

prized on that account. The idea that the eyes were eaten to prevent them from becoming stars is, however, I believe, a mere European fancy: I have never heard it so stated by a Maori. This fate was inflicted by the noted Hongi upon the whole of Paraoarahi's family and their relations, in vengeance for the murder of Koperu, the murder for which he commenced his war on the Waikato, Thames, and East coast tribes. Sometimes the head was preserved entire, that the young men might set it before them, and make their first attempt at eloquence in recounting the cause of the chief's death, and by whom he fell; or the old woman would set it before her upon the "Turuturu," or corner stick, used for holding the web while making a mat, and taunt and revile it.

The women are invariably left behind when blood vengeance is the object of the "taua:" they are not thought sufficiently sacred to cook food in such cases; they have also their signs for which they watch anxiously to guess the fate of the warriors; if the clouds are red at sunset, there has a battle been fought that day; if an owl cry in the day time, and especially seven times, if a tame tui talk at night, these are evil omens. The men must, in this case, cook for themselves; but cooked food being considered polluted, must not come near the weapon, it must not pass before a warrior, it must not be eaten standing, it must not be carried in the right hand or on the back, but either slung on the left side or carried in the left hand. We will now suppose the victorious war party on the return to their own home, bearing with them the preserved heads of the great chiefs whom they have killed; just on the border of their own territory, they dig a small hole for each: then all the people turn round towards the country from which they come, and the priests, taking each a head, repeat a song to which all the warriors dance, and every time they leap from the ground, the priests lift up the heads; this ceremony is called "Whakatahurihuri," (a turning round, a causing to look backwards), and is, as it were, a farewell from the heads to their own land, and a challenge to the defeated tribe to follow them; the words of the song are these:—

Turn thou, look back, look back!
And with a farewell glance
Look on the road thou wast brought,
From all that was once thine,
Turn thou, look back, look back!

These holes are also to perpetuate the memory of the battle and of those who fell in it; and the ceremony is repeated at every subsequent halting place.

On the South side of the Manukau Heads, is a spot called *Te Kauri*, which forms a prominent point as seen in going up the harbour to the Waiuku. Here the first "Whakatahurihuri" was performed with the heads of the Waikato chiefs who fell in Hongi's invasion. To this day, the Waikato tribes never use the spot as a resting place when they travel from Waikato to Auckland, for were they to stay there to sleep or cook, the spirits of their slaughtered friends would be sure to visit their impiety with death.

When the war party arrives at home, the priestesses go forth to meet them, headed by the eldest, and make the most hideous contortions and grimaces that they can, which is called "Whakatama;" then with a loud voice, they ask them:—

Whence have ye come, great travellers of Tu?

The warriors halt and answer with one voice:—

We have come from the land,
We have come from the sea,
An assembly of the god Tu
We have dealt out our vengeance,
We have found satisfaction.
An assembly of Tu.

The priestesses ask again:—

Is Tu appeased? Has Tu been great?
Has Tu received? Is Tu enriched?

The warriors answer:—

Tu is great as heaven above,
He is appeased, he rests in joy.

The priestesses rejoin:—

May ye rest in peace
When quiet is gained,
Ye assembly of Tu.

The whole of the people of the settlement then make their appearance, and wave their garments in the air, while each tries to let his voice be heard above all the others, some calling one thing, some another, women and children all joining in the clamour. The general import of the noise is, "Welcome! return, return!" The warriors are sacred, they therefore go first to the stream of water with all they have brought with them, and sit in lines facing the water; one of the priests taking a round pebble, goes to the other side of the stream, and flinging off all his clothing, offers the stone with a piece of fern-root and of human flesh (all of which he holds in his right hand), in sacrifice to Tika, the creator of mankind, who must yet be appeased for the slaughter of those whom he has formed. To Tiki the kumara is sacred; so also is the right foot, and especially the great toe of it, because with this foot only the Maori digs in setting the kumara; to this, therefore as the god the stone, the fern root, and the human flesh are now offered, and the following incantation is repeated:—

Thou canst now eat and consume,
Thou canst now eat in a house,
Thou canst now eat with the priests,
Thou canst now eat with the gods.
Now the thundering of the heaven
And of the earth is over.