

Aparima. From thence they journeyed to Awarna (Bluff Harbour), and alarmed the shore whaling station. The object was to get tidings conveyed as speedily as possible to Tuhawaiki, who, with his fighting force, was lying in wait at Ruapuke.

Living, as the whalers did, under the protection of Tuhawaiki, we can understand they would be only too eager for the fray. It is remembered a European, Claus Ross, whose name subsequently became famous in connection with the Keeling or Coca Islands, then a whaler at the Bluff, was the man selected for conveying the information.

It is illustrative of the prudent reserve of the old Ngati-mamoe chief, to say no one knew better than he how to comport himself in a sudden emergency. Tuhawaiki's conduct on this occasion supplies a capital representation. No sooner was the whale-boat descried approaching the island than he, suspecting important intelligence, gave orders the visitor should at once be brought to him. This was done, and a close confab ensued. Tuhawaiki made no announcement to the tribe as to the nature of the intelligence, but merely issued orders that his fighting men, fully armed, should be ready to embark for the mainland at daybreak. His reticence was due to the fact that had the nature and extent of the calamity been made known, the islanders would have been so overwhelmed that no consideration, not even the emergencies of the case, would have roused them to immediate action. In that way valuable time would have been lost, and the enemy fortified in the position he had gained. It was not until the armament had been completed that the massacre was made known, so that, while the forepart of this eventful night was taken up with the pomp and circumstance of war, the afterpart, all through the early hours of morning, was occupied in the plaintive wails and lamentations of the Maori cronach, or tangi, for their dead. It was the Noche Triste, or melancholy night of the Mexican conquistadors, and, as such, its traditions are preserved by the islanders.

Shut up in a cavern opening out to the beach beneath the island fortress, the tribal tohunga, or spirit medium, spent the entire night in exorcisms. The precise nature of these is now of little moment, but from the characters of the incantations following, they must have been on the parallel of extreme unction. The *Koangumu*, or spell for weakening the enemy, was cast, and the *Kitao*, or invocation of the spear, on the eve of battle, was spoken. These were performed in presence of the multitude just as the *taua* embarked for the mainland. What gives them their chief historical interest is that this was the last occasion upon which their ghostly offices were brought into requisition in the South. That, of course, is due partly to European intercourse, but mainly to the Christian catechists, whose advent occurred shortly afterwards.

The first faint gleam heralding the orb of day found the *taua* afloat in their canoes. The *whakahirihiri*, or incantation chants, were kept up by the islanders until they were well out to sea, as, also, *hakas*, war-whoops, and songs of defiance, peculiar to the occasion. These, and other traditional items, go to prove the issue of events was looked forward to with grave apprehension. I go a step further, and say it was an event of paramount importance to none more than the European. Had Te Rauparaha and his turbulent northern tribes gained a footing in the South, instead of the peaceful occupation obtained a few years later, we should have had a repetition of the turmoil, trouble, and expenditure in treasure and blood encountered by European settlement in the North. We praise and magnify the names of such men as Cargill, Burns, and Macandrew, oblivious of the fact that we are resting under a debt of gratitude to Tuhawaiki, the island chief.

Arriving at the mainland, they landed at the mouth of the Mataura, probably on the site of the rising township of Fortrose. Scouts were sent out along the track leading to Tutarau. The report brought in was that the country was quiet. The army then