school story in 1906), New

Reading of adventures could make girls dissatisfied with their own lives, and while domestic fiction set out to “convince [the female reader] of the need to conform to conventional expectations of her sphere Yet, paradoxically, it was this genre of popular fiction that also provided a medium for recognizing the growing rebellion of middle-class women against the limiting tradition of the *Angel in the Home*” (Rowbotham 8-9). It has been suggested that Victorian women writers frequently used the children’s literature genre to “adopt a subversive position through articulating the child’s viewpoint” (Foster and Simons 22). There are similarities between women’s literature and children’s literature—shared content, such as settings of enclosures and interior scenes of action, a shared language of male-dominated otherness, and a tendency to be regarded, up to comparatively recent times, as marginal genres (Paul 149). Foster and Simons also discuss the Lacanian link between the child and the feminine or Imaginary/semiotic order, reading a young heroine as undergoing “socialisation as a process of adaption to a patriarchal sign system” which the woman author may challenge by writing of “transgressive configurations of identity” such as cross-dressing, feats of daring, and displays of bad temper (27-29). Mitchell, while emphasising that complex and multiple interpretations can be drawn from nineteenth-century children’s literature, has demonstrated how this fiction can be seen as a cultural code encapsulating girl readers’ transgressive feelings—fantasies, tensions, fears, grief—even as it exhorts conventional gender instruction and values (6, 139-43).

Lessie Lestrage is an emblem of such transgressive feeling, fascinating to the female reader in her independence and flamboyance. Dicky is agog to find her seated cross-legged and smoking, a “peculiarly masculine pastime” which his mother’s more conventional friends eschew (165). She drinks, uses slang, and is daringly made-up; she is an assertive, financially successful career woman. It is Lessie who leads her longsuffering, silent husband around the world, not vice versa. Dicky

Zealand-set examples did not appear until Phillis Garrard’s *Hilda at School*, published in 1929.

disapproves of her, but the narrator expresses ambivalence, seeming unable to decide whether she has achieved “professional fame, or ‘notoriety’,” but ultimately acknowledging her worth as a covert fantasy figure: “. . . sprightly maidens in the seclusion of their own bowers practised her ‘double’ high kick, or her ‘single toe-walk,’ and dressed their locks with the famous ‘eye-brow drop-curl’ à la Lessie” (156, 157).

Unlike Lessie, the young heroines in these texts only temporarily transgress their culturally appointed limits. Lucy Graham transgresses not only by arguing against her brothers but most blatantly—and shockingly, for the era—in her complaints at not being born a boy (*Distant Homes* 67). Aylmer’s novel is innovative, and Lucy anticipates children’s literature’s more famous rebellious heroines, predating Jo March by six years and Katy Carr by eight. Although the novel was based on letters written by the Reverend W.J. Aylmer of Akaroa (Bagnall, I:1, 234), it is Lucy’s voice, strident, anguished, dissatisfied, which sounds loudest in the narrative. Yet while Lucy’s gender-related hurts and trials are often defended (Tom rebukes her “rather unjustly,” the reader is told, 22), they are equally often presented as faults to be repented of. While Victorian girls’ fiction authors frequently sympathised with female frustrations, this device, Reynolds notes, usually anticipates the heroine’s eventual conformity in a conventional resolution (129-31). Thus *Distant Homes*’ narrator just as frequently defends Tom’s male chauvinism with such comments as: “I do not mean to say that Tom thought this in his heart; but Lucy provoked him sadly, and made him say a great many things derogatory to girls” (22). The reader is alternately encouraged to sympathise with Lucy and to castigate her.

In *Six Little New Zealanders* Ngaire daringly and angrily challenges Uncle John’s authority, which John curtails by locking Ngaire in his office with orders not to dare to say another word. The reader is encouraged simultaneously to enjoy Ngaire’s noisy transgression of boundaries and to expect its rebuke. Ngaire escapes through a window to find solace amid the tussock and river, and while this connection with the natural world can be read as symbolic of female power (Foster and

Simons 29), by the novel's end Ngaire has come to accept John as the rightful wielder of power in the family.

Protagonists in children's literature, particularly pre-pubescent girls, are sometimes permitted to transcend culturally-defined gender boundaries and "win" against adult male oppressors, because they are "not yet closed in by the rules of adulthood" (Paul 159). Thus Ngaire, aged twelve, is permitted to defy Uncle John, though her victory is partial and temporary. Should her boundary-breaking continue beyond puberty she is likely to be punished, like Denise McLennan, or Uncle Stephen's fiancée Allison, who drowned after the transgressive acts of quarrelling with him and riding off alone.

Judy Alford of *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* is soundly punished for transgressive behaviour against males. Although the Alford sisters are presented as morally and physically superior to the men around them, Judy oversteps her boundaries by saying so. She daringly answers back her father-substitute Uncle Martin, and when cowardly Walter Portland hesitates to assist drowning children, Judy delivers him not only a tongue-lashing but a "stinging blow" on the face. The reader senses Judy is right to be disgusted with Walter, but wrong to take matters into her own hands. Her improper behaviour is punished by her being forced to abandon her dreams of a university and teaching career, and this is a subtle penalty for which she can blame nobody but herself. Eyestrain from overwork forces her to remain at home, learn domestication and patience, and resign herself to an eventual marriage. Girl readers thrilled to imagine Judy striking and yelling at men are thus warned that such behaviour will be repented of at leisure.

For a girl to strike a male is the ultimate transgression. In Lucy Graham's final sibling altercation she strikes her younger brother Aps for spoiling her box of paints and is consumed with guilt and grief. Aps here becomes a smaller version of Tom (who is now away at sea), a male whom Lucy can control, punish, and hurt. However this state of affairs is merely temporary: Aps will grow up into a powerful man, while Lucy will rue her transgression all her life.

Beatrice's silent suffering in *The Boy Settler* erupts in similar physical and psychological aberration. Jilted by her lover and turned out of her uncle's home, she sickens and becomes "possessed by a demon of restless energy" (274). When a small boy in the street throws stones at her she boxes the lad's ears, ". . . a most extraordinary proceeding on her part," and asks herself, "Am I going off my head?" (285). This shocking behaviour from a Victorian lady indeed suggests the border realms of madness, indicating the actions of what Gilbert and Gubar term "the madwoman in the attic"⁵⁶—the venting of suppressed or unconscious desire to retaliate against the oppressive male, achieved here through hitting a boy as a powerless surrogate for the actual object, or objects, of resentment.

Ngairé in *Six Little New Zealanders* attempts to attack the controlling adult male rather than a pint-sized stand-in, and when this fails, she harms herself:

Something hot and angry was surging through me. If I had been smaller I think I would have struck at uncle when he propelled me so suddenly down the front veranda; as it was, I could only rage round the small, dusty office, try the door angrily, and then, mounting the desk, wriggle myself through the little uncurtained window. From there it was an easy drop to the garden outside, and though I scratched myself pretty severely on the climbing rose, I seemed hardly to feel the pain. (116)

Gender tensions are more openly expressed by Ngairé's younger sister Pipi, who scratches her ten-year-old brother's face and stamps on his toes—behaviour which would have been unthinkable in a children's text written half a century earlier.

As has been shown, in many of these texts girls defy an uncle, not a father. Confronting a paternal stand-in rather than their own papa makes

⁵⁶ See S.M. Gilbert and S. Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1979.

their temporary rebellion against patriarchy appear as less culpable and more easily forgivable.

A more symbolic form of transgression in these texts involves the rejection of patriarchally-gifted clothing. Margaret Godwin refuses the “new smart frock” her father offers to buy her for her wedding, just as she rejects the farming type of man he would prefer her to marry (*Under One Standard* 198). Her rebellion is sanitised for the reader by its presentation as holy self-sacrifice (though the author of *Emily Bathurst* would certainly not have approved of a limited wardrobe, even in the service of God). Margaret in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* also makes eschewing new clothes a signifier of her temporary economic independence; she is later showered with money by her fiancé which she outlays, significantly, in a “modest trousseau” (291).

Female transgression of gender boundaries has an important place in these texts, though it seldom receives unreserved authorial approval. While some children’s authors challenged the traditional model of submission and ladylike domestication none dared present an outright rejection of it. All heroines in these works who chafe against gender injustice eventually accept patriarchally-dominated domestication, and girl readers are encouraged to enjoy vicariously their rebellious behaviour but not to imitate it.

Feminine Power

If gender transgression is inevitably punished, then the seemingly passive virtue of feminine refinement could be a mid-Victorian girl’s only means of wielding power over males: “. . . refinement is the internalising of control of female power, through sexuality; society rewards the lady for restraining instinctive self-assertion, and modifying the use of her capacity to provoke potentially disruptive responses” (Bratton, *The Impact* 181).

Few texts examined here develop this idea. Most posit the colonial mother as holder of a marked, though limited, prestige, but none upholds the image of woman as domestic tyrant or virago. Single girls

may occasionally enjoy their sexual powers, such as Helenora of *The Greenstone Door*, who toys with smitten Cedric, and Althea in *Patricia-Pat*, who fascinates all the men she meets, but even they emerge as repentant domestic angels at their novels' ends. Only in the character of *Six Little New Zealanders'* Pipi is glimpsed a girl who may retain into adulthood her manipulative and transgressive powers over males. Pipi's antics are outrageous (she smokes cigars with impunity and plays practical jokes on Uncle John) yet she remains John's favourite due to her angelic looks and outwardly charming manner.

Brothers and Sisters

Victorian girls' longings for male privileges and freedoms did not go unnoticed by their brothers, and the fraught relationships which often resulted are realistically depicted in domestic settler fiction. Authors of colonial children's novels dared not depict obvious tensions between the mothers and fathers who were idealised as God's viceroys but they could, and did, document injustice, frustration, and hostility between sisters and brothers.

In Victorian society elder brothers stood in their fathers' place and expected to be obeyed (Avery, *Nineteenth Century Children* 115). Conversely, the presence of brothers or male cousins at home was often a middle-class girl's passport to freedom, licence, and privilege, active sports, outdoors play, unsupervised excursions, even cross-dressing (Mitchell 135). Mitchell notes that references to sisters sharing their brothers' adventures and freedoms appear regularly in nineteenth-century girls' fiction and memoirs (105). Such girls, at puberty, faced the task of learning to submit to their playmates, a requirement discussed in popular nineteenth-century female guidance manuals by such authors as Sarah Stickney Ellis. Ellis sees brother-sister friendships as a unique training ground for future married life, and she instructs a sister to be self-sacrificing, provide her brother with home comforts, suit herself to his temper and habits, demonstrate sound moral influence, and even reprove his faults, provided always that "she stills esteems herself his inferior"

(*The Women of England* 222). Ellis admits this might be so daunting that a girl's "spirit sometimes sinks within her . . . with a feeling that the burden of life is too heavy to be borne" but denies men are to be blamed; rather, she sees the fault in a "foolish" female propensity to suffer slights (224).

Colonial authors agreed with Ellis. *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* contains firm socialisation messages in its presentation of Cis, who accepts she is naturally less intelligent and responsible than her brother Hal. In *The Redfords* Maud capitulates to the dictates of brother George, who forbids her or his mother to help construct the "warrie": "They must still be fine ladies. We boys must work for them, and they must just give orders" (24). Maud replies that she had only intended to be "head of the home department" in any case (24)—which is a lie, as she has earlier expressed keen desires for colonial carpentering and outdoors fun.

Less submissive is *Distant Homes'* Lucy, who sobs in outrage at being denied Tom's liberties. Tom comforts her with the slang she is forbidden to use ("Cheer up, old Luce, you're a capital fellow—for a girl!"), meanwhile thinking, "Girls are such soft-hearted things; I wish poor Luce were not one" (68). He is presented as in some confusion: affection for Lucy makes him desire her as his chum, yet he is being socialised to see her as the Other against whom his masculinity is defined.

Lucy's longing for equality with Tom and all males becomes clear after she and Tom rescue drowning Aps. When Tom says that Lucy's "presence of mind saved us both," Lucy is delighted and astonished: "She thought she had been so very foolish, and that she had done nothing; and here was Tom praising her" (107). From this moment she begins to hunger guiltily for male appreciation, and when the rescue is recounted to guests Lucy is reduced to tears by the one man who lauds her coolness: "Lucy's cheeks burnt, and her eyes filled; she had suddenly begun to see that no-one appreciated her share, except this stranger and Tom, and a sense of injustice stole over her" (112).

Eventually Lucy realises she must relinquish hopes of equality with males, as well as Tom's companionship and the vicariously-enjoyed liberties it brings. Tom himself appears embarrassed that the clinging of his "Siamese Twin" threatens to continue into puberty: "You're a regular donkey, Lucy. A fellow cannot stay at home, idle, because his sister wants him" (88). By the time Tom joins the Navy Lucy has been sufficiently disillusioned by his cooling friendship to face the situation quietly, and girl readers are likewise encouraged to expect sibling betrayal, relinquish their honorary freedoms, and submit to the yoke of womanhood.

When *Six Little New Zealanders'* Ngaire realises her beloved brother Rob is running away to seek his fortune she tries to "hold him back" (124), thus disguising the way she herself is held back. Jealous of Rob's male friendships ("I *hate* Alan McLennan"), and incensed at his refusal to share his plans with her, Ngaire resorts to clinging and entreaties to stay, which are answered in ambivalent Tom Graham style:

Rob looked uncertain and sorry, but when he spoke
his voice had the old reassuring gruffness.

"Don't be an idiot!" he said. (124)

Running away is a cowardly act but Ngaire refuses to castigate it "because he was Rob, and I loved him better than anyone else in the world" (125). However she retains the moral upper hand, and is later able to restore the ill and now penitent Rob to the family fold.

Joss and Juliet Vaughan are desperate to play down their feminine weaknesses and to be thought cool and courageous by their brothers. Juliet in particular lives "in mortal terror" of being denounced as "a fine lady" by her brothers, particularly Dick, who criticises her fragility unmercifully (*Across Two Seas* 35). She exerts herself to win appreciation, and is rewarded when, following an effort to rescue a drowning horse, foster-brother George praises her torn and bloodied hands: "To be called brave, and by George, that was pleasant!" (116). If, as Ellis suggests, sibling life is a practice for marriage, it should come as no surprise when George proposes to Juliet.

However the imbalance of power implicit in the brother-sister relationship is also sufficient to sour a romance, as is revealed in *Patricia-Pat*. Though Althea learns to restrain the “stormy impulses which had been natural to her in her spoiled early youth” (36), her mutinous streak against Ron’s “brotherly influence” dies hard; on one occasion she actually faints rather than submit to his orders (144). Small Pat is similarly unprepared to be submissive and sacrifice her share of pudding to cousin Laurie at dinner, although she agrees on the condition she receive the dish to scrape.

Girls in these texts must content themselves with the scrapings of sibling privilege. *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* goes even further by actively promoting the idea of sibling estrangement. This novel, written from a position of phallogentric dominance, scarcely mentions girls except by dismissive metonyms; we are told New Zealand boys have “contempt for skirts” (11). The sole girl character stands silently in her mother’s kitchen: “She was only Mac’s little sister Elsie, barely ten years old, and no stranger to them, but she was a girl. Cleanliness and frocked creatures were a fearsome terror to these timid boys” (49-50). Marginalised by the terms “only,” “but,” and “creature,” Elsie is barred from the bush boys’ games and conversation. Sisters exert a constraining, civilising influence which boys detest, and rightly so, avows Thomson, for “. . . a boy cannot even scold when frocks suddenly appear” (54).

Superior Girls and Marriageable Women

“In her intercourse with man, it is impossible but that woman should feel her own inferiority, and it is right that it should be so,” stated *The Women of England* (233). However from the last quarter of the nineteenth century girls’ fiction began to bow to social change by rejecting the physically fragile heroine and instilling in her place one with more “masculine” qualities such as courage, coolness, health, physical strength, talent, intellect, and self-reliance (Mitchell 131-32, 137, Rowbotham 33-35). Several texts examined here create heroines physically, mentally, morally, or spiritually (though never

economically⁵⁷) superior to the boys around them. Many withstand seasickness while their brothers succumb, such affinity with the tide suggesting a peculiarly feminine or moon-allied type of physical strength or health, considered invaluable in the pioneer woman who must populate and civilise a wilderness.

The portrayal of outstanding girl characters created dilemmas for authors, however, most particularly in terms of whom such heroines could wed. While a tomboy or female intellectual figure offered girl readers attractive alternative behavioural codes (Foster and Simons 6), unless the tomboy could be tamed or the genius humbled she would not suit the conventional romantic domestic novel plot and its expected dénouement, marriage. Much social and scientific debate about appropriate girls' activities arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Girls' sports were seen by some to be healthy, even necessary for creating fit mothers, whilst other experts accused robust girls of being hoydenish, unwomanly, and careless of damage to their reproductive organs. Many Victorians advocated education for girls, yet some scientists who feared that too much "brain-work" would shrivel the uterus issued warnings that intellectual, creative, or gifted young women were in danger of "unsexing" themselves. The androgyny of the New Woman was popularly seen as threatening sterility and doom to the British race (Nelson 54).

In several early New Zealand-set texts outstanding girls are either "rescued" from independence by romance and marriage, or—if truly superior to all the men in the text—firmly relegated to the parental home. Female readers are shown that if they too wish to marry they will have to relinquish their independence (or, at least, appear to). In *Across Two Seas* Juliet Vaughan, who burns with literary talent, is made to repent of desiring unfeminine fame and fortune. After her marriage Juliet declares that her publishers must wait, as "She must not get into disgrace for

⁵⁷ Apart from Lessie Lestrangle, who is not a heroine. Even the fortune of heiress Helenora Wylde in *The Greenstone Door* eventually stands at £20,000 less than that of her suitor Cedric.

neglecting her work in her new sphere, as she had done long ago in the old home” (187). Joss Vaughan, who combines womanly nurture and spirituality with outstanding physical skills, has no male superior so marriage is out of the question for her. Marquis suggests this text validates Joss’ “unruly out-of-door predilections . . . as the childish sign of an independent, practical spirit that supports colonial enterprise, rather than threatening it” but notes that despite Joss’ initiative the rewards of romance, home, and marriage are given to Juliet (62). This reinforces the notion that no man will marry a tomboy.

Margaret and Judy In *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* are both outstandingly athletic, intelligent, courageous girls, physically and morally superior to their weak brother and his weaker companion. Margaret, who never forgets to be ladylike and self-controlled, is rewarded with marriage to a banker (a man her superior in the only field she is not permitted to enter, public life) but rebellious Judy is punished with curtailment of her intellectual ambitions: “It really is rather hard that a person of my ambitions should have to sink them all and become just a domestic character, an ordinary girl at home, with little chance of ever being heard of outside her own family.” Her mother answers, “Notoriety does not always spell happiness . . . if you are fit for a larger life, there is no doubt that it will open for you.” Judy, wryly acknowledging that females are scarcely fit for the larger life, agrees it may—“With a chime of wedding-bells, perhaps” (291). Judy’s womanliness is thus rescued from the negative effects of too much brain-work, and although Margaret’s farm labour appears less likely to atrophy her reproductive organs, she too is saved from sterile independence through marriage.

The Malcolm girls of *Six Little New Zealanders* are also physically and morally superior to their brothers, whom the courageous girls must repeatedly rescue. The Uncles are sadly challenged to keep their froward nieces in line, and John’s perpetual references to them as “little women” is seen as “somewhat fatuous” (Rowbotham 37). The three elder sisters do eventually attempt to become ladylike and domesticated, however. Kathie in particular dreads earning her own

living and is happily rescued from the prospect by Dan's marriage proposal.

The single girls in Peacocke's novels of the 1910s start out as New Women but end in cosy domesticity. *Patricia-Pat*'s Althea learns to subdue her imperious, independent nature and admits she needs the protection of a domineering husband. Millicent Lynn of *My Friend Phil* is an anti-romantic whose cool, sharp-tongued behaviour is later retracted in a blaze of tears and swooning on the shoulder of her lover Lingard, a pompous type. Millicent battles ("mutinously" and "wilfully") against his orders and even makes Lingard admit he is "a bit of a brute," but it is Millicent who must repent and adopt a "new sweet shyness" (293). Squabbles are predicted for the couple, as "Sorrow and submission and humility were not meet cloaks for Millicent's gay courage and imperiousness" (302), yet Lingard (Lynn-guard) is destined to rescue Millicent from spinsterdom, however much she may resist.

Most paragons of superior girlhood are the productions of women's pens. However Henty too makes his *Maori and Settler* heroine physically strong; Marion can tramp and shoot as well as her brother. Henty, says Reynolds, granted his ideal woman a period of license prior to marriage in which to act out male power and freedoms (79). Yet though he "offers the woman active, imperial individuality, measured in the capacity to do violence" (Marquis 66) he appears unable to develop this and solves the problem by marrying her to Atherton, a man of such gargantuan physical proportions, wealth, and ego as to brook no denial of superiority. If this is a waste of colonial talent, Henty does not own it, but presents Marion as delighted with her matrimonial reward and hastening back to the British fine life with no memory of her earlier keenness to emigrate.

Only in *Under One Standard* is a superior, independent girl shown as being not saved by marriage, but as initiating an unconventional marriage. Being a submissive wife has not "saved" but rather endangered the health and happiness of Mary Godwin. Her cousin Margaret, in contrast, will copy her own mother, who rules her home and husband

with “soft but firm sway” (58). Margaret is described as “strong and tall and beautiful,” and declares, “I’m almost as strong as a man” (83). She proves this by controlling her father, her lover Folkes, her own wedding, and her future (leading Folkes into the bush to evangelise Maori). Margaret’s New Womanly strength and ambition is angelically modified by a self-sacrificial religious calling but is nonetheless infinitely appealing to the girl reader.

Domestic Professionalism: Palace or Prison?

Margaret is a unique heroine of early New Zealand-set children’s fiction, which generally adheres to the Victorian ideology of the restricted domestic feminine sphere. Even by the second decade of the twentieth century, when adolescent advice manuals had begun to praise all sorts of girls, business, sports-minded, or academic types, it was still the “home girl” who was valorised as the one most needed to build the Empire (Mitchell 175).⁵⁸

These texts invariably define the “feminine” in terms of domestic prowess, with heroines expected to possess both a natural inclination and a professional attitude towards home management. An extreme example is Rose in *Daddy Crip’s Waifs*, who is never happy unless cooking and cleaning for a man. When household skills are lacking, a recipe for humour as well as socialisation is in the making. The reader is expected to laugh at Lucy Graham’s hatred of the needle as much as sympathise with her, while the failings of *Six Little New Zealanders’* Kathie at governessing, sewing, and cooking make high comedy. However these failings are a genuine disappointment and terror to Kathie (who sees her marriage prospects jeopardised by them), and readers are warned, even as they snicker.

The Redford sisters take their domestic role seriously. When Maud marries, Madge asks if Mr Harkom will still make slap-jacks and damper for them. Lily replies, “indignantly,” “I should think not . . . of

⁵⁸ Mitchell quotes from Amy Barnard, *A Girl’s Book About Herself*. Cassell, London: 1912: 65.

course Maud would never allow him to do work like that. It was only because he was a bachelor that he did it when we first saw him" (*The Redfords* 106). One wonders why Harkom waited so long before proposing. Consequently, the younger girls are depressed rather than delighted when Maud leaves home, leaving fifteen-year-old Lily to take on the mantle of "brave young housewife" (127).

Banerjee believes that many Victorian daughters saw their expected household management role as an opportunity for active service bringing meaningful, purposeful rewards (113-116). A woman's social influence was not as limited as some have suggested, says Banerjee, for "the world outside was felt to depend for its stability and even productivity on the domestic base" (118). Nineteenth-century New Zealand also placed "intense emphasis" on women's roles in the domestic base as a means of freeing men for the work of colonial production (Dalziel 113). The female colonial experience worked to broaden the variety of tasks a middle-class woman could undertake and still be considered a lady; thus the Graham sisters of *Distant Homes* milk cows, feed poultry, dust, garden, and still consider themselves genteel.

Across Two Seas deviates even from this convention in its division of family domestic labours. Mrs Vaughan plans to let each of her children try all pioneering tasks before apportioning the chores. On the voyage she teaches children of both sexes to knit stockings, and in New Zealand it is Dick and Phil who scrub, bake, and mind the youngsters, while Joss and Betsy clear land, chop wood, and shoot game. Gilderdale comments that "Mrs Vaughan is an educated woman who rears her sons and daughters without any discrimination of role . . . Unlike most fictional settler women, Mrs Vaughan refuses to become overwhelmed by domesticity" (*Oxford History* 528).

Aylmer makes a tentative attempt to take *Distant Homes* in a similar direction (in one episode Tom's sisters inform him he has no excuse for not learning to sew), but abandons the theme early in the novel.

Clearly this literature did not preclude hard work for females: not one novel examined here advocates the creation of useless fine ladies of the “silver fork” variety,⁵⁹ the very of idea of which was anathema to the middle-class mentality producing these texts. As Rowbotham stresses, the Victorian middle-class emphasis on usefulness and professionalism in all areas of life was consciously applied to the divinely-appointed female vocation of domestic duties (19, 58, 222). What these texts do frown upon is the idea of middle-class girls entering paid “professions” outside the home, thus jeopardising their ability to be the family’s guardians of moral purity. Clearly, too, Victorian and Edwardian authors knew it would not do to present girls outstripping males in an already precarious labour market.

At the same time, texts for girls had to address the needs of the increasing number of spinsters who permeated society. Early New Zealand-set junior fiction takes a conservative view, suggesting that even though spinsters might need to support themselves it was not desirable that they should excel in careers (see Bratton, *The Impact* 148). If work and money are women’s and children’s keys to freedom (Paul 152) the heroines of these texts are seldom seen to desire them. While these girls might take on forms of house, farm, or charity work, their motives must never spring from selfish desires for money or pleasure. Juliet of *Across Two Seas* is castigated for privately scribbling poetry to the detriment of her household responsibilities, for she calls her task “working” and her goal is to earn money by it. The family have built Juliet a “bower” or summerhouse, in acknowledgement that girls of thirteen sometimes need privacy, but Mrs Vaughan warns that this room of one’s own “must not be a snare instead of a pleasure” (107). She brutally criticises Juliet’s verses and makes her write journals, letters, and children’s stories instead. Juliet humbly submits, subsuming her ambitions into ladylike benevolence by donating her earnings to charity. *Across Two Seas* thus

⁵⁹ Rowbotham discusses the influence of the “silver fork” or fashionable novel about the British aristocracy, popular in the first half of the nineteenth century. These novels

allows its heroine a limited measure of career success but only in those types of literary practice considered respectable for Victorian ladies⁶⁰ and only after she has eschewed personal ambition and any desire for economic power. More scholarly ambitions, like those of Judy Alford in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles*, are invariably squelched. Margaret Alford must work to pay her brother's debts, but her employment takes place on the family farm and she does not plan to keep her income for herself.

Peacocke's novels show working women as either vulgar lower-class servants or scandalous hussies like Lessie Lestrangle; her middle-class spinsters who must work are cast as miserable typists and piano teachers, the victims of family financial tragedy. Even governessing, long considered a respectable endeavour for the impoverished middle-class spinster, is presented in these texts as no desirable vocation but a fate dreaded even by heroines who need money, such as Beatrice Falconer, and Kathie Malcolm, who cried "in her bed at night because she couldn't find any children who wanted to be governessed, and because she was afraid she would" (*Six Little New Zealanders* 10-11). Both of these characters are unable to find positions, and thus their femininity and gentility are preserved. Even though by 1911 it had become usual for single women of all stations to enter paid employment, *In the Bell-Bird's Lair* contrasts exhausted city shopgirls who fall into faints and declines with healthy homely rural lasses, and praises the intelligence and academic achievements of rural schoolteacher Nellie Crawford only to establish her as a suitable wife for the local minister, whom she marries without a thought for her "brilliant scholastic career" (77).⁶¹

Lucy Graham, who longs for an exciting career like that of missionary Samuel Marsden, asks her mother, "How is it we never hear of women doing such things?" and is told: "Because it is the privilege, as well as the right of man, to show the way and act as pioneer. Besides, you

provided ambitious middle-class readers with a guide to upper-class character and manners and helped to create the new tradition of the middle-class lady (13-15).

⁶⁰ The same genres in which Lady Barker was successful. *Across Two Seas*, and the character of Juliet in particular, owe a debt to Barker's New Zealand-set works.

⁶¹ Married women were not employed as schoolteachers in New Zealand in 1911.

do not hear, it is true, of women, but almost every missionary is married, and you may be sure their wives do their share in the good work” (*Distant Homes* 74). This answer has been read as a feminist desire to tell the settlement story from a viewpoint other than masculinist (Roberts 9, 67). Its didactic intent is far from feminist, however. Mrs Graham explains that the wifely “share” involves teaching native women housework and mending—good work indeed, but far from the adventures Lucy desires. Girl readers who might sympathise with her are thus shown the futility of their dreams.

However although Lucy sees home life as a species of imprisonment, readers of these texts may have viewed the homestead as a haven, or a challenging sphere of influence. The idea of the home in the postcolonial novel can be attractive to women as well as dangerous for them (Lyon Clark 7). The domestic sphere contains both positive and negative elements, symbolising both the security and creativity of the womb as well as the incarceration of the madhouse or prison (Foster and Simons 29). Many of these novel’s heroines find happiness in an ardently desired marital home; others discover that good domestic management can procure them a little independence. Joss Vaughan and the Graham sisters run small perfumery, poultry, and dairy businesses from their parental homes, the type of cottage industries which were encouraged as a conservative answer to the surplus single woman question (Mackay and Thane 199).

It has been suggested that the “colonial context . . . provided demands and challenges that held a high degree of personal reward and satisfaction,” while migration itself provided a breaking-away from traditional enclosures, a safe “escape carried through in the bosom of the family” (Dalziel 115). Marquis has noted that the homestead is the spiritual and cultural centre of junior colonial novels, an emblem of order and comfort (61). Such an emblem may well sincerely fascinate. Banerjee, who differs from many critics in refusing to see all portrayals of domesticity in girls’ fiction as burials or all domestic novel endings as “closures,” suggests that for some strong-minded Victorian fiction

heroines home management or “marriage itself opens up new avenues in which to exercise their power” (140, 131).

Model Mothers

Certainly the most powerful females in these fictional homesteads are the mothers. Early New Zealand-set children’s texts emphasise marriage as not only a means to patriarchal safety and provision, but as a magic ceremony which creates those revered objects, colonial mothers. “As respects morals and manners,” stated emigration proponent Edward Gibbon Wakefield, “it is of little importance what colonial fathers are, in comparison, with what the mothers are” (qtd. in Dalziel 113⁶²). Although in Victorian girls’ fiction the ideology of motherhood can be a problematic one, “inextricably associated with [daughters’] search for autonomous selfhood” and combining a display of female power with a form of patriarchal repression (Foster and Simons 30), the texts examined here present mothers with a role daughters envy: they are colonial House Angels, hardworking, morally perfect, and deeply respected.

Mrs Renshaw of *Maori and Settler* is a model colonial mother, strong, “clear-headed and sensible”—more sensible, indeed, than her husband. Her children openly express greater affection and respect for her than for their father (14, 15). *Across Two Seas* revolves around the figure of “the Mother,” a “dauntless lady” looked upon by her eight children “as a very queen, among mothers, full of love and strength” (41, 3). Bachelor lads on the emigrant ship are drawn to her, and “the remembrance of the loving mother with her obedient, merry children round her, remained as good seed in many a reckless young heart to keep it from evil in the future” (17). In her iconic status and presentation Mrs Vaughan stands as an emblem not only of Queen Victoria, but of the Empire, with obedient colonies clustered around the cultural centre, Britain.

The mother’s beneficial influence is naturally assumed by domesticated daughters in these texts. To George Hallett, “Mrs Vaughan

⁶² The original source is E.G. Wakefield, *A View of the Art of Colonization*. London, 1849: 413.

seemed . . . the personification of all that was sweet and lovable in woman” and “sisterless, he had found Juliet and Joscelyn slip easily into an empty corner of his heart” (*Across Two Seas* 10). Tom Graham mercilessly teases Lucy but never dares mock Beatrice, for “there was something about Beatrice so like his mother” (*Distant Homes* 100). In *Doing and Daring* the mother role is not merely suggested but filled by a fourteen-year-old termed “little Mother Audrey” (153). Maud Redford’s younger siblings nickname her “old mother,” and Mauds acts as surrogate mamma to her younger siblings and to the stowaway Tim Napper, who adores her as a combination of teacher, adviser, Lady Bountiful, and Virgin Mary.

While the mothers and motherly elder-sisters of the mid- to late-Victorian texts are almost perfectly sweet, some later novels display cracks in the icing. The young Malcolms in *Six Little New Zealanders* run wild when their mother and tower of moral goodness is taken to England for a cure. Elder sister Kathie is no Maud Redford and fails miserably in all areas of maternal guidance. Peacocke’s mothers are not perfect: Mrs Stanley of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* is caring whilst allowing her son almost unlimited freedom (Peacocke frowns on excessive maternal control for boys), but rich Mrs Wyndam in *My Friend Phil* is a shallow socialite who is uninterested in her child, even when he lies near death. *Amongst the Maoris* and *The Boy Settler* utilise that standard device of children’s literature, the evil stepmother or guardian figure, to force the orphan heroes to search for better maternal models; these are usually found in kindly old housekeepers or idealised middle-class ladies, like the aptly-named Mrs Marvel, “one of those women who create an atmosphere of home wherever they go” (*The Boy Settler* 255). “Three Xmas Gifts” presents the innovative sight of a working-class mother, coarsened and worn through overwork but a survivor, with a “strong face” and “steadfast grey eyes” (8).

Marquis comments that the loving mothers in these texts are pakeha, and that Maori in settler tales appear motherless, a cultural distinction serving to point up the superiority of British civilisation (61).

Clearly, texts proposing the removal of Maori could not countenance the eradication of mothers or a feminised society. However some texts (*The Greenstone Door*, *Tiki's Trip to Town*, *Doing and Daring*) do present Maori mothers, but these are usually negative examples who fail as moral guides, domestic angels, or earners of their children's respect.

Those settler tales in the boys' adventure mould which are devoid of a mother figure often contain images of the idealised colonial woman, who may be cast in supporting roles but who is always glimpsed as strong, sensible, healthy, and resourceful (the business of these texts was, after all, to exhort the reader that empire-building was not a matter for the fainthearted of either sex). Reynolds suggests that Henty may have been more prepared than many of his colleagues to depict females as vigorous and plucky simply because he never admitted that boys experienced problems in becoming masculine (77). Certainly Henty paints female settlers as a self-sufficient lot whose ingenuity is called forth in unusual situations; in *Maori and Settler* two ladies cart a wounded man across country on a litter made from sticks, flax, and a calico petticoat. *The Boy Colonists* observes pioneer women setting grand examples of cheerful "roughing it" for the cadets, in particular the self-sufficient local midwife, "a stout woman of about fifty," courageous and self-controlled, who trudges for miles through atrocious conditions: ". . . a most excellent hearted woman . . . she never asked for anything to eat or drink till she had fully attended to both Mrs Galloway and the baby" (238-39).

Future Colonial Leaders: Sturdy Settler Boys

Of course boys as well as girls bore the yoke of Victorian middle-class gender expectations. Banerjee suggests that the nineteenth-century boy was required to participate in a rapidly changing society in ways girls were not, yet without any behavioural model available to him on a par with the domestic ideal handed down to girls (149-50). Reynolds concludes that boys were directed away from the world of emotions and affective relationships by texts supplying information and answers but suppressing introspection or problematic personal questions. Instead,

boys destined for social domination were provided with texts firmly grounded in the Lacanian Symbolic Order—such as the straightforward adventure story punctuated by imperialistic action (for instance, fighting savages), or the factual scientific or geographical text, which sought to impart dominance over the earth through intellectual knowledge. “The effect of constantly reinforcing this position was not only to define manliness, but to produce a reader who accepted the definition” (Reynolds 37-43, 53).

Colonial children’s fiction was deeply concerned with inspiring “manliness” in boy readers, though the exact definition of this quality varied between texts and throughout the period. At one end of the spectrum is cocksure Tom Graham, glorying in manly pioneer privileges; at the other end is silent Dicky of “Three Xmas Gifts,” “old beyond his years,” burdened rather than liberated by a settler’s responsibilities (8). In between lie the red-blooded heroes of Barker and Marryat who are encouraged to thrash animals but not human beings, and feminised boy protagonists who combine a joyful active life with Christian conversion and domesticity.

A man’s presence in fiction suggests the power of doing (Berger, et al 45-46). If this fiction prepares girls for private life, it also addresses the business of preparing boys to run the colony. Cedric in *The Greenstone Door* is a particular example, being poised to inherit a land which he will run with a mixture of assimilationist racial policies, scientific pastoralism, Western humanistic culture, immigration, trade, and planned urban development, all of which he has absorbed through his education by intellectual giants Purcell and Governor Grey. The majority of these texts however foreground the settler experience over political issues, and, in keeping with an anti-intellectual strain seen in late Victorian fiction (Reynolds 59), they emphasise adventures over education. Sydney Bartlett is no scholar, but he is courageous and manly, and saves Sefton Station from fire, armed with only a bucket, axe, and “indomitable pluck and perseverance” (172). The novel’s frontispiece shows him as a swashbuckling type pitting muscles and pluck against the

bush. Henty encouraged just these values, and provides Wilfrid Renshaw with his standard heroes' commodities: physical strength, courage, industry, common sense, and good luck, all of which combine to produce what Nelson terms "secular manliness" (106). Wilfrid is no academic; farming and soldiering in a raw environment hone his already fine qualities.

Manly heroes who enjoy exciting adventures while mastering their environment clearly function as role-models for the boy reader. An outstanding example is Louis Roden, though Barker is not content with allowing sensible, good-looking Louis—"well-grown, well-made, more healthy in his appearance than 'saps' are wont to be, and yet loving nothing on earth so well as his books" (9)—to be the sole influence on her young audience. Louis is a little too fond of a practical joke and the narrator warns her readers, "Mind you don't imitate him" (70). Louis' scrapes render him ". . . not a model boy. None of my boys are, I am sorry to say, and I do not hold him, or any one else, up as a pattern to be closely followed. I expect every boy for whom I write, to have enough character to strike out an original line for himself" (69).

Barker's narrator thus moralises while pretending not to, and then preaches a homily on the ideal boy: he would love cold water and hate a lie; not be silly or soft; have plenty of manias for outdoor pursuits; not be a dunce or greedy. "He should not be ashamed of loving and reverencing all that is good and holy and pure, but with nothing of the molly-coddle about him"; and despite his "fine, sweet temper" he should know how to fight (70). These are the sort of Arnoldian traits lauded in such books as *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, and they appear blended in Mr Gale, the manly runholder who takes Louis under his wing.

Ernest in *The Boy Colonists* blossoms into a near perfect example of the Arnoldian colonist. A studious "dark, shy, and reserved" boy, he arrives in the colony "ignorant of the merest trifles of every-day business life" (2, 3), and it appears at first that contemplative Ernest is to be contrasted to his detriment with his settler friend Harry, who is "fair, full of fun," and used to practical farm labour. But so eager is Ernest to

succeed that he excels at every challenge and Harry soon drops out of the narrative as Ernest's successful exploits multiply. It has been suggested that Elwell has not been quite truthful in recasting his farming adventures as a ripping Empire yarn:

The view of what we must regard as the ideal boy of the time, established in . . . books actually sets up a pattern which real life is required to match I am certainly prompted to believe that Elwell's interpretation of what went on during eight years in Otago, New Zealand, was influenced by "the rattling good yarn." (Mahy, "Attitudes to Childhood" 425)

Chivalrous Knights and Imperial Soldiers

Other literary ideals of manliness influenced the settler tale, particularly the tradition of courtly romance. Many of these texts reinforce the ideology of boys as gentlemen and defenders of ladies by endorsing a version of colonial Christian chivalry. As Marquis has noted, many colonial writers took seriously the advice in Charlotte Yonge's 1887 *What Books to Lend and What to Give*, which stated that boys' tales should teach respect for womanhood (55). Thus brothers in these novels gallantly mount watches and rout enemies to protect their mothers and sisters. Sydney Bartlett is likened to Sir Galahad, and readers are instructed to imitate his chivalry: "To be a gentleman was his chief object in life and a very noble one too. For to be a perfect gentleman means that one must be truthful, honest, honourable, gentle and merciful" (*The Boy Settler* 37).

Miniature chivalrous gentlemen people Peacocke's novels, which were written in an era where the winsome child had superseded the reasonable adult as the epitome of goodness (Avery, *Nineteenth Century Children* 170-79). Phil of *My Friend Phil* is pure, brave, honest, honourable, charming, and charitable—all this at just six years of age. Dicky of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* is a small "romantic knight," frank and honourable, patriotic, assisting those in trouble. Both these novels,

however, also take some gentle, humorous swipes at traditional male chivalry: Dicky's attempts at derring-do involve him in comical scrapes, while Phil's seemingly beautiful manners are frequently shown to be selfish at the core (he offers a lady his flowers simply because he is tired of holding them).

Qualities of a more robust and imperial "manliness" are lauded by colonial period authors who attempted to inspire boy readers to soldier for their Empire. *In the Grip of the Hawk* establishes colonial soldiers as role-models for boys. *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* presents rural New Zealand as the perfect crucible for forging patriotic he-boys, and its heroes' leisure hours are crammed with tough outdoors activities incorporating cracks on the head, bruises, mud baths, splinters, and such games as Kingy-seeny, which breeds "bull-dog soldiers" and "fits the bush-boys for that severe life of the pioneer" (115).

Certain types of violence, especially towards animals, are shown as unavoidable in colonial life for boys. Barker, Marryat, and Elwell quibble over whether to allow their heroes to delight in hunting and whipping animals, and compromise by qualifying such depictions with warnings against gratuitous violence to living creatures. Hunting scenes provided authors with an accepted definition of manliness and an analogous representation of the fitness of the dominant, imperial race over the uncivilised colony (MacKenzie, "Hunting" 147, 170). Wild bush chases like the pig-hunt in *Amongst the Maoris* mimic the excitement of bush warfare with natives, retaining combat and sanguinary elements whilst side-stepping issues of moral conscience. Mitchell notes that while sensationalist Victorian boys' fiction often depicted gratuitous violence against brigands, pirates, or "savages," "women authors, even when writing for boys, generally avoided these incidents" (132). A similar moral constraint applied to male authors of "classic" nineteenth-century boys' adventure fiction (see Bristow 47). Authors aware of the "family" audience drawn to a settler novel felt duty-bound to sanitise their narratives, and apart from Verne's *A Long Vacation*, none of these texts actually shows a young hero taking a human life.

Dry Eyes and “Manly” Emotions

“‘Activity’ and ‘doing’ is of the essence of boyhood,” states *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*: “. . . what reason else for those tireless muscles and legs with which they have been so bountifully endowed, and the buoyant spirits with which they have been filled?” (135). Activity, rather than feeling, is the hallmark of manliness in many texts. The earlier texts in particular agree on the importance of dry eyes and “manly” emotional self-control, even in very small boys, and some offer anger as a socially acceptable male alternative to grief. Aps Graham, lost in the bush, exhibits neither fear nor panic but cool reason. “Aps, though little more than four years old, had learned to be very manly and independent . . . and, imitating Tom in everything, had become quite a determined little fellow, and very seldom cried, except when he was angry” (*Distant Homes* 103). Tom Graham too cries with rage (and that only over his damaged possessions), but seldom sheds tears over affective relationships. Singing “Home, Sweet Home” around the piano in Otago proves overwhelming for Mrs Redford and her daughters but the Redford sons act “indignant” at the tears, while papa rules “This will never do” and controls himself (though only “after an effort,” *The Redfords* 78). *Across Two Seas*’ Mark Vaughan is expressionless and chides his siblings for mourning their dead horse. When nine-year-old Hal in *A Southern Cross Fairy-Tale* is pricked by thorns he declares, “I am a boy, you know, and boys don’t cry” (3). His pet parrot bites his fingers “dreadfully” but “I—no, I didn’t cry, I only howled” (4).

By the end of the century prayer begins to replace anger in texts as an acceptable male response to fear or grief. While Edwin and Cuthbert of *Doing and Daring* do occasionally approach tears in moments of crisis (for which their youth is pleaded as excuse), they know that praying—and action—are better. At no time do these manly British lads ever carry on like Maori Whero, with whom all the pakeha grow swiftly exasperated. “Stop that howling,” a colonist snaps at him: “Be a man, and help me” (193).

However an equal number of texts challenge the idea of the British male stiff upper lip. Most of these are written by women, and endorse a feminine ethic which becomes stronger as the period progresses. *Amongst the Maoris* examines the taboos surrounding male emotion, expressing an uneasy dialectic between a belief in the cathartic benefits of grief and the need to uphold a respectable front. The doctor who informs Jack his father is fatally injured tells him to “bear up like a man,” yet when Jack does break down he softens: “I don’t expect you not to cry; but I want you to try and bear up when you are with your father” (12, 14). Jack’s landlady encourages him to weep: “It ain’t right and it ain’t natural not to cry; it will do you a deal of good, my dear” (28). Marryat considers emotions natural in refined, artistic souls like Jack’s. However well-bred Jack is always able to hold his feelings in check when there is a public duty to be done.

The Boy Settler presents sensibility as the touchstone of character for both sexes. According to this text, loss, sorrow, and tears are useful for they make us better people: “. . . through suffering are most of us led to start and maintain the Heavenly quest” (42). Loss indeed brings out the best in some of this novel’s least likeable characters while sealing the fate of others. Heartless women like Winnie Stone neither faint nor weep at death. In contrast, one of Uncle James’ few gleams of humanity appears in his tears over his nephew’s orphaned state, and eight-year-old Sydney is deeply impressed: “He could forgive a great deal of coldness and apparent neglect for the sake of those tears” (13). Sydney himself finds relief in sobbing over old toys, unexpected kindnesses, and loved ones’ sickbeds. He even teaches Beatrice’s mother how to be womanly by sharing with her his secret therapy, though “she was too unaccustomed to indulge in the luxury of grief to weep for long” (48). Storer is aware that this challenges dearly-held societal codes, and has the red-blooded old-stager Parker inform Sydney that to be a success a fellow needs both a tough skin and a soft heart—but, he adds, for safety’s sake the word “heart” should not be mentioned: “It’s *tapu* as the Maoris say” (104). In

The Boy Settler genuine feeling wins out over society's taboos, though in a somewhat covert fashion.

Storer depicts rage not as a manly alternative to grief but as a natural facet of it. Sydney, disinherited by his uncle's marriage, subtly attacks James' small heirs by telling them a cruel fable about the boys' mother. This is out of character for Sydney, who usually sets such a wonderful example to younger boys. The oral fairy tale has long been analysed as a traditional genre for the exploration of fundamental psychological fears and desires, which is how Storer employs it. Unable to display his anger publicly Sydney sublimates it creatively, striking a blow at smaller, powerless versions of Uncle James. Storer goes on to show that the subsuming of both anger and grief beneath orthodox behaviour can be dangerous. When Sydney struggles to outwardly accept God's will yet subconsciously still rages at misfortune ("rebellious thoughts of God rose up within him," 41) he becomes depressed and even begins to hear voices. *The Boy Settler* advocates acknowledgement of emotion, a feminine value opposing older attitudes which Storer clearly saw as psychologically unhealthy.

Bedford develops a similar theme and makes real men in *Under One Standard* shed tears freely. Refined, sensitive David Copeland sobs at the sight of a dead sailor, although the narratorial explanation "No tragedy had touched his life before" (40) is untrue, as David has already lost both parents. He cries again at parting with his adored foster-sister Ruby. However he is embarrassed to see tough farmer Kempe weep over his wife's grave: ". . . it must be awful to feel like that, he thought, but ten times worse if any one noticed it" (136). The reader, on the other hand, is encouraged to simultaneously admire Kempe's romantic grief and feel relieved that pioneer life need not destroy men's human qualities.

The stoical efforts of Peacocke's small hero in *My Friend Phil* are equally calculated to generate reader sympathy. Phil doesn't "exactly cry" with toothache, "I only shut my teef and make a little noise—and—and there was a little water in my eyes—that's all" (14). When Phil does blub

on occasion (“None of the boys saw me, did they?” he asks, 192) he is forgiven for being only six years old and praised for weeping at the right things, such as human suffering. As in *The Boy Settler*, hardhearted females point up the wrong ways: in a display of “queer feminine perversity” (89) Olivia Mary sniffles over the fate of storybook villains and Millicent Lynn is considered unlovely in her dry-eyed coolness. These novels suggest that it is womanly to demonstrate emotional sensitivity, but if women fail at this, boys can teach them better.

The hero of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* moves in a wartime setting where emotions run high, and for all his assumed Boy Scout staunchness Dicky also exemplifies the feminine ethic by his sensitive matchmaking and succour of the downhearted. This natural little boy is not above tears for himself or for others, although he is ashamed at breaking down before a soldier.

“I—I—please excuse me, sir, but I c—couldn’t help it,” he gasped at last. “Course, I know soldiers nev—never cry, but—“

“Oh! don’t they?” cried the young man, with rather a sad laugh, “or if they don’t cry—they come pretty near it, as I did, lad before—before I volunteered for active services.” (134)

Laurie in *Patricia-Pat* is similarly “boyishly ashamed” of his tears, to the point of taking “a passionate relief in pummelling” schoolmates who notice them (113), but the reader is encouraged to be glad he still gulps, sniffs, and rubs his eyes at others’ misfortunes (not his own).

Glen’s *Six Little New Zealanders* lauds the feminine ethic in Rob who, ill, miserable, and repentant, might be ashamed to be seen weeping over his cumulative sins, but is relieved to hear that Ngaire loves him all the better for it. Similarly, Bruce in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* is characterised as a moral weakling whose repentant tears of illness and misery suggest he has the makings of a better man.

The Feminised, Peacable Hero

An emphasis on emotional sensitivity is just one facet of the feminised young male heroes who appear throughout this fiction. Other equally important factors are emphases on the heroes' acceptance of evangelical Christianity and qualities of patience, self-sacrifice, acceptance of domestic enclosure, and willingness to place high value on affective family relationships—all traditional female ideals. Nelson has discussed the "feminine ethic" in Victorian children's fiction, whereby boy characters are shown expressing emotions and striving to achieve conventional womanly ideals of gentleness, piety, and self-sacrifice. Her study reveals these qualities as most apparent in the mid-Victorian fictional boy hero, and suggests that by the turn of the century ideological emphasis had swung from the spiritualised or invalid boy in whose androgynous "manliness" lies the suspicion of the homosexual, to the robust, red-blooded Empire-builder. New Zealand-set juvenile fiction varies from this model in that it is mainly in turn-of-the-century texts that the brawny settler lad is joined by a more feminised hero, tender-hearted, pure, and pious. I say "joined by," rather than replaced, because the early twentieth century also saw the emergence of colonial texts celebrating sporty, fighting boys. Nelson agrees that the two models of manliness coexisted in Edwardian times (54).

The depiction of feminised settler boys suggests the children's fiction market was catering to increasing numbers of female authors and readers, and reflecting a low church influence emphasising qualities of piety, introspection, and gentleness. While girls in these texts are not permitted to become boys, boys may be permitted or required to adopt traditional female traits, sometimes at the expense of traditional male values such as independence. A gender debate is enacted here, with (principally) women writers modifying the patriarchal type.

Thus Rob in *Six Little New Zealanders* slinks home from his wild swagger's life ill and repentant, ready to adopt the feminine ethic of submission and domestication. His reconciliation with sister Ngaire

demonstrates relinquishment of the male ego and acceptance of feminine ideals, as Rob groans from his sickbed: “You don’t know how I am longing for a good old home row—how homesick I am for you all” (188). Rob kisses Ngaire, “And with that I understood all that he meant to say and couldn’t say—all the repentance and sorrow and the resolving of better things” (193). Rob also grows close to crippled Denise McLennan, their friendship symbolising Rob’s own adoption of the self-sacrifice and passivity which Denise is learning: “. . . they have each a battle to fight, and are fighting it bravely. Rob is not quite so sure of himself, not so ready to dispute any and every point. He is rapidly winning back all that he lost, and reinstating himself in the good graces of the uncles” (198). Rob’s battles have been translated from the outer world to the feminine spheres of the family and the individual conscience. Glen’s novel suggests a fantasy if not of female freedom then of male self-abnegation. Even rowdy, raging, Uncle John, who is dismayed by his nephews’ lack of manliness (Jock fears horses; Rob wants to study law, not farm the land) learns the importance of tenderness in affective relationships.

Like Rob Malcolm, Dick Vaughan of *Across Two Seas* is considered “unmanly” due to his lack of responsibility—he idles, grumbles, and larks. Bedridden after a characteristically reckless escapade, Dick comes to terms with his failings and rises from his sickbed having internalised the feminine restraint and self-sacrifice his sister Joss exemplifies. Brother Mark, who dominates the Vaughan family with “a little dictatorial air” which comes, we are told, from accepting heavy responsibilities “before his judgement was matured” (13), is especially hard upon Dick, and Dick’s wounding of Mark with a shotgun can be read as the fulfilment of unconscious feminine desire (the accident occurs when Dick is but half awake and thus receptive to what Lacan terms the unconscious, Imaginary, feminine state). Yet while Mrs Vaughan acknowledges Mark can be unfair, she capitulates to convention: “There must be a master in the bush dwelling, and by birthright that master should be Mark” (14). Dick comes to accept this

and emerges more patient, sober, dutiful, and spiritual, filled with a “manliness” of the androgynous form analysed by Nelson.

Cedric Tregarthen of *The Greenstone Door* is in some ways also a feminised or androgynous hero. He is incredibly studious (no Henty hero was ever a swot), idealistic, and romantic. Seldom able to deliver himself from life-threatening situations, he waits to be rescued by his foster-father or Maori friends. As Wilson has noted, he is even—very occasionally—cowardly (143). Cedric spends the New Zealand wars imprisoned or as a non-combative interpreter, which allows him to assume colonial leadership with his hands unspotted by blood and characterises him and the era he ushers in as dominated by feminine values of peace and culture rather than by masculine aggression.

Under One Standard's David Copeland resembles Cedric in his sensitivity and passionate intellectual ambitions. Unlike the typical storybook hero in his initial detestation of emigration and farming, David does learn to work hard, even uncovering a dormant talent for “carpentering.” His academic leanings are re-channelled through the colonial experience, during which he pegs away at his books by candlelight (to the derision of his cadet roommates), in the more spiritual direction of the missionary. However he matures into manliness not through traditional settler fiction deeds of derring-do such as mustering or fighting, but by humility and self-sacrifice in affective relationships, for instance assisting his overworked sister around the homestead, and adopting and relinquishing an abandoned child. It is by these acts of nurture that a “sense of responsibility made him feel like a man” (114). David is particularly tender towards women and appears one with them emotionally, as his sister notices: “You’ve grown quite a man, and yet you’ve got ways like a girl” (105). David, now fifteen, is not embarrassed by this praise at all. Although the standard mentioned in the novel’s title refers to Christian love, it could equally possibly refer to the feminine ethic, under which David matures into a domesticated version of “manliness.”

These texts' emphasis on pious androgynous manliness suggests the existence of a subversive discourse between evangelically-inspired women authors and the more muscular Christianity of male writers of imperialist boys' fiction, although as *The Greenstone Door* reveals this type of character is not restricted to women-authored fiction. The affective, sensitive boy hero also appears designed to cater to the requirements of the girl reader, incorporating her desire for male freedoms in a "safe"—that is, non-violent—hero.

Hero-Worship: Fathers, Brothers, Others

However appealing these feminine elements may have been for some boy readers, it is in hero-worship of an older man that the late Victorian boys' book locates its supreme fantasy (Nelson 61). Early New Zealand-set children's texts are well-supplied with appropriate male role-models. The heroes of the earliest novels are usually fathers or elder brothers, who set examples of physical fitness, intellectual prowess, protection, and care for their families, to be copied by young sons. *Distant Homes'* Aps imitates Tom "in everything," just as Tom imitates Captain Graham, from whom he is seldom parted. The Lee brothers of *Doing and Daring* take paternal imitation to its limits, temporarily "becoming" their father after he is felled by an accident. In this story where values of pluck and Herculean labours reign supreme, some of the feats the Lee boys accomplish seem rather incredible, especially when we remember that Cuthbert is only nine. Their inspiration is their father, who refuses to slash and burn like his neighbours, instead methodically chopping his trees and deeming the enormous task "jolly work indeed" (75). Cuthbert symbolically dons Mr Lee's coat, declaring, "I want to be father tonight," and launches with Edwin into a daring rescue, after which they dub themselves "new-made men" (146). Yet this is merely a rollicking adventure fantasy of heroism; soon Mr Lee regains his health and restores his sons to the security of the family home. Wilfrid Renshaw in *Maori and Settler* also temporarily "becomes" his father, and an altogether better, stronger, and more sensible version at that. However

once Renshaw Senior has been awakened by his colonial experience to a sense of manly duty Wilfrid hands back the reins with relief that he can now hero-worship his own father—"now his father's right hand, instead of having, as before, everything on his shoulders" (331).

Later novels replace the biological father with a more glamorous hero, unrelated to the boy protagonist, who has often been orphaned. The orphan scenario side-stepped the potential parent-child discord which Victorian children's fiction was often forced to ignore (Grylls 97-100). It provides its hero with increased opportunity for individualism and self-advancement, in which he is helped by a variety of surrogate or foster-fathers installed at strategic points throughout the narrative. Thus Sydney Bartlett is influenced by noble colonists Parker and Twopenny, who replace other father-figures Sydney rejects—ineptly prim Uncle James, overly grim Colonel Falconer, effete Uncle Herbert. Storer lauds "gentle men" but does not suggest for a moment that men should be wimps. Both James and Herbert are swayed by vicious wives, and "There is no calculating what folly a man will consent to, if he once places his neck under his wife's heel" (*The Boy Settler* 279). The ideal father is revealed in Parker, who achieves adventures, financial success, and domestic bliss. At the novel's end he has married a woman—a significantly quiet one—and is seen doting on his baby.

Images of baby-dandling men were satirised in mid-Victorian cartoons as national figures of fun; indeed, the sight is mocked in *The Boy Colonists* (Mahy, "Attitudes to Childhood" 425). Storer, writing forty years later, remodels the image of caring fatherhood as honourable and worthy of emulation. Bedford also idealises the tender father image and uses it to round her sterner settler characters. Brusque farmers Kempe, Jacob, and Abel all adore their daughters, thus modelling appropriate behaviour for orphaned David Copeland. He, however, is more influenced by the doughty bishops and old colonist Folkes, a moral giant and "stunning" muscular adventurer whom David trails like a faithful puppy. Like Parker, Folkes is not quite old enough to be the teenage boy's physical father, but acts as a bridge between two

generations, making the ideologies of the older generation accessible and attractive to the young hero.

Orphaned Jack Stanley in *Amongst the Maoris* also searches for paternal guidance. Jack is not devoid of worthy natural qualities, but his inclinations to pride, passion, and vengeance make him a fallible hero. Marryat cannot encourage her young readers to emulate Jack until he has been purged of these faults by the examples of his fellow colonists, particularly the settler Bradshaw, the missionary Grant, and the handsome young doctor Hope Bernard, who also spans the generations and makes wisdom and maturity palatable to a young reader.

The parson, schoolteacher, and surveyor in *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* are dashing colonists, whom Dinkums and Mac venerate in preference to their manly settler fathers. Thomson, perhaps sensitive to accusations of homosexuality in the hero-worship of these personable young men, insists that such relationships are good and healthy and need not be concealed. Wilfrid in *Maori and Settler* is drawn to heroic, gentlemanly Atherton, who at thirty-five is old enough—just—to be Wilfrid's father but is destined to become his brother-in-law. Atherton's influence is profound. A "tremendous man" of superior size, a natural leader, a learned botanist, a crack shot, and a breathtaking fighter, he makes a glamorous substitute for inept Mr Renshaw. Cedric in *The Greenstone Door* idolises his foster-father Purcell, and Governor Grey. Frank Howard in *Daddy Crip's Waifs* admires his pious foster-father, Daddy Crip, but since Daddy is too old and passive to provide a manly model this role is undertaken by brave Captain Garnet and the old colonist whaler, Evans.

In *My Friend Phil* the young protagonist rejects his silent, pathetic father in preference for the prosaic young solicitor Lingard, who is no muscular hero but who at least is caring and spends time with the child. Dicky of *Dicky, Knight-Errant* is the product of a happier marriage than Phil, but he idolises only men in uniform. His civilian uncle draws his contempt, while his relationship with his surveyor father is distant. When, in the novel's final pages, Mr Stanley expresses pride in Dicky

and kisses him, this is presented as quite an achievement for “caresses were rare between these two” (301). Fathers seldom feature in Peacocke’s novels; as Gilderdale has noted, they are either pleasant but busy or absent and irresponsible, and the upbringing of their sons devolves onto kindly strangers (*A Sea Change* 7). An exception is Patricia-Pat’s widower father Ron, who is a war hero and a prime mover in the narrative. I have discussed in Chapter Five how his virile assertiveness ultimately defeats the “morbidly sensitive” writer Seton, who also vies for the privilege of being Pat’s father but who is characterised as so feminine he becomes almost a surrogate mother (102).

Rebellious Lads

The flipside of hero-worship is the rebellion of a young man against parental or avuncular authority, and this stock motif of adolescent fiction is expressed in several texts. Sometimes this antagonism is punished: Rob Malcolm in *Six Little New Zealanders* nearly dies trying to liberate himself from his uncles, and a broken leg teaches Dick of *Across Two Seas* to submit to his brother Mark.

However other texts foster adolescent rebellion and independence, within certain limits, as a desirable manly trait. Wilfrid Renshaw is compelled to overstep his inept father, and openly criticises his parent’s foibles:

“I cannot understand a man having no opinion of his own about anything.”

“I do not think you ought to speak in that sort of way, Wil, about father.”

“Oh, that is all nonsense, Marion. One cannot be blind about a person even if he is one’s own father. Of course he is very kind and very indulgent, but it would be very much pleasanter if he were so because he wished to give us pleasure, instead of because it is the easiest thing to do. I would be downright pleased if sometimes when I

ask him for anything he would say positively I could not have it.” (*Maori and Settler* 15)

Mr Renshaw’s behaviour gives Wilfrid the right to challenge and replace him, though only of necessity and only temporarily.

George and Terence in *In the Grip of the Hawk* both run away from the careers planned by their fathers to seek adventure in the New Zealand wars. George leaves a note: “I am afraid you will say that I am making a crooked beginning; but, father, in this matter I can’t obey you. I can’t indeed” (10). Caught stowing away on a troop ship, George dares to defy Colonel Cranstoun himself, refuses to go home as the colonel thinks is his duty, escapes court martial, and proves himself right. Such flouting of authority would have been too shocking to appear in a children’s text of the early- and mid-Victorian periods. *In the Grip of the Hawk* shows New Zealand as a site for breaking with old ways yet, paradoxically, as a place for re-establishing traditions such as patriarchy. The novel ends with filial reconciliation and George’s father, delighted at his son’s colonial heroism, relents of forcing a commercial career upon him.

These Horsley and Henty protagonists who launch a token rebellion against an inept patriarchy or an unwanted career are correct, capable, priggish types, whose actions justify their judgement. The psychological status of Jack Stanley in *Amongst the Maoris* is more rounded. His rebellion springs from a combination of bereaved grief and the struggles of adolescence. Jack’s father has infantilised him: “Boys cannot understand money matters, and it is as well they should not” (2). His guardian Denby attempts to organise the boy’s future, much to his chagrin: “. . . it seemed to him strange that things should be supposed settled already for him without any reference to himself, for it does not take us long to realize our own independence, and Jack Stanley was beginning to feel his boyishness slipping away from him, and that he was already a man” (33-34). In fact, Jack’s childishness and impulsiveness are revealed in his colonial escapades, and it is only after he knuckles down to the duties of work and character-building that, Marryat suggests, he becomes a real man.

Authors, Intentions, and Stereotyping

Female authors such as Marryat had to take care how they instructed boys to behave. While male children's fiction authors such as Henty, Kingston, and Verne were themselves set up as public manly ideals in a process which has been described as "positive stereotyping" (Reynolds 65-66), female authors of texts read by boys, in contrast, were popularly publicised as embodying the pious, feminine, domestic qualities society wished to inculcate in girls.⁶³

Reynolds asks the inevitable question which arises in discussion of Victorian female authorship: were women authors forced to conform to a conventional market while privately nurturing feminist beliefs? Her study of girls' fiction writers L.T. Meade and Evelyn Everett-Green concludes that feminist or independently-minded female authors whose work reinforces traditional feminine ideals and undermines the attractions of New Womanhood may well have been influenced "by pragmatic considerations" and publishers' advice or have been unable to "afford to alienate publishers, parents, and educators" (115-118). Scant biographical information or publishers' records exist concerning many of the female authors in my survey, preventing me from undertaking similar research to Reynolds. However the material contained in the novels examined here suggests certain similarities, particularly in the way the female challenges against patriarchal authority are abruptly squelched.

Girls' books of this era produced a narcotic quality, says Reynolds, by arousing excitement and sympathy for a rebellious heroine which is then damped and dulled by a conventional resolution (133). Reformed rebellious heroines "created an audience which colluded in its own containment and a reader who reacted against change, adhering to—or even reverting to—her place in the home and a moral ambience based on feminine idealism" (138). Reynolds does not hear any dissenting or

⁶³ It is worth noting here that Hannah Storer's *The Boy Settler, or The Adventures of Sydney Bartlett* was marketed under the authorship of "H.C. Storer" as boys were

questioning voices in works of this period; feminist critics, such as Showalter and Gilbert and Gubar, have assumed nineteenth-century women writers attempted to reshape the male literary tradition as their own, but this effort, says Reynolds, was far removed from the creation of Victorian girls' fiction (128). Mitchell, in contrast, suggests that the subversive nature of girls' fiction arose from "tapping highly significant repressed material in the author's unconscious and perhaps communicating it directly to the reader's unconscious without either becoming aware of the transaction" (147). In such a reading even the subtlest tilts at social conventions assume significance for both author and reader.

Like many Victorian children's novels, most of the texts examined here both challenge and uphold contemporary values and ideals (see Foster and Simons 87, 108). Undoubtedly the manly ideal of the settler lad fired the imaginations of readers of both sexes. "It is important to recognize," observes Mitchell, "that girls used boys' fiction not only for 'reading' but also for mental and emotional food" (114). Marquis, emphasising that girls were not excluded from the force field of settler texts, suggests that though a woman seldom figures as a protagonist in this fiction, "She guarantees the value of the actions performed in the book, and often her agency opens up the possibility for straightforward identification for the girl reader" (62). I would suggest that girl readers are often consciously placed as protagonists in these texts, particularly those written by female authors. However Marquis' related point that girl characters in these novels are frequently given a certain agency which is then taken away (65), is certainly correct. Girls' fiction of the period adhered to rigidly defined codes of acceptability and while it may have paid lip service to market demands for exciting plots and rebellious or unconventional female characters, it actually served to confirm traditional values and conventional images of femininity (see Reynolds 97-98).

thought more likely to read books which might be written by a male. Similar reasoning prompted the marketing of the *Harry Potter* books by "J.K. Rowling."

Yet although these fictional heroines are forced eventually to subsume rowdy natures and career ambitions in marriage, their desires *have found a voice*, and readers are comforted by the tacit acknowledgement that their frustrations and fantasies are shared (see Reynolds 125⁶⁴). Audrey Lee knows she will never be a lad but, like the narrator of the ballad she sings, she is permitted to express a valid desire to participate in men's action.

Conversely, in the boys' adventure novels examined here, filled with feats of strength and daring, a feminine ethic of androgynous manliness is never completely absent (although it may at times be defeated or sidelined) and it is often emphasised. Even in the sturdily masculinist Edwardian *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*, where "femininity can be no more than an annoying intrusion" into a world of physical might, some values from the feminine evangelical tradition, such as duty, honesty, and sexual restraint, remain (see Nelson 118, 137). This is especially so in texts written from the 1890s onwards, when women, through suffragism and temperance campaigns, began to enjoy a stronger political presence. Again in this fiction, women's desires or values find a voice.

Examination of colonial period New Zealand-set children's novels reveals heroes who contribute to the creation of a standard of middle-class fictional masculinity which in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras diversified into two streams—the sternly masculinist and the feminised androgynous boy—and heroines who are permitted, even encouraged, to openly express a desire to act as "lads" rather than "ladies," though only for a time. These novels present a species of boyishness combining sound moral character with healthy physical vigour as an attractive goal for readers of both sexes. Many of them also embark upon a domestication of the male protagonists along with the female, emphasising the cultivation of homeliness, nurture, sensitivity, and piety for both genders.

⁶⁴ Reynolds refers to Sally Mitchell, "Sentiment and Suffering: Women's Recreational Reading in the 1860s," *Victorian Studies* Autumn 1977: 29.

Such messages address several instances of meaning in the service of power, including the assertion of patriarchal hegemonic power, of the moral power wielded by female authors and readers of an evangelistic persuasion, of the power of an older over a younger generation, and of middle-class values over those of other classes. It is clear that early New Zealand-set children's fiction was earnestly concerned with the creation of ideal colonial girls and boys.

CHAPTER SEVEN

“WE MUST NOT LET THE FLAG SINK”:

Constructing the Empire’s Children

“I wish you would send me home a Belgium baby. There must be plenty about now. Don’t bring a German one. It might grow up into a German and I want it to grow into a [sic] English. The English is the best of everybody—Laurie told me.” (Peacocke, Patricia-Pat 58)

So writes small Patricia-Pat to her father stationed at Flanders in 1917. Pat has been well versed in imperialism by her ten-year-old cousin, at whose school boys play “Civil War” games to avoid taking the part of a German. While such attitudes commonly appear in children’s fiction written during wartime, they also saturate most earlier New Zealand-set junior fiction, not necessarily in hatred of Germans (who appear in some pre-World War I texts as respected botanists or kindly traders) but in zealous praise of Englishness and the great imperial ideal.

The Child as Pioneer of a Better Britain

Central to these texts is the idea that a child in a new colony not only reflects but can also rejuvenate imperial Britishness, rescuing it from enervation through injections of purity and vigour of the type epitomised by the colony’s unpolluted landscape. New Zealand was seen in terms of “filiation,” as a child of Mother Britain (Prentice 68). This child is both dependent on the Mother and revitalises her in a process Belich terms “recolonisation”—the belief that Old Britain’s future greatness depended on a tight relationship with colonials who “were Britons too—indeed, in some respects better Britons than those of the homelands . . . Living standards, egalitarianism and some other public goods were typically superior in the neo-Britains than in the Old” (11-12).

Jacqueline Rose observes that nineteenth-century commentators, following the nature-education theories of Locke and Rousseau, came to see the child as accessor of a primitive, natural, true, or lost state, “something of a pioneer who restores these worlds to us, and gives them back to us with a facility or directness which ensures that our own relationship to them is, finally, safe” (9). This pioneering image is especially applicable to early New Zealand junior texts, in which the child hero is a pioneer or frontiersman of the physical British Empire and a scout, guide, or gateway to piety and innocence. As Rose notes, children’s writing has always had special links with “colonialism which identified the new world with the infantile state of man” (50). Jo-Ann Wallace refers to Ariès’ theories about a seventeenth-century “invention” of the state of childhood in her suggestion that the Western world had actually to “invent” the child—using such biblical and Romantic ideas as naturalness, innocence, faithfulness, and purity—“before it could think a specifically colonialist imperialism” (176). Settlers in these texts are youthful, energetic, pious, and pure. Colonial children’s literature depicts the ideal of an untrammelled, unspoiled child—or settler invented as child—operating within a wild yet pure landscape. He or she is possessor, dispenser, and rejuvenator of the blessings of British imperial civilisation.

Defining Imperialism

Definitions of this idea known as “British imperialism” are broad. From the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century the dominant British national ideology was comprised of a cluster of images in which empire, crown, “race,” the armed forces, and nation became synonymous (MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire* 7). These images and the idea they supported carried colossal social import. Brantlinger, applying Jameson’s theory of “the political perspective,” views imperialist discourse as informing all aspects of Victorian culture and society, thereby enabling political support for and physical expansion of the British empire (*Rule of Darkness* x, 10).

In literature, as in the wider society, imperial ideology did not remain static, but moved from a mid-nineteenth-century focus on evangelism and commercial and cultural imperialism to a more aggressive militarism, followed by an emphasis on enlightened, peaceful colonial administration (Richards, *Imperialism* 5-6). From the 1870s, when early Victorian confidence in the imperial mission was threatened by fears of foreign enemies and British cultural and racial decadence, adventure novels began to express what has been termed the New Imperialism, an “. . . ideological form to resolve contradictions in the lived experience of imperialism, usually by inscribing the male reader in tales of regenerative violence on the colonial frontier,” in which colonial settings were “actively constructed” as the preferred arena of contest (Robert Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Adventure* 1-3). The myth of racial and cultural rejuvenation from the empire’s outposts abounded in popular culture at this period, and became particularly useful to New Zealand in the period after 1890, when a peaceful, prosperous colonial existence ironically threatened degeneration to staunch physical and moral fibre (Yarwood 47).

This thesis has already discussed many ideological formations which could be loosely gathered together under the label “imperial,” such as middle-class commercial ethics, Protestant morals, focus on “manliness,” and themes of racial supremacy. This chapter will concentrate on more overt imperial references to patriotism, military might, and the British right to world domination, demonstrating how early New Zealand-set children’s fiction is replete with meaning in the service of an imperial power.

Writing the Empire: Children’s Fiction and the Robinsonade

Ideas of empire and emigration were inherently bound up with the nineteenth-century children’s publishing phenomenon.

Thousands of British subjects emigrated each year and many Victorian children shared their parents’ interest in the empire, expecting to work there when they left school,

in trade, the armed forces, or as public servants. . . . this interest in exotic places overseas, offering the possibility of exciting adventure within the hegemony of British imperialism, encouraged boys and girls to read adventure stories describing similar events in which the heroes and (less often) the heroines were young people like themselves. (Butts and Briggs 149)

The adventure story, the domestic tale, and their synthesis the domestic adventure made unequalled tools for propagandising the imperial mission. The enormously popular Henty, whose tales sold over 25,000,000 copies, claimed that he taught British imperial history to untold numbers of boys and that the armed forces' officer ranks were filled with his readers (Arnold Preface, 21, 38, 63). Arnold notes a particular colonial emphasis: "In Canada, Australia, New Zealand and possibly even more in the United States there are more people proportionately than in Britain who could say, as an Australian correspondent, 'We were brought up on [Henty]'" (175). Through authors such as Henty the literary tastes of not only the middle-class boy but the nineteenth-century working-class male were retrained by Victorian educationalists from the sensational but morally unimproving "penny dreadfuls" to the higher ideals carried by the colonial adventure story, a movement not merely moral but political:

Given the extension of the franchise in 1867 and the marked rise in the working-class population, the boy was now identified as a political danger to the nation. He had to be trained not only to read the right things, to turn his mind away from the debasing effects of penny fiction, but he had also to meet the demands of becoming a responsible citizen. Imperialism made the boy into an aggrandized subject—British born and bred—with the future of the world lying upon his shoulders. (Bristow 19)

Martin Green terms adventure tales, which "formed the light reading of Englishmen for two hundred years and more after *Robinson*

Crusoe,” the “energizing myth of English imperialism” (qtd. in Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 11). *Robinson Crusoe*, an adult novel swiftly appropriated by children, was the archetypal imperialistic work, and the popular impact of this text, with its themes of self-help, piety, Providence, and dominion over a new land and native peoples, was far-reaching. Of its myriad imitations, Bristow comments:

. . . there is no obvious reason for the Robinsonade in itself, except for the fact that the island story is located in a “world” where colonial discourse can justify its existence. . . . it has, simply as a piece of fiction, no self-sustaining value independent from colonialism—the history shaping its moral purpose. (99)

Unsurprisingly, Robinsonade themes inform many early New Zealand-set junior novels. Authors such as Aylmer, Marryat, and Stredder gently satirise heroes who expect to have merry outdoor adventures like *Crusoe* and must instead face bush dangers. Other characters, like Tom and Lucy of *Distant Homes* and the Gwynne boys in *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles*, play at making *Crusoe*-like huts and gardens, symbolically re-enacting colonialism. The little Gwynnes even give their small bush settlement a name (Nikau Kainga or Gwynneville), and the idea of nomination, implying appropriation, is a crucial element of the imperialist text. This is made clear in Verne’s *A Long Vacation*, in which a group of boys from Auckland’s Chairman School find themselves alone on a desert isle. Verne treats the self-help theme with some irony (his castaways are told, “next time you read anything you want to imitate in that book by Wyss,⁶⁵ take it with a grain of salt,” 100) but his boys are eager to name and rule “their” island. “Who are you?” ask shipwrecked pirates. “Colonists of Chairman Island,” the lads reply. However, there is much dispute as to which world power this colony should belong. Verne, with due consideration to his own nationality, characterises the young French leader Briant as fairer and nobler than the

⁶⁵ Johann Wyss’ popular juvenile *Crusoe* story, *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1818).

opposing English faction, yet it is the American boy Gordon who is both peacekeeper and driving force behind the settlement. Gordon is ambivalent about bestowing New Zealand names upon various parts of the island, as he “had no real home in New Zealand. . . . He had grown up with tales of pioneering, and the idea of founding a colony in an uninhabited island had nothing frightening for him. He regarded it as an opportunity in line with his own interests and abilities” (67).

At the story’s end Gordon is the only boy “sorry to leave what he felt was his island” (204). The departure follows a battle for the colony, in which the boys, led by British sailor Evans, depopulate the island of undesirable low-class pirates. As Barthes comments, the basic activity in a Verne book is appropriation; his heroes are “true owners of the world” (65-66). “[Verne] expressed to the full the clear-eyed optimism about progress and European Man’s central role in the world typical of high nineteenth century culture” (Clute 630). In *A Long Vacation* noble young Europeans subdue landscape, natives, and riff-raff to establish imperial rule forever, creating a boys’ adventure story which reflected the actual imperial spirit suffusing the globe.

Teaching the Empire: Imperial School Texts

The values of popular junior fiction and imperial education walked hand in hand, and Victorian and Edwardian educators lost little time in incorporating children’s “classics” with colonialist settings such as *Treasure Island* and *Peter Pan* into the elementary school English curriculum.

Children’s adventure fiction constituted one of three major models of nineteenth-century educational knowledge, the other two being youth organisations like the Boys’ Brigade and Boy Scouts and the education system itself (Bristow 21). With the areas of school, leisure reading, and spare time recreation thus replete with imperial propaganda, little room was left for dissenting opinions to form in the minds of the young. Between 1870-1900 narratives celebrating empire and techniques for teaching reading and writing in elementary schools coalesced, with

the Jarrold's *Empire Readers* series, published in the 1880s and adopted by the London School Board, setting a trend for imitators (Bristow 20). Malone notes that after the 1877 Education Act banned religion from schools a substitute was found in "the deliberate indoctrination of children with a pattern of concepts about the British Empire," a function which found expression in the *New Zealand School Journal*, established in 1907 (12).

The Little Maories (1906) is one of *The Empire's Children* series of Chambers' Narrative Readers, intended "to give sketches of youthful life in some of the great countries which constitute our world-wide Empire" (qtd. by Gilderdale, *A Sea Change* 58). Its simple plot showcases values of British supremacy and what has been termed the "white man's burden"—a perceived imperial duty to intervene in the affairs of indigenous peoples, ostensibly for their own good (see Ballara 111-19, 174-75). Orphaned Maori siblings run away from their pa, live wild, and are rescued by local landowner Mr Seaton. They cannot speak English but know all about imperial greatness. Epuni tells Amohia that Mr Seaton

". . . is sure to be a Briton, and you know that we belong to the British now. I have heard the old chief talking to the British in the wharré. He knows all about them. He said once, when I was listening, that the British never allow people to be robbed and beaten without cause, and they will help those who are not strong enough to help themselves." (25-26)

The text's overriding theme of imperial paternalism is summarised in this idea that the British Empire exists to protect those unable to take care of themselves. Such protection connotes ownership: "we belong to the British." The passage also indicates that Britons may legitimately allow robbing and beating, if there is "cause"—at least, an imperialist cause. The indigene is here symbolised as a helpless child protected by the lordly Briton/Britain, as nature in need of law. Amohia points out that a pakeha sundowner has mistreated them. Yes, there are bad men in every

nation, replies Epuni vaguely . . . but gentlemanly Mr Seaton is good and so is British law. Imperial law and militaristic might are glorified as Seaton sends the riff-raff off, smarting from a volley of buckshot.

To his wife's query about the orphans' fate, Seaton replies: "Oh, we'll find them a corner somewhere, if it's only to keep up their faith in us British. We must not let the flag sink" (35). Seaton does not adopt or educate the children but foists them onto his married Maori shepherd, where they learn farm labour fitted to their race and social station. "You see, it was just as I said about the British," says Epuni—they are "very kind" (35). Finnemore's text is written in a confident tone, oblivious to ironies which strike the modern reader. Inside the covers are discussion questions, such as, "Why, do you think, did Mr Seaton feel that he must take special care of the two little Maories?"

Flags, Colours, Hurrahs

Colonial New Zealand-set novels did not have to be didactic school readers to fly the imperial flag. Many decorate text and illustrations with colours and hurrahs. *Distant Homes* closes on a stirring spectacle of Christchurch resplendent with preparations for the New Zealand Wars, all depicted as jolly fairground entertainment: "Prizes were shot for everywhere; ladies presented colours and bugles; the old men and women looked proudly at their sons marching past in their pretty dresses, and the children ran after them, shouting and hurraing in true English style" (197). The reference to juvenile enthusiasm is deliberate, not that the young Grahams need much to fire their loyalty. Tom, now a naval recruit, has spent most of the novel whistling "The Red, White, and Blue"; Aps longs to be a drummer or bugler. *Patricia-Pat*, set over fifty years later, gives a Great War volunteer a grand send-off in a flag-decorated barn, the whole affair organised by patriotic Farmer Barshott, "a genial, ruddy-faced man, so exactly like Punch's pictures of John Bull that one instinctively looked for the Union Jack waistcoat" (227). Military sartorial glories are emphasised in several texts, especially handsome blue jackets. "Poor Tom indeed," Captain Graham reproves

Lucy; “if you could only see him in his blue jacket, you would be quite content to part with him for a while” (*Distant Homes* 159). A colonial militia uniform turns young Sydney Bartlett into a man proud of himself as well as the power he represents: “. . . this is rather becoming . . . I would like to get my photograph taken and send it to Beatrice and Patty” (*The Boy Settler* 193-94). The English flag, symbol of immense ideological power, is joyously waved in *Among the Cannibals* by Captain Grant and his men from “their” desert island, and is contrasted with the Maori “national” flag of revolt, a poor “strip of stuff” (86). *Distant Homes*’ local chief demonstrates his assimilated status by revering the right, British, flags and flying “in imitation of the English manner” these objects of “great pride,” the envy of surrounding tribes (169).

The Imperial Perspective: Illustrations and Images

Such attractive images are vital to propaganda, and thus publishers’ illustration choices were strategically selected, irrespective of the extent to which authors actually advocated imperialism. The settling Vaughans eventually fly a Union Jack in their garden, but admiration of empire is endorsed less by *Across Two Seas*’ text than by its coloured spine illustration of a uniformed teenager proudly hoisting a flag. A lamp hangs above, radiating, presumably, the light of a Christian civilising empire. Ringer notes of an edition of *The Little Maories*:

The claims and demands of Empire are symbolized by the cover . . . A settler holds the Union Jack proudly aloft. He is standing on a crag outlined against the rising sun. He wears high boots, breeches, a bush shirt, a slouch hat. In his free hand he holds a rifle. He is ready for a scrap with anyone who disputes his claims. (*Young Emigrants* 29)

Some texts published around the time of the First World War actually question the military ethos, but are packaged as patriotic propaganda. *Under One Standard*’s frontispiece shows the young heroes cheering and waving at a man-of-war bearing a new Governor, even though the novel criticises imperial might as ineffectual and upholds

instead a “standard” of Christian pacifism. *Dicky, Knight-Errant* critiques chivalry and militarism, yet its boards are resplendent with flags, staves, and uniformed lads. It is the *immediate impression* of a myth which counts, which is why illustrations and images carry such ideological power: “. . . it does not matter if one is later allowed to see through the myth, its action is assumed to be stronger than the rational explanations which may later belie it. This means that the reading of the myth is exhausted at one stroke” (Barthes 130).

The Military Ethos and Gentleman Soldiers

Attractive images mask the bloodshed and appropriation which was imperial militarism’s real business, and even this could be endorsed in these texts as beneficial and needful. Killing was “an important and clearly unavoidable part of the [imperial] tradition” (Dixon *Catching Them Young* 277). The military ethos, reclothed in the nineteenth-century garb of Christianity and chivalry which redeemed it from its earlier associations with brutality and licentiousness, was absolutely central to imperial myths and rituals.

Thus *Distant Homes*’ Maori chief not only flies British flags, he endorses British military violence: “It is well, brother . . . let the Queen conquer; let the red coat take the bad [Maori] man and kill him” (191). *In the Grip of the Hawk* stresses that Maori are killed by British soldiers who act under divine authority, punishing the indigene for his uncivilised folly and sin.

Small wars such as those fought in New Zealand were popularly viewed as good training grounds for soldiers and a means of building that character upon which the empire depended (Richards, “With Henty” 81-82). How often in these tales is the emigrating paterfamilias or charismatic old identity cast as a military hero, often a Crimean veteran,⁶⁶ and how often are his sons destined to follow in his footsteps.

⁶⁶ In Chapter 2 of *Empire Boys* Bristow discusses the importance of the Crimean War in formulating imperial ideology.

In these novels the colonial life and aspects of militarism are woven together. Tom Graham longs to live in a tent “like soldiers” and fire at everything, principally “caffirs” (*Distant Homes* 4-5); he soon joins the Navy. Dick Redford also longs to shoot, not only game but “a savage or two occasionally by way of a change” (*The Redfords* 22). Most boy heroes in these texts fight in the New Zealand Wars or at least train for the colonial militia, and by behaving nobly prove themselves gentlemen and justify imperial warfare. New Zealand soldiers, Sydney Bartlett realises, are a mixed bag of classes and nationalities, ranging from “some fine fellows” (like himself) and “decent, well-meaning men” to a “few who were distinctly undesirable, the flotsam and jetsam of civilized society” (*The Boy Settler* 191). The presence of Sydney and his ilk raises the colonial army’s tone to a more genteel status. In *The Boy Settler* the respected officers are born middle-class or above, while those risen from the ranks are disliked bullies. Early New Zealand-set children’s literature sees a military career as a gentlemanly calling conferring added nobility to superior boys: “Very fine boy, sir, remarkably fine boy! Don’t bury him among the sheep; let him put on the blue jacket, and serve his Queen” (*Distant Homes* 65).

As the position of military men in this fiction is seen to be justified by gentlemanly qualities of nobility, chivalry, loyalty, and fair play, most authors are very careful to cast no slur upon the armed forces but to bolster the military image with ideals of holy callings and youthful sacrifice, values of *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. Noble sailors abound, such as Captain Garnet in *Daddy Crip’s Waifs*, who exemplifies “the bold, straightforward English sailor whom all admire and love” (47). He fights a Maori chief unarmed—and wins—before dying a sacrificial death following attack from behind (which suggests that the indigene, unlike the English, cannot be trusted to fight fair). Equally stirring is the sailor in *Under One Standard* who makes a “fine . . . finish to his life” by rescuing a child, leaving an “abiding mark upon [David’s] character . . . that of a man who was ready to sacrifice his life for another” (41). These worthy mariners are designed to outshine drunken, rascally, mutinous

sailors with foul mouths and fouler deeds, who are commonly punished with violent deaths or abandonment on a desert isle. Soldiers are frequently presented as noble too. *The Greenstone Door* absolves British troops of knowingly firing on unarmed Maori by attributing Puhī-Huia's death to a random shot (372). Storer, apparently basing Sydney Bartlett's military career on an actual soldier's diary,⁶⁷ excuses the odd bit of shirking or pilfering from pa as boyish pranks; once Parihaka is reached this larking turns to serious hopes of glory and willingness to die in the Queen's service.

Criticism and Doubt: An Imperfect Militarism?

Some notable exceptions to this praise of noble British armed forces appear in certain texts. Henty believed and taught imperialist dogma but openly criticised military actions or individual conduct which he felt fell below high British standards (Richards, "With Henty" 73). His English gentlemen officers in *Maori and Settler* are inherently more noble than their non-white foes, unswervingly dedicated to duty. Those members of the colonial militia who shirk their duties and are killed get what they deserve, Henty suggests. At certain junctures, however, Henty's intent is ambiguous. He recounts the kangaroo court set up to try a settler accused of killing a Maori; the man on "trial" is ordered to serve on his own jury, which finds "that the deceased was shot by some person unknown, and served him right" (325). Whether Henty intends to question or praise the incident is not clear, although it—like the kangaroo court the Bromparts engineer to execute Purcell in *The Greenstone Door*—is hardly in keeping with lofty ideals of British justice. Odder still is the *Flying Scud's* furtive departure from Rio after Atherton kills two bandits on shore. Is such behaviour manly, just, true, and British? Henty

⁶⁷ Sydney keeps a journal of army life, of which the narrator appends "a few extracts," adding, "They may be a little fragmentary, but they are true to life" (197). The extracts do read like first-hand experience: they are not particularly literary in style, they do not flow well with the rest of the story, and their voice is not convincingly Sydney's.

worked at a speed and using methods⁶⁸ which made oversights unavoidable, and in *Maori and Settler* he perhaps invests readers with more power to question imperial dilemmas than he may have intended.

Peacocke can be equally patriotic towards and critical of the military establishment, though rather than disapproving a let-down in standards she casts doubt on the necessity for military violence at all, reflecting the pacifistic stance of many women around the time of the Great War (Mackay and Thane 219-220). Althea in *Patricia-Pat* complains that war proves man is “not advanced one inch from his condition of primeval savagery, the age of tooth and claw, only he is infinitely more terrible now, because Science has come to the aid of savagery” (121). The novel explores alternative forms of heroism, such as the passive suffering of Seton, whose health prevents him from enlisting. Yet Seton is insufficiently go-ahead to win Althea; she marries heroic airman Ronald Rae, who recalls her to the greatness of the imperial mission:

“It is criminally idiotic that so many good, useful lives should be flung away and sacrificed simply for— for—”

“For an idea!” he broke in softly, “an ideal, a tradition, the tradition of British honour, which does not break its word not [sic] tear up its treaties.” (120-21)

Ronald mocks Althea’s call for a revolution of peace and emphasises that war “brings out the best in the average and ordinary male” (121). The novel’s Flanders chapter certainly praises the troops’ cheerfulness (“the finest thing in the world, the most enviable and one of the most heroic,” 54), and Ronald’s heroism in a dogfight, yet this last is presented as an uncomfortable combination of orgiastic ferocity and schoolboy pranksterism. It would surely shock Althea to see her hero roar with laughter over dropped bombs and strafed “broad Teutonic faces” (63).

⁶⁸ He dictated to an amanuensis, who also inserted passages from history books into the narrative. Henty did not see his texts until the proofs arrived from the printer (Dunae 20-21).

A gradual disenchantment with the idea of empire developed in New Zealand writing in the early twentieth century, as has been noted by Malone in his investigation of imperial content in the *New Zealand School Journal* (Yarwood v). After the demise of the first rank of imperialist writers such as Henty, imperialism in children's fiction came to assume two guises: that of wishful thinking or private dreams of glory, and that of parody (Leeson 100). Some authors combined these apparently contradictory views: one example is Kipling's *Stalky and Co.* (1889); another is Peacocke's *Dicky, Knight-Errant*, an ironical 1916 account of a Boy Scout besotted with soldiering. The Scout Movement was conceived by Lord Baden-Powell as a training-ground for British soldiers; a 1909 *Punch* cartoon captioned "OUR YOUNGEST LINE OF DEFENCE" depicts the movement's ideals with a Boy Scout reassuring Mrs Britannia, "Fear not, Grandma; no danger can befall you now" (Bristow frontispiece⁶⁹). Yet Dicky is wild to be a hero *now* and, dissatisfied with the "too peaceable" Scouts and chafing under his mother's attentions, he embarks on a comical round of quixotic derring-do which queries and parodies imperial military manliness even as it applauds it.

The novel's adult soldiers do, however, journey off towards real heroism, though in contrast to the later *Patricia-Pat* their exploits are performed offstage. Peacocke's depictions of mobilising armed forces and returning wounded (with Scouts soberly lining the route) express an ambivalent public mood. She criticises the Defence Department for withholding information from relatives of the wounded, and the language with which she describes troop mobilisation is redolent not of pride and glory but of confusion, conflagration, and disease: ". . . to be in the seething heart of things . . . to see khaki colour break out like an intermittent rash in the city streets . . ." (85); ". . . a running fire of cheers swept the packed masses . . ." (134).

⁶⁹ *Punch* 1 Sept. 1909: 147.

Chapter II (“Hero Worship”) encapsulates Peacocke’s equivocal attitude to the imperial officer. The visit of his English uncle Captain Darley, a “hero of romance” with a Boer War V.C., sends Dicky into transports of delight. He decorates the guest room with a portrait of Lord Roberts and spreads a Union Jack over the bed. However Darley seems embarrassed by his medal, refuses to discuss the war, is uninterested in viewing Dicky’s Scout uniform, thinks Roberts’ likeness “vile,” and commits the ultimate sacrilege by *sitting down on the flag*. Dicky is devastated, and his mother must persuade Darley to restore Dicky’s faith in the empire by regaling him and his chums with war-stories, facts suitably embellished.

War in Peacocke’s fiction is necessary but evil. *Dicky, Knight-Errant*’s narrator comments: “. . . it was hard to credit that such a ghastly mistake as war was permitted to disfigure so beautiful a world” (91). Yet the text takes care to nurture Dicky’s innocent patriotism. His comical paranoia about German spies is proved correct and he captures a gang of them, in the process sacrificing his greatest treasure, a new bicycle. He gets away with imprisoning and tormenting his Uncle Laurie on suspicion of also being a spy. (Presumably Laurie deserves punishment anyway for his inability to remember all three verses of “God Save the King,” which he dares to term “a rotten jingle,” 121, 116). In *Patricia-Pat and Dicky, Knight-Errant* Peacocke offers glimpses into the seesawing emotions of a colony at war, disproving Ringer’s comment that “New Zealand children’s writers as a whole failed to come to terms with the war. Its realities were largely ignored” (*Young Emigrants* 35).

Although some early New Zealand children’s writers questioned the military ethos, to what extent readers may have acknowledged the critique is debatable. It has been suggested that criticism of institutions in works of popular mass-culture actually serves to confer the fixedness of those institutions:

To instil into the Established Order the complacent portrayal of its drawbacks has nowadays become a paradoxical but incontrovertible means of exalting it.

. . . . It is a kind of homeopathy: one cures doubts about the Church or the Army by the very ills of the Church and the Army.

. . . . A little “confessed” evil saves one from acknowledging a lot of hidden evil. (Barthes 41-42)

An acknowledged criticism of the military ethos becomes a kind of anti-conquest strategy; by this light a contemporary reader would have left the texts described above believing that the imperial war machine performs a necessary and beneficial, if regrettably tragic, function.

Peaceful Imperialism

Other texts place greater emphasis on the pax Britannica, a rational rather than a muscular imperialism. British law is considered necessary to redeem natives, whose existence in a state of fallen nature is seen as brutish. This is demonstrated in the way Seaton’s British justice rescues Epuni and Amohia after evildoers infiltrate their Edenic bush home in *The Little Maories*. Many texts emphasise Biblical law in order to validate the secular laws of Christian Britain. *Under One Standard* advocates spiritual rather than military British law, and while this peaceable “feminising” influence is perhaps unsurprising in an evangelistic work by a female author, the idea also appears in male-authored texts. Kingston’s pacifistic settlers may bluster about England’s military superiority but they seldom fire a shot. Satchell anxiously keeps Cedric Tregarthen’s hands unstained by grubby colonial wars, although he does see “[Christian] love and [imperial] law [as] . . . opposite sides of one coin” (Wilson 157).

Throughout this fiction the missionary stands as an important symbol of imperial authority and self-sacrifice. He dies, or at least eclipses his own desires, in nobly spreading the Word for the Empire. *Among the Cannibals* recounts, in graphic detail, an historical missionary martyrdom. *Across Two Seas*’ Dick Vaughan finds adventure as a short-lived South Seas missionary. David and Folkes of *Under One Standard* make personal sacrifices to become missionaries (in particular, they

forfeit the commercial benefits of farming). The missionaries, and settler women, strove to spread the particularly British brand of Christianity which rendered colonisation the “civilising mission” and, as has been demonstrated in Chapter Five, texts such as *Waihoura* use this theme to support the expropriation of Maori land and the replacement of Maori culture with British culture, including law. Conversion, we remember, requires Waihoura to look and act like a “pakeha girl.”

Imperial Sacrifices: Ordinary Lives

Of course, a hero need not be a soldier or missionary to live and die splendidly for Britain; the surveyors, shepherds, teachers, and other workers in this fiction are agents of empire too. The peaceful wing of the empire is won by the sacrifice of ordinary souls, such as Charlie in “The Grave by the Rakaia.” This young English surveyor loses his way at night, breaks both legs, and dies in paroxysms of agony and thirst. Charlie’s expiration—freezing with arms outstretched, necessitating an unusually wide grave—not only satisfies boy readers’ desires for gruesome detail. His crucifixion posture is highly symbolic, connoting innocent sacrifice and salvation in the performance of one’s duty to the empire—surveying, exploring, serving the Queen and the great imperial ideal. Barker takes care not to dissuade her readers from emigration by adding that this death occurred in the colony’s “early days” (defined as “A few years ago,” 273). Such sacrifices have paved young immigrants’ ways. Similarly, *Among the Cannibals* notes that geographical exploration of the colony has produced many heroes who “paid for their adventurous passion with their lives” (63). Yarwood, speaking of the “veneration of the dead in [early] New Zealand writing” comments:

Moral power transcends the limitations of earthly life and links the historical self-sacrifice of empire builders with that of their inheritors and fellow practitioners. The dead, like the historical past itself, become powerful formative and sustaining influences in the unfolding pattern of Empire. (64)

Not that living for the empire is any less holy than dying for it. The majority of these texts aim their message at the healthy young reader with energy to channel in appropriate imperial directions, and unfold a colonial myth in which go-ahead heroes eschew boring office careers and emigrate to a land of adventure and opportunity. Even settler characters who become merchants and accountants experience plenty of fresh air, not to mention stirring participation in colonial wars. *Among the Cannibals* makes even prosaic railway work sound glorious:

The English . . . think but little of war! . . . They even make railways under the fire of New Zealanders. . . . the Drury Railway and the Mere-Mere Railway cut through the principal points occupied by the insurgents. I would wager that the engine drivers fired at them from the locomotives. (59)

Empire Girls: Biological Imperialism

Throughout these depictions of imperialism myths of manliness reign supreme. While Queen Victoria “was clearly the most important symbol of imperial rule,” it has been suggested that “the potency invested in imperialism was not entirely compatible with her gender,” and thus she was frequently replaced with a manly imperial image of violent physicality and authority (Bristow 140). Bratton, in “British Imperialism,” has discussed how masculinist imperial values pull against the late Victorian/ Edwardian ideal of womanhood, and how the role of females in the imperial ethos was generally seen as biological and supportive: women were to produce healthy children who rejuvenated the British race, and promote the spirituality and domestic harmony so inspirational to settlers and soldiers. Strength, health, and responsibility were therefore desired in female colonists (and indeed, in all British females as the science of eugenics led to the call for outstanding mothers of an exemplary race), though not at the expense of domesticity.

The girls at home “were both the warriors’ prize and the embodied ideal,” suggests Bratton (“British Imperialism” 196; see also

Mackay and Thane 192-196), and the immigrant girl in early New Zealand-set junior fiction exemplifies this supportive role. Accomplished and pious, she is the harbinger of middle-class culture's sweetness and light. The female "civilising mission" was presumed to protect male pioneers' British national heritage and high cultural values against the threatening effects of an alien environment and the potentially degrading presence of other nationalities (Mackay and Thane 203). Thus in episodes where Graham and Redford women sing angelically around pianos in their bush homes, and Mrs Vaughan soothes the savage breasts of Maori intruders by accompanying herself on guitar to "Home, Sweet Home," these texts present womanly accomplishment as a bastion of imperialism and middle-class respectability, and as a saving grace comparable to religion (Gunn 134, Tosh 33).

If a fleshly martyrdom was to be the goal of the imperial boy, an imperial girl's duty was to sacrifice her loved ones and her own desires to the empire. When Tom Graham departs for the navy his mother and sisters bear up, dry-eyed; afterwards Mrs Graham faints with emotion. Her maid praises her fortitude: "He's a brave boy, an' ye did yer duty. Sure many a mother's sheddin' bitther tears at this minute for the same" (*Distant Homes* 151). The separation is a peculiar hardship for Lucy Graham, and Captain Graham, who would himself have preferred his son at home, must remind her that "Tom has much better work to do—he has to fight for the honour of his country and his Queen" (159).

The fate of the nonprofessional soldier is even more dubious, and Maggie in *Patricia-Pat* is "torn between grief and pride" when her sweetheart "'lists": "I do try to look at it that way an' think of him coming home with the flags flying and the band playing, but all the time I can't help but see the poor dead corpisses lying thick on the bloody ground, and perhaps Rufe will be—" (202). As an Indian Army Officer's wife, Mrs Falconer in *The Boy Settler* must endure distasteful separation from her children, "the glitter and glare and homelessness of Indian life," and an untimely death from tropical fever (34).

Although they do not go to war themselves, many of these texts' heroines are presented as having a "fighting spirit," for they are the daughters of military men (Bratton, "British Imperialism" 200). *Patricia-Pat*'s Althea admits that ". . . though I rail against war, I often long to be a man to take my part in it. What heroes they are—all heroes!" (121). Imperial girls' fighting spirit leads them not onto the battlefield but to the cheerful relinquishment of comforts, the tackling of chores, the consigning of loved ones to the armed forces, and the provision of domestic, spiritual, and cultural sustenance to all. Althea sublimates her energy into knitting balaclavas, thus growing in womanliness while supporting the war effort. In these texts girls' struggles and sacrifices take place in their "empire" in microcosm—the home (Mackay and Thane 196).

Few girls' literature authors coped satisfactorily with the "clash of ideological designs" springing from "the conflicting imperatives of Englishness and femininity," but one who did was Bessie Marchant, who makes her assertive heroines physically subdue their environments, thus reflecting both the theme of the home domain as a "girl's own kingdom" and the idea of British world domination (Bratton "British Imperialism" 201-05). In *A Girl of the Fortunate Isles* Margaret wrests a farm out of a Waitemata "location," tames a wild river, tramps through bush, and performs feats of physical daring, but she also keeps the home fires burning, nurses her invalid mother, and saves the reputation of a wayward brother, thus proving her worth as a physically fit yet thoroughly nurturing daughter of the empire.

Imperial Rewards

Although these fictional examples lay a heavy burden of physical, moral, and cultural responsibility upon young shoulders they promise substantial imperial rewards, from the financial profits of "goodly and pleasant" lands to physical fitness and moral achievements won by work and duty. The rags-to-riches themes of many texts suggest that whatever evils may have infiltrated England's overcrowded cities, the empire's

colonies have held the keys to health and prosperity all along, and not just for the likes of convict Daddy Crip and chimney sweep Tim Napper. "It is not possible to explain in a letter how sound and wholesome the [Canterbury Settlement] scheme is . . . there will probably be a splendid opening for young men," writes Colonel Townshend to Barker's emigrant boy (8-9). The healthy climate which authors lustily praise is presented as a cure-all for the British masses, promising physical, moral, and spiritual revitalisation. Many texts, notably *The Greenstone Door*, *Distant Homes*, *The Boy Settler*, and *Across Two Seas*, contain paeans to colonial pastoralism, with English grasses, orchards, and farms shown displacing the bush and English-style hamlets filled with hearty yeomen springing up throughout the colonial wilderness. Themes of healthy, happy children learning self-sufficiency à la Rousseau reappear in the novels. Barker makes her child characters true exponents of the Rousseauist nature gospel, "absolutely appalling" in their independence and robust health ("My Emigrant Boy" 43). Lady Harcourt of *Fairyland in New Zealand* wants her son to ". . . grow up strong and self-reliant, like the young New Zealanders. She thought that children could not be anything but good, growing up amongst such beautiful surroundings" (5).

Dutiful Children: Rejuvenating the Centre

The child, these works suggest, is not only father of the man but saviour of the empire. As the nineteenth century drew to a close the antipodes became popularly seen as an arena for the physical and moral salvation of an imperialism teetering on the brink of destruction. Many works examined here critique Old Great Britain's imperial efficacy and suggest a colonial antidote, even while maintaining a belief in England as the cultural mother or centre of civilisation. The image of the colony as a dutiful child of the Empire, "in terms of an anthropomorphised mother-child 'relationship'," has been deeply ingrained in New Zealand writers from earliest colonial times (Yarwood ii). Running throughout many of these texts is the idea of filial duty in colonial redemption, by settlers

who return home triumphant or who disseminate their revitalising views through literature.

The need for a return to purer imperial ideals and behaviour is evidenced in the carousing drunks who so disgust Ted Strangemuir:

He tried to remonstrate with them, but to no
purpose. . . .

“He thinks we’re ‘shickered.’ But we’re not. We’re
B-Britishers, ain’t we, mates?” Singing—

“Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves,
For Britons never, never shall be slaves.”

(*In the Bell-Bird’s Lair* 34)

It is unclear whether these “boys” are New Zealand-born, or new chums. The terms “colonial” and “British” were used interchangeably at this time (see Mackay and Thane 209-210), but “shickered” is a New Zealand/Australian colloquialism and “mates” provides another clue. Either way, a dearly-held nationalism is being travestied and reformation is necessary, which in this utopian text occurs via the hard work and spiritual peace of bush settlement. Ted is determined that the squalor and slums of London will never be repeated in New Zealand, and writes books, with titles like *Social Problems of a New Country*, which have worldwide influence. “God’s own Country” (111) has the chance for a fresh start, and can even teach Great Britain a thing or two; soon one of Ted’s emigrant disciples has returned home and is preaching his message in the British House of Lords.

Heroes in these texts are never allowed to forget for a moment their responsibilities to improve themselves and, by extension, the empire. An example is Jack Stanley being quizzed by a Maori as to whether he is a Christian: “‘Of course I am,’ answered Jack, without thinking of how much was meant by his answer. ‘I am an Englishman, you know’” (*Amongst the Maoris* 145). Representing England entails more than Jack realises, and he is hardly a flawless example for the simple savages to copy. Only after he has been improved by his colonial experience can Jack return to England a revitalised imperial ambassador.

Cedric Tregarthen sees himself as the Maorilander of the future, upholding the values inherited from his imperial fathers: Western education, culture, Christianity, technology, military might. Cedric's first sight of a British industrial marvel—an emigrant ship—fires him with patriotic zeal of hyperbolic proportions:

. . . an object of such majesty and beauty that I . . . had eyes only for this. . . . one of those wondrous floating palaces which were bringing the people of my race in hundreds and thousands to the land of the Maori. How great and glorious were the people who could fashion and control an object so transcendent! Tears of pride and delight came into my eyes as I watched her. (*The Greenstone Door* 148)

A closer inspection revealing the vessel's dark, noisome interior barely dampens Cedric's ardour, since he finds the immigrants cheerful, healthy, and raring to prosper. Cedric himself refuses to leave New Zealand, demonstrating that if Britain is to be reinvigorated, it must be done in the New World. Not all pakeha in this novel are cultured and noble, but those who are are very superior indeed, and Satchell suggests it is up to these noblest Maorilanders to construct, if not Grey's fanciful ideal of the Wonder City of the world, then a new and worthier Britain.

In *Doing and Daring* old identities praise the colony as a source of moral rejuvenation: "New Zealand beats old England hollow . . . If that is going a little too far, she is the gem of the Southern Ocean" (68). This 1899 novel states repeatedly that a colonist is the best kind of chum, and that traits of helpfulness and duty are better "learned in our far-off corner of the Southern Ocean" than almost anywhere else. *The Bush Boys of New Zealand* (1905) is strident in its jingoistic emphasis on New Zealand boys as superior Britons, and these sorts of cries became noisier in turn-of-the-century children's literature, in proportion to contemporary anxiety about the moral and physical fitness of Britain's defence force. Dinkums and Mac are "Britons and brothers" who "love the dear Home-land" and whose "proudest ambition is to show [them]selves worthy scions of the

grand old stock” (Preface). “Have not our ‘boys’ done so in South Africa, where they bore themselves indeed as Britons staunch and true?”

questions Thomson, going on to milk the recent war for every drop of patriotism: “Who among Britishers felt no stirring of the heart-blood at the record of their deeds, and what man or boy of the Empire can fail to be keenly interested in the rugged Bush-home in which so many of these brave lads were reared?” (Preface). It is well known that an embarrassing number of English Boer War recruits were rejected as physically unfit.⁷⁰

The bush boys’ exploits suggest the Scout movement, which was intended, via outdoor exercise and lessons of resourcefulness and patriotism, to improve the military fitness of lower-middle- and working-class lads.

Thomson’s text also speaks to those boys of higher social echelons who, destined for the military officer and colonial administrator class, received their imperial training at British public schools. Leeson has documented how British school stories, such as Thomas Hughes’ *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* and its dozens of imitations, were used to win acceptance for imperial land acquisition (91). Colonial New Zealand children’s fiction is all but devoid of the school story, yet certain texts, including *A Long Vacation*, *Dicky, Knight-Errant*, and *The Bush Boys of New Zealand*, approach the genre in spirit, being schoolboy tales which laud the public school sparring spirit. Dinkums and Mac’s rural environment thus also functions as not only a Scout camp but a school sportsfield, and the boys’ favourite sport, the imperial-sounding Kingy-Seeny, is a “game indeed to breed bull-dog soldiers . . . Britain owes a great deal to just such games,” the reader is told (115). Emphasis on such tough imperial manliness is a reaction against perceived British effetism of the time, notes Robert Dixon in his reading of Australian “ripping yarns of Empire.” Dixon observes how Australian pre-1914 fiction contrasts the decadent British gentleman with the capable manly colonial, “reflecting new imperialist assumptions about the declining moral fibre

⁷⁰ Of 11,000 Manchester men who volunteered for the military in 1899, 8,000 were rejected (Bristow 182).

of the British and the vigour of the ‘Coming Man’” (“The Unfinished Commonwealth” 136). Thomson’s brawny parson and schoolmaster are clearly “Coming Men” whom Dinkums and Mac are eager to emulate.

The Boy Settler of 1907 concentrates in a more evangelical sense on superior colonial values. An Australian is, we are told, “a thundering good sort” (331); New Zealanders are dutiful, helpful, and jolly. The novel’s apostrophe to settlers reads like biblical oratory:

All honour to you, ye patient, kindly bushmen, who will spend a whole day of extreme discomfort in order to pay the last tribute of respect to a fellow-settler, or ride all night long to bring a doctor to a sick woman. Ye are the true empire-builders when older races falter over there beyond the seas. Ye face the dangers and hardships of life, and bring into practice the primitive virtues of patient endurance and brotherly love. (224)

Here is an explicit statement that England is outmoded and morally faltering, ineffectual if not actually degenerate, and certainly lacking in practical virtue. The praise of “primitive virtues” suggests ideological connections between the purity of childhood, virgin colonial land, and pristine moral values. Imperial righteousness, believes Storer, is fading but can flourish again in the colonies. When Sydney Bartlett disembarks at New Plymouth a farmer slaps his back with a benediction of “Wish you good luck in a new country, old man”: “The greeting was rough and unconventional, but it was one of those touches which makes the whole world kin, and Sydney went on his way cheered by the friendly touch” (184-85).

This theme of the holy touch making the whole world kin is taken up in *Under One Standard*, where Bedford (who was probably aware of Storer’s work) uses it for her novel’s subtitle and its central image of evangelistic renewal. “New Zealand’s the land for me,” emphasises Jacob Godwin, “you see men as they are, simple and sincere; they’ll give you of their best and ask for nothing back” (195).

These works indicate that a subordinate yet vitally necessary relationship must exist between the colony and Britain. Readers of the 1917 *Six Little New Zealanders* are instructed, first of all, to “TAKE AN ATLAS” and see where the story is set: “Tucked away down in the south, separated from Australia and America . . . three funny little crinkly islands . . . Very far from the rest of the world” (7). This description of New Zealand as peripheral exemplifies how postcolonial writing by a gentrified settler elite incorporated marginal elements of colonial experience which potentially threatened the centre, England, into a cultural hegemony by which the margin attempted to become “more English than the English” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 4, 5). Yet while the language may be that of marginalisation, *Six Little New Zealanders* suggests that the Dominion has a genuine contribution to make to the empire, by contrasting a vigorous youthful colonial generation against stale old English mores. The text presents the colony as a natural, refreshing child at the same time as it establishes England as the geographical, ideological, cultural, and technological centre (Mrs Malcolm, we remember, must go there to be cured of a grave illness).

Educating the Young Colonist

Most texts keenly instructed young readers to regard Britain as the centre. This is apparent in the glimpses these novels provide of colonial schooling. Educational ideologies in these works agree with the popular “nature” theories of Locke and Rousseau, who valued a practical outdoors education over book-learning. In these texts schools, governesses, and tutors are invariably left behind in England and a healthy New Zealand bush life makes a splendid substitute for books and slates, though fictional children are not allowed to postpone lessons indefinitely. Rousseau himself advocated the introduction of more formal education in the teen years; more to the point, imperialistic advances had to be maintained and increased by a populace with the right sort of education. Thus Mrs Vaughan makes Dick read history at nights, no matter how tired he may be, while George Hallett studies languages for

trade purposes. Most settler children abandon a traditional, classical public-school education for practical subjects like geography, natural sciences, modern languages, and accountancy. Although Cedric of *The Greenstone Door* is a genius excelling at Greek, Latin, and philosophy, he takes bookkeeping as well as tutoring positions, and speaks modern as well as ancient languages. David of *Under One Standard* justifies his exhausting nights with the classics by his empire-building missionary calling.

These novels praise the self-educated (later, Board School-educated) settler, healthy in mind and body and with his nose glued to an atlas designed to reinforce imperial greatness. Bristow has noted the increasing importance, from the late 1870s, of the teaching of “nationality” via geography as a state school subject, to be followed by history around 1900 (19). Captain Graham and his son spend the first chapters of *Distant Homes* poring over encyclopaedia and atlases; *The Boy Settler*’s Parker is defined by his pocket-atlas and travel literature; David Copeland whiles away the emigrant passage studying geography and Maori. In *Doing and Daring* Whero is introduced studying a geography book with coloured maps, an imperialist production presenting to him the authorised perspective of his country. His tribe begs him to attend the “Ingarangi” boarding-school, conveniently concurring with the colonists’ own belief that a Western education for Maori boys is the only way to eradicate violent opposition to themselves: “We have overcome the cannibal among them; and as we draw their young lads down to our schools, it will never revive” (65). In *Dicky, Knight-Errant* the Board School-educated hero gains knowledge of native bush not through firsthand experience (though he lives an easy walk from the forest) but through the pages of “our School Journal” (33), just as Ngaire in *Six Little New Zealanders* defines herself via her atlas.

Colonial Misgivings

Authors thus acknowledge and privilege imperial Britain as the centre, even as some express doubts or misgivings about the British

imperial way. Elements of apologia for imperial practices such as war or appropriation appear frequently in this fiction. Jack Stanley mumbles shamefaced acknowledgements that England is a “bullying race” even as *Amongst the Maoris* attempts to absolve its heroes from culpability in imperial killing or takeovers by stressing social Darwinist and biological determinist theories. *The Greenstone Door* castigates pakeha who supply arms to Maori even while suggesting that land wars are nothing more than a convulsion of nature brought about by a changed ecosystem. Texts incorporating the Robinsonade myth justify land acquisition and violence against indigenes with ideas that such land is empty and unused, or inhabited only by subhumans devoid of property rights (Ballara 33).

Other texts suggest—or perhaps fear that—British emigrants of a less reputable kind may import corruptions to the colonies, making the business of colonial rejuvenation of the empire difficult or impossible. *The Greenstone Door*’s Purcell, who arrives in a fit of misanthropy and disillusionment at the corruptions of Europe, finds little to impress him in Auckland. He scoffs at the “lumber” and “institutions” colonists drag with them (193). That the worst immigrants will never be improved by their country of adoption is evidenced in the Bromparts, cowardly criminal upstarts. Satchell’s text remains uneasily aware that while noble Maorilanders like Cedric, Purcell, and Grey offer most to the colony, it is imperial riff-raff such as the Bromparts who have the most to gain; while sensitive Cedric struggles to recover from a breakdown induced by the horrors of land battles, the Bromparts have profited from both sides of the wars.

Three Xmas Gifts sounds a note of true hopelessness for the colonial development of imperial progress, showing civilisation carrying a legacy of misery which pastoral colonial beauty can assuage but not eradicate. The theme is most obvious in “The Kauri-Tree,” where a kauri growing over millennia is periodically updated by “the Spirit of the Times” on the progress of civilisation, and told that imperial atrocities, though “terrible,” are necessary, “Because this is the birth of a new era . . . that must be ushered in by blood. I don’t know why. I do not even know

whether it is to be better than those great times I remember. I am only an agent, clearing the path of Progress, and I bring with me what is ordained” (88). Enter the nineteenth century, and technological progress spells the kauri’s demise: “Civilisation had found it at last, and had brought it—to the dust” (92).

Two ideological formations are apparent here. The first is the wholly eurocentric historical perspective; no Pacific immigrants are mentioned, although the Spirit visits the kauri around the period of their arrival. The second is a view of Western progress and civilisation as destructive yet determined, part of some incomprehensible divine plan to which the noble kauri tree (perhaps as a stand-in for indigenous people) must be a martyr. The tragic tone is unusual in a 1901 children’s story; none of the jingoism found in much juvenile literature of the period following the 1897 Jubilee Year is evident here. At best Bright presents an equivocal attitude to imperial progress: it brings suffering yet it is somehow a divinely-appointed or determined “great good” (135).

England’s Mission

Children’s authors of this era saw themselves entrusted with the important task of educating a society to come; the future of “England’s Mission,” as Gladstone in 1878 termed imperialism, could not be left to chance (Bristow 22). These texts clearly uphold a British imperial hegemony, though they are not simply sites for the elaboration of a monolithic model of imperial behaviour but also places for contestation, particularly from women writers concerned with challenging or domesticating the Henty model of militaristic manliness. By the second decade of the twentieth century New Zealand children’s texts both supported New Zealand’s participation in the empire and had begun to explore a nascent sense of nationalism.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to comment on whether the inculcation of imperialist values was beneficial or detrimental to young readers and to the wider society. I do however offer an observation from historian Gertrude Himmelfarb:

. . . not to say that the impulse behind the imperial enterprise is always honorable, or that its consequences, whatever the impulse, are always desirable. But to impugn the motives of all imperialists is surely to have a crabbed view of both the past and the present . . . while the missionary or proselytizing temperament is to be suspected and feared, it is also, on occasion, to be esteemed. (267)

Authors of early New Zealand-set children's works encouraged the adoption of values they esteemed. They wrote with lofty ideals, creating utopian visions of a worthy and pleasant world which might be created if the next generation would believe and live according to the cluster of ideas known as British imperialism.

CONCLUSION

“ . . . meaning . . . emerges as part of a complex interconnection of language, society, and a variety of discourses.” (Stephens, Language and Ideology in Children’s Fiction 115)

The New Zealand-set children’s fiction published between 1862 and 1917 is in many ways diverse. From the emigrant novel to the fairy tale fantasy, the boys’ adventure story to the temperance tract, this body of fiction assumes a variety of dress. Yet, as the foregoing chapters have demonstrated, ideologically significant tropes and themes are recycled throughout these texts, increasing in cultural significance with each reference and creating a specific discourse or semiotic field which can be readily identified as “early New Zealand-set children’s fiction.” Even names, both Maori and pakeha, are reused; settlers named Lucy, Margaret, Beatrice, Tom, Jack, George, Dick, and Harry appear at least twice each throughout this body of fiction, functioning as examples of the stock British immigrant, just as the Maori name Tairoa functions as a representative of the subhuman Other. While authors of the genre undoubtedly read similar works which had been published to date (we know that Kingston borrowed freely from Aylmer) they need not have plagiarised one another directly in order to express the views, values, and concerns of their day. These attitudes circulated as part of the vast cultural force Jameson terms the “political unconscious.”

This corpus of fiction thus presents striking instances of intertextuality, defined as “The production of meaning from the interrelationships between audience, text, other texts, and the socio-cultural determinations of significance” (Stephens 84). Texts repeatedly focus upon themes relevant to pakeha indigenisation, such as depictions of pakeha characters identifying themselves with aspects of the colony or its indigenous inhabitants, while the themes of Maori degeneration and

dispossession which proliferate throughout these works serve to marginalise, morally and physically, the colony's indigenous inhabitants, presenting them as inherently unworthy to share in the blessings of white civilisation. This serves a manifold ideological purpose, addressing the needs of settlers to secure identity and tenure in a new environment, depicting the colony as an empty or near-empty space ready for uncontested pakeha occupancy, and justifying or disguising the realities of contest. These texts reveal a variety of social attitudes towards racial mixing through miscegenation, some more and some less tolerant, but all concurring in an overview of the Maori race as inferior to the pakeha and inescapably, if tragically, doomed.

Early New Zealand-set children's fiction upholds a specifically middle-class pakeha mentality, expressed in its triple foci of an emigrant, a family, and a homestead of, or slightly above, the middling station in life. Lower social orders are shown as finding their value to society in loyal service to the emigrant of middling status, while any characters drawn from the nobility exist mainly to highlight the presumed vitality of middle-class values. These values are based in a puritan ethos emphasising duty, thrift, and piety, and this fiction takes particular pains to inculcate sound morals and religious sensibility in its readers. Its exhortations to abstinence within a colonial setting suggest utopian ideals of a new, morally pure, physically superior European culture in New Zealand.

This fiction made fertile soil for both the didactic representation of gender socialisation and the airing of newer trends in literary gender representation. Throughout the period, texts increasingly acknowledge a female desire to transgress boundaries of domestic confinement, yet their assertive and physically capable heroines are invariably redirected towards a *dénouement* of contentment in the home sphere. Characterisation of colonial boys exemplifying the traditional feminine traits of emotional sensitivity, domesticity, nurture, and piety develops in contestation with depictions of more conventionally "manly" robust lads. Many works suggest that the colony requires populating by physically fit,

courageous, yet thoroughly domesticated young women, and young men who combine brawn and brains with puritan or traditionally feminine values. A relatively uniform discourse of imperial hegemony thus gives way to potential fracture along gender lines, this in itself suggesting how much these works are bent on establishing or challenging the disposition of power within a new society.

Overall, these texts are concerned to depict a society in which all marginal, threatening, or disruptive elements—the Maori, the vagabond, the working-class rebel, the bold female, the drunkard, the atheist, the fornicator, even the Irish emigrant and the Roman Catholic—are sidelined or eliminated, often through the diligent examples of middle-class English youngsters. Many works see the colonial antipodes as the proving or improving ground for imperialist zeal, suggesting that the ideals of the British Empire can be not only achieved but also bettered in New Zealand. This is the endeavour of a British imperial hegemony striving to foster a spirit of control abroad as well as at home, expressed through works of junior fiction utilised as propaganda. These texts are united in their sense of imperial mission, even if sometimes in disagreement as to how this may best be achieved. They clearly demonstrate meaning in the service of power.

The final challenge posed by Thompson's hermeneutical framework for analysis of children's fiction is to generate a "creative construction" of texts' possible meaning in their own day. I have already discussed the difficulties this presents. Commentator Jacqueline Rose admits that the Victorian child's own experience of a book is impossible to gauge, although she remains convinced that the recurring idea throughout fiction of the colonial period is that of adult mastery over children. Adult producers of colonial children's texts, says Rose, used their created concept of the child to "hold off a panic, a threat" arising in areas threatening to break free of human ideological control—areas such as sexuality, death, and language—and utilised boys' adventure stories as part of "an exploratory and colonialist venture which assumed that discovering or seeing the world was the same thing as controlling it" (1,

9-10). Colonial books, says Zornado, show “the ways in which adult culture in the form of ‘literature for children’ represents itself to itself through the stories it tells about ‘reality’” (128).

An assertion of the hegemony of one generation over another, in which the child is seen as another kind of subaltern, is implicitly bound up in the texts examined here, each of which has been produced by adults for (though not exclusively for) children. Like most youthful entertainment of its day, this was recreation with a purpose. These works provide a moral map and justification of colonialism for the adult writer and reader, prescribing a path (the emigrant passage and development of puritan habits), a goal (perpetuation of the empire by establishing pakeha land ownership, a home, and a family), and a meaning to life (physical blessings on earth; eternal blessings in Heaven). This fiction endeavours to construct an ideal society through the depiction of the ideal child or, more often, the settler imagined as an ideal child, thus combining the advice manual for youngsters with the imperial hegemonic map for adults. At this period not only Maori were colonised, but, “Ironically, children of European descent were also colonized through their reading” (Khorana 3).

The ideological messages of early New Zealand-set children’s fiction loudly advocate the creation and establishment of an orderly, pakeha-dominated outpost of imperial civilisation, built on a solid backbone of immigrants of the middling sort. The society imaged in these texts would have unlimited potential for increase, with its population free of threats of racial degeneration (through moral or bodily disease, intemperance, or the introduction of mixed-race bloodlines), military defeat, or elimination from the colony in some form of natural selection or divine punishment.

Such ideas clearly lie in the realms of utopian and eugenicist fantasy. As Eldred-Grigg notes, colonial New Zealand was not predominantly a nation of puritan wowsers or of predominantly middle-class gentlefolk. These texts are fiction. Yet the fact that authors believed their books contained important social messages is evident from the

earnest and sincere tones in which they have been written. While the number of families influenced by these texts to bring their girls and boys out to stay cannot be gauged, it is likely that at least some of this fiction's ideological messages inspired readers to live and die as part of the idea known as the British Empire.

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