

The appointment of George Grey as governor to succeed the hapless Robert FitzRoy, however, promised more substantial gains. As we have seen earlier, Owen's relationship with Grey preceded not only the establishment of the Colony but also, of course, any prevision that he might be in a position at some future time to be of professional assistance there. Although he himself was hardly more than a collector-explorer—and with little success as either—Grey's experience in Australia where, under both Darling and Franklin, the scientific possibilities of that continent had become matters of great official interest, had strengthened a commitment to science and to the obligation of the colonies to do their share in its promotion. The relationship between the two young men—Grey was just 25 and Owen eight years older—was, beyond friendship, a tutorial one. In the midst of working out the fossils which Darwin had brought back from the *Beagle* voyage, Owen wrote to Grey in Australia of his desiderata:

Darwin's Zoology has gone on steadily. . . . I can see by the allusions in your letter that it [Grey's collection] will be rich in Natural History. . . . When you return and that may be before this reaches you—you will find a large balance of time placed to your account to draw upon for explorations or *corrobories* on any point that may have interested you in physiology. . . . But our collection of Marsupial Skeletons is too poor to enable me to give any positive information [on their fossil affinities]. Therefore, skulls, & other bones—however roughly prepared would be of particular value to us: no matter how many duplicates: Starve the Dingoes; don't let them crack any bones, save Mutton: box up in saw dust all the odd bones of Marsupials. . . . Impregnated Uteri of all Marsupials are of great physiological interest but after what you have already achieved in that way I look forward with confidence to some capital materials at your return.²⁰

And several years later, just as Grey was assuming his first governorship of New Zealand, Owen wrote again, excited by what seemed to him an emerging pattern of organic change. It was a pattern whose universality the New Zealand birds—both the extinct Moa and living Kiwi—seemed to confirm. 'The entire series of the Mammalian Fossils [from Australia] demonstrates the same kind & degree of correspondence between the extinct pliocene and the existing Fauna of Australia, which is illustrated, in regard to South America, by the Mammalian Fossils of that continent, and, in regard to New Zealand, by the remains of the extinct gigantic struthious birds, at present represented there by the little *Apteryx*. These series of facts are very suggestive and interesting.'²¹

By the early 1840s, Owen was already receiving fossils and information from a variety of sources, the result of both his personal requests and the distribution of a reprint of his 1843 memoir in the *Transactions of the Zoological Society* in which the Williams collection had allowed him to lay out the bare outlines of the Moa