

Descend, O descend !  
 Stretch forth thine arm, stretch forth!  
 This is the mantle of night now coming,  
 This is the garb of day now coming,  
 With its god like yet withering soul.  
 Thy strength is failing,  
 Oh! angry Heaven, by the strength of Tu,  
 Mete out the stars, mete out the moon.  
 Thou shalt be smitten.

The allusion to the single star seen close beside the moon we have already explained as a presage of certain victory. For young men entering battle for the first time, a slightly different *reo* is used. When all are ready they go to a running stream, and, while they sit in a line side by side, the priest takes a branch of *Karamu*, and, dipping it in the water, sprinkles their naked bodies, repeating over each "Their mocking is at a distance, but the ominous wind of Uenuku is blowing. Thou art baptised, my son, to conflict and to war; thou, my son, then wield the weapon of Tu in the tide of war; fight in the tide of Tu, ward off the blow in the tide of Tu, my son." Should a part of the branch break off over any man, it is a presage of his death. This ceremony is called "*Tohi Tauwa*" (the baptism of war), and is held particularly sacred; no woman or boy is therefore allowed to be present at it.

We now pass on to the ceremonies of asking and concluding an alliance. They who ask for the assistance of another tribe make no formal statement of the cause of the quarrel, or even the names of their enemies, but send a messenger with a token, which is called a "*Ngakau*" (heart), varying according to the object in view. If it is a secret expedition of murder that is meant, this token is the *Kumara*, either raw or rotten, or, if cooked, cold and uneatable. If it is to be open war, the messenger wears a mat with holes burnt in it: he gives no explanation of his mission, save that he sings some old song suitable for the occasion. They ask no questions, but accept the token and invitation together, or else, first dismissing the envoy, return his present by one of their own men upon the same day. In either case, the cause and nature of the quarrel are never asked. But the tribe assailed will also have their allies, and, if they know of the invasion, they light up their beacon fires upon certain well known mountains, as a summons to their friends to hasten to the rescue. In the wars of the noted *Hongi*, the mountains of Waikato were lighted up this way night after night to mark to the Natives inland the route of their dreaded foe. Should the allies not answer the summons, and there be yet time left, the chief will go himself to try and enlist their sympathies. On his arrival, he sits some time in silence, then asks for water: a chief always drinks from the palm of his joined hands, into which the water is poured from the calabash by a slave. On this occasion, the calabash used is a very large one, held sacred, and reserved in time of war for this special purpose, being covered with the dried skin of a tattooed chief killed in some former war; this calabash he must drain to the bottom, for, upon this, his success may depend. Next, he says he is hungry. A young chief now rises, and takes a basket of *Taro* (a small round yam)—no other food would suit, for the *Kumara* is sacred to the gods of peace—and washing part of the earth from them, he lights a native oven, which must never have been used before, and the stones of which must also be new; the whole basket, half baked, is then set before the guest, and, if he proves his prowess by devouring all thus offered to him, those whose help he asks will join him in the war. When he has done, all required of him is to present a lizard, brought with him for the purpose, to the chief whose aid he seeks. The lizard is held in great dread by the Maories; but now to shew that they will aid each other in spite of any previously dreaded thing, he who receives the lizard eats it raw. The resolution for war, or the approach of an enemy, is communicated to the people at large by a trumpet called a *Putara*, or by a kind of gong formed out of a piece of *Matai* wood, hung by one end and struck with a stone at the other. When the resolution for war proceeds from the chief alone, he will make an effigy, and calling over it, in the sight of all the people the name of him whom he intends to attack, he cleaves the head with his axe. Thus, before the Northern war, Heke gave a great feast at his village, Kaikohe; poles were as usual set up round which the food was piled in pyramids; but on the top of one of them was made the figure of a man, and as the pole was lifted up into its place by the people Heke split the head of it with an adze, saying "I split thy head, O Governor:" thus both his own people and his visitors knew that he had resolved to fight the Europeans, and that they were invited to join him in the war. The incidents of the march afford fresh omens. A blow-fly crossing the road is a sign of defeat; if the party arrive unobserved within a short distance of the pa, the priest makes a kite of *toetoe whatu manu*, and flies it into the air; if the kite proves one-sided it is an evil omen, but if it should fly right, the priest holds the line in his right hand (for if he should by accident hold it in the left it would be a fatal omen), and letting it out he says:—

"Beautiful art thou my bird,  
 Thou hoverest well, seest thou the stream  
 Of Atutahi and Rehua?  
 Doth it flow with a gurgle?  
 Thou dost behold  
 Thou dost enchant with dread.  
 Thou art as the albatross in the rain,  
 Fluttering over the ocean,  
 Thou art son of the severer,  
 Whose power cannot be stopped,  
 Thy parent is a god.  
 The head of the heavens  
 Thou'lt pierce with the death of Rangi  
 By a blast of chilling wind."