

A. A. Fraser's novel *Raromi or The Maori Chief's Heir* is "a salvation novel which deals with both individual and collective salvation" (Moffat 46), tracking the journey of the protagonist Falconer and his peers from alcoholic ruin to riches. At the beginning of the melodramatic narrative the dock hand Falconer doubts himself proclaiming "I'm only a – a beach-comber – on my "beam ends"- going to ruin!" (7), yet by the end of the story he has become teetotal and repented his sins, established a successful shipping business and found his long lost fiancé. Didacticism is heavily present throughout and the message is clear, if the example of Falconer is followed salvation and success will be abundant. Fraser's narrative will be outlined, detailing largely arbitrary episodes which consist of action, romance and cross-cultural encounters. Very little concrete information is known about A. A. Fraser, but what is known will be discussed. Because of the obscurity of Fraser's identity, this introduction will focus on examining the content of the novel from a historical perspective. *Raromi* was published in 1888 but it illustrates a period roughly forty year prior to this, depicting the city of Wellington in the early stages of its infancy. Vibrant scenes, containing a degree of historical accuracy are presented, such the infrastructure and settlement of Wellington, judicial process, shipping, trade, and race-relations. While Fraser's novel is a temperance novel, it is a temperance novel with a twist. Constantly in the backdrop throughout the entire narrative, is the overarching presence of Te Rauparaha. So much so that the novel ends expressing concern that he is a barrier to peace. While Te Rauparaha, the 'Southern Napoleon', was a tyrant his representation in the text is incorrect, as historical record suggests that during the period he was not a force of hostility in Wellington, but one of neutrality. However, his presence in the text does provide an almost mythological villain, whose distance from society within the novel is a celebration of peace, prosperity and salvation.

Like many Victorian novels of questionable quality, *Raromi or The Maori Chief's Heir* contains an array of almost arbitrary facts, characters, plot twists, action, romance, travel and, specific to its New Zealand setting, racial relations and vivid geographical description. Often characters are introduced solely to provide crucial detail which instigates an action or romance sequence, and then they disappear into thin air. However, Fraser does present a consistent protagonist, Falconer, even though his name and identity are not so uniform. Falconer is a "bonny sailor-lad" (7) who, along with his colleagues, works during the day and hits the bottle during the evening. The novel opens with Falconer repenting his sins to a close pious friend, remarking "In your presence I vow, before God, to give up the company of the drunkards; I'll touch drink no more, come what may of it!" (10). His friend, suitably named Noble, helps to guide Falconer away from his existence of sin, acting as a paternal figure for a lost soul without family support in the colony. Becoming teetotal allows Falconer's life to literally take flight (Fraser's pun excused). He relinquishes his alcoholism and is attributed characteristics and titles which reflect the positive progression and achievement his character has made. Despite his multiple titles such as Raromi and Harold Morpeth, he will be referred to primarily as Falconer to avoid confusion. He is befriended by a Christian Maori chief, Dog's-Ear, who he rescues from a harrowing cliff face in the Ngauranga Gorge. The Chief pronounces him "Ramori, for your grip is tight, your word straight, and your heart is true." (108). Adventures within the novel include Falconer successfully defending himself in court against a murder charge, Noble being abducted by hostile associates of Te Rauparaha and taken to Makara, hunting Kaka to survive in the bush, speculation to start a shipping company, blowing up a ship of hostile natives with rockets and getting lost at sea, ending up in Sydney.

The Sydney excursion is indulgent as it allows Fraser to reference characters and scenes from his previous novel *Daddy Crips's Waifs*. Daddy Crips, in *Raromi*, runs a community orchard where young boys who have fallen from grace, or have been deprived of opportunity, are given employment, shelter and moral guidance. Here Falconer's identity is revisited again. He is recognised by a former associate from England called Mr. Jarvey, as Harold Morpeth. Falconer tells Jarvey "the young man you knew at Liverpool is not the same you now see – at least, I hope not." (166). Mr Jarvey sees that Falconer has repented his dipsomania, and conveniently puts him in contact with a lawyer who informs him he is entitled to a considerable inheritance from a distant relative. While Fraser is committed to abolishing sins of the old world in the colonies, such as poverty and alcoholism, he has no desire to repent industrial wealth. Falconer's teetotalism has provided him with mana, land, wealth, and the possibility for lucrative business enterprise. Realistically, in a temperate New Zealand society how many others would be given the same opportunity? Of course it is only a novel, and a melodramatic one at that. The only remaining loose end in the narrative is Falconer's long lost fiancé, Clara. During the excursion to Sydney, Daddy Crips holds a community ball, with the mystery guest singer being late to arrive. Thanks to an anonymous tip off from a character introduced solely for that purpose, Falconer embarks on a rescue mission encountering violent bushrangers, or highwaymen, who he pursues and overpowers in an armed conflict. Of course, the singer that Falconer has rescued is his lost fiancé Clara, who becomes overwhelmed with emotion:

Harold, her own Harold, by his daring and bravery had saved her, had saved her at the risk of his own life. And, best of all, that clear, frank look of his – the outlook of a hers; he was true, but chastened, sad, and

repentant for the wrong he had thoughtlessly done. (191)

From here, Falconer's narrative neatly resolves itself. He and Clara return to their cottage in Kaiwharawhara, and his business exporting and importing produce to and from Australia is lucrative. Most plot ends are neatly summarised in a letter by one of Falconer's associates from Sydney and an inspirational message from Fraser is given: "hard work, energy, and perseverance allied to tact will do more than idle, limp people imagine in this world – they give success." (211). For a didactic novel which consistently reinforces temperance, this would be a suitable conclusion. The protagonist has successfully sought redemption, all have benefited and now the reader is given the opportunity to do the same if they follow the example Fraser has presented. Yet there are two additional chapters narrating a confrontation between Dog's-Ear and the hostile tribe of Te Rangihaeata, from whom Dog's-Ear must claim *utu* against the fictional Pakihure. Dog's-Ear is wounded and as he dies he proclaims to Maori and Pakeha spectators that peace must be retained, and that no *utu* be taken for his death. Fraser ends the novel writing "Pakihure returned home in peace, and saw no more the face of Te Rauparaha, the fierce maker of war. There was peace." (224). Some of the didacticism in *Raromi* is hyperbolic, while much of it is merited and informs the reader of the morals and methods that Fraser wanted to transmit, his decision to end the novel with the overarching threat of Te Rauparaha is very interesting, unusual and historically inaccurate.

While *Raromi or The Maori Chief's Heir* has not been entirely forgotten by New Zealand literary history, as some studies gloss the narrative, it seems that A. A Fraser's identity has. No concrete evidence regarding Fraser's life is available, which is a view reinforced by Stevens, Moffat and Jones. In their respective studies only the content of the novel is discussed. Stevens labels the narrative as "prohibition fiction" (30) outlining the teetotal redemption of Falconer, the protagonist, and the fall of his enemy Black Charlie who dies repenting his alcoholism, praying in the arms of his mother. She also writes that the novel has "much false Maori melodrama, some authentic details such as snaring pigeons, boatbuilding, and so on" (30). Stevens implicitly transmits that she has no knowledge of Fraser's life, which is something that Moffat makes explicit writing that "my research in the National Library and the Alexander Turnbull Library collections has failed to produce any details about Alexander Fraser's personal history" (46). Moffat follows Stevens, detailing the redemption of Falconer and Black Charlie, and labelling the work as a salvation novel which deals in both collective and individual salvation (46). Jones gives Fraser's work even less treatment than the others, briefly glossing themes such as a lost heiress, secrets, kidnappings, capture by Maori villains (a theme that is illustrated on the frontispiece of the novel) and shipwrecks as essential elements for Fraser's "New Zealand melodramas" (Jones 124).

From the evidence given in the text itself it is possible to deduce some information about Fraser. *Raromi* was published by the Religious Tract Society, which, along with the novel's content, would suggest that he was a committed evangelical Christian. The title page labels Fraser as the "Author of 'Daddy Crips's Waifs' Etc", which suggests he approached writing with a degree of seriousness, as he published multiple novels. It is also possible to suggest that while he may not have permanently lived in Wellington, he was defiantly a resident at some point as he is very familiar with the geographical details of the city. During the sensationalised excursion to Sydney, the narrative becomes sloppy and erratic, providing arbitrary details that neatly boost the plot, but are laughable in their implausibility. However, at the start of 'Chapter XXX. Home Sweet Home', when Falconer returns to Wellington harbour Fraser provides an accurate geographical description, confidently depicting the harbour, native bush and hills:

Some three months later a smart, swift, topsail schooner swept around the outer edge of Barrett's Reef, ran close-hauled through the entrance between the Reef and Pencarrow Head, and stood boldly into the harbour with a smart breeze. Tacking off Ngahauranga, the schooner ran quickly to an anchorage off Port Nic. and drooped anchor. . . looking through a telescope, swept the picturesque western shore, the heights above it, and the straggling town, which, though poor in itself, was set in a rich framework of wild scenery. (204)

No such confidence in specificity is expressed when narrating Sydney and other parts of Australia, making Fraser's sudden attention to geographical detail a stark contrast to previous episodes. This passage, along with countless others which accurately detail Wellington locations and landmarks make it obvious that Fraser lived, for at least a period of his life, in Wellington.

Fraser's previous novel *Daddy Crip's Waifs: A Tale of Australasian Life and Adventure*, published in 1886, is set in Wanganui. Due to Fraser's familiarity with Wellington transmitted in *Raromi*, it is plausible to assume that he spent some time inhabiting Wanganui in order to complete *Daddy Crip's Wife*. Therefore, a non-conclusive argument can be proposed that 'Mr A Fraser' (Figure One) is the author in question. The photograph was taken in the studio of William James Harding, Wanganui. No specific date is given, but the photos from the collection that 'Mr A Fraser' is a part of were taken between 1856 and 1889, which encompasses the years Fraser was writing.

As with Fraser's identity, the date in which the narrative is set is also non-conclusive. The novel was published in 1888 and not once within the text is a date, specific or approximate, given. However there are

multiple details within the text that suggest that the story is situated in a distant, yet still living, memory of the past. Throughout *Ramori* both Te Rangihaeata and his uncle Te Rauparaha are portrayed as overarching villains, constantly threatening the security and prosperity of Wellington. The fictionalisation of these historical figures provides an end date in which the narrative must occur before. Te Rangihaeata died in November 1855 (“Te Rangihaeata” www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t63/te-rangihaeata) and Te Rauparaha died in November 1849 (“Te Rauparaha” <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t74/te-rauparaha>), making 1849 a cut-off date. Another date marker is the inhabitation of central Wellington. “Te Aro Flat, now dotted over with wooden shanties” (Fraser 84) is “filled by colonists unaccustomed to war” (Fraser 37), and there is no mention of co-habitation with Maori, who are only at the fringes of settled areas, notably inhabiting Porirua. By December 1847 the majority of Te Aro Maori had been relocated out of the central city, accepting an offer from Governor George Grey for a 526 acre block out of town, allowing for wharf construction. Consequentially Grey could now sign off a Colonial Office report announcing that all land disputes in the vicinity of Wellington were settled (Rutherford 164).

Another aspect of interest, which also helps to provide an approximate date, is the settler desire to replicate civic practices consistent with those in Britain. In one of Fraser’s direct didactic addresses to the reader, he details that

It must be explained that the young settlement had just received a judge sent down from Sydney to act in criminal cases. Englishmen in the colonies like to have a doctor to tell them when they are ill; a lawyer to settle their disputes; and a governor to hoist the Union Jack, and remind them of home . . . Sad to say, one of the judge’s first trials was that of Falconer, for the wilful murder of Garry; and the trial, stripped of much of its ceremony – as conducted at home – was fixed for the morrow. (47-8)

It is worth detailing some plot. Falconer had refused to drink with his fellow sailors at the local bar, enraging them. Later that evening a murder was committed and Black Charlie, the leader of the gang, attempts to frame Falconer for the crime because of their disagreement. Eventually the truth is revealed and the innocence of Falconer is proved – his temperate nature provides salvation. Aside from overtly clichéd nostalgia for the motherland, this passage represents a relative realism to the civic development of Wellington during this period. Echoes of Fraser’s judge resonate with two of New Zealand’s first judges, William Martin and Henry Samuel Chapman. Martin was appointed chief justice of New Zealand in January 1841 and was the first judge to sentence a crown subject, Wiremu Kingi Maketu, to death (“William Martin” <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1m21/martin-william>). However, he resided in Auckland. Chapman was his Wellington counterpart, being appointed as judge of the supreme court of New Zealand for the southern district in 1843 (“Henry Samuel Chapman” <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1c14/chapman-henry-samuel>). Much like Fraser’s judge, Chapman served in various administrative positions throughout the empire, spending time in Montreal prior to his time in New Zealand, and moving on to both Tasmania and Melbourne afterwards (ibid.). Of interest to the text is conviction of Henare Maroro, the first Wellington convict to be sentenced to death. *The New Zealand Evangelist* details that “Maroro the Murderer” was brought to trial before Chapman. Maroro was angered at the four months he had just spent in a newly established government prison, and upon release he murdered John, William and Catherine Banks at random for their property and possessions. The author of the article then remarks “If every, or any native, be disposed to carry out the old native practice of extracting utu or payment for any one in the tribe which they suppose has injured then, no white man’s life is safe.” (263). Fraser also makes appropriating comments about utu writing “to a Maori – complete revenge – is the dominant passion of his untutored heart.” (37). While the trial of Henare Maroro is not identical to that of Falconer the two cases do have similarities, as both are early murder trials in Wellington, reinforcing that the narrative of *Raromi* firmly belongs in this historical period. From the evidence discussed it can be argued that the narrative is set between 1847, when the Te Aro area was supposedly “cleared” of Maori, and 1849 when Te Rauparaha died. The case of Henare Maroro also reinforces this. It is probable that Fraser simply decided to place his narrative forty years prior to its publication, which was in 1888.

Throughout the novel Falconer’s sobriety repeatedly results in improved circumstance, which is reflected by multiple changes of identity, as he becomes a more reputable character. This improvement of circumstance includes gaining the respect of the Maori chief Dog’s-Ear, who gives him the title Raromi, and rekindling his romance with Clara, who evokes Falconer’s previous identity, Harold Morpeth. One aspect of interest is Falconer’s upward social mobility through his employment. Falconer, initially a dock hand and sailor, removes himself from the company of his drunken peers and speculates his future: “This is just the country to do something good in by-and-by. But I want to strike in now, and be ready for it. Instead of being a common sailor, I want to employ them, and help them and myself, too” (80) Falconer and his associate Scotty plan to build a ship of fifteen to twenty tons, trading potatoes, onions and timber under the name “Falconer, Scott, and Co” (84). During chapter XVII the narrative details a colourful episode in the forest of Kaiwharawhara, where

Falconer's ship *Kahawai* is built. Many adventures are had in this ship including a scuffle with hostile Maori involving explosives, and a near death experience in the middle of the Tasman Sea. The *Kahawai* sinks, but thankfully Falconer and his friends are saved with only seconds to spare. Near the end of the novel once Falconer has received investment, the ship is rebuilt and his enterprising ideas are put into practice with great success: A letter received from an Australian trade partner states that "the cargoes you send are so well selected and arrive in such good condition that people look out for the *Kahawai*, money in hand" (211).

In this instance Fraser's retrospective representation of Wellington again provides a degree of historical accuracy. As argued above, the novel is set in Wellington in the 1840s. Historical material from this period reflects Fraser's depiction of shipping and naval activity. Two industries which were being prospected were whaling and timber exports, both of which Falconer engages in within the novel. Notable Wellington politician, commercial printer and newspaper proprietor Samuel Revans speculated investing in whaling, writing

Many of us . . . are convinced that a Whaling Co. would pay well and advance the place [Wellington] rapidly. We should like a Co. to be got up at home, capital £150,000 for the purchase of 25 ships or 50 brigs. In addition to a London board a local direction should be reserved for that purpose. I should be happy to be a director here, 25 vessels would have 1,000 seamen. Their earnings would not be less than £70,000 which would be expended by them in this place. I reckon a Co. of this kind would benefit Port Nicholson to the extent of £100,000. Get Wakefield to take the matter up. (Revans Letters, July 7th 1841)

The sums suggested by Revans are astronomical, but nothing came of this speculation (Miller 130-1). Constantine Augustus Dillon, the political secretary of Governor George Grey, wrote to William Fox, the future premier of the colony, suggesting timber exports to locations as distant as California: "speculation will give a great spur to the timber trade . . . if this cargo pays we shall probably export £50,000 to £100,000 worth of timber annually for this port – if hands can be got to saw it." *Dillon Letters*, February 8th 1850). This strongly echoes Falconer's behaviour in the novel, which sees him export timber to Sydney and Melbourne. However what we do not see depicted by Fraser is the environmental damage caused by these exports. Miller suggests that between 1840 and 1850 "the indiscriminate destruction of native trees reduced the countryside to a wilderness of stumps" (132). It is important to note that Falconer does not deforest indiscriminately in the novel. He only culls trees from Kaiwharahara glen, which his friend Dog's-Ear inhabits, acquiring this area legitimately "by purchase or lease" (212).

Another episode involving shipping in the novel has less obvious historical application. During "Chapter XX. The Fire-Demon at Work" a series of arbitrary events occur which eventually result in Falconer and his gang destroying a ship filled with hostile Maori. At the climax of the episode, Falconer discovers ballistic rockets:

'Fire away!' said falconer, and away flew a big rocket into the hold with great force. It struck one, then another, rebounded and returned, hissing, darting, and striking on all sides with great force, with great noise, until it finished with a fearful explosion! (139)

Throughout the novel there is much depiction of conflict but none with such preposterous intensity as this. The question must be asked, why rockets? A possible explanation is Fort Buckley, which is located in Kaiwharawhara and was built in 1885, only three years before the novel was published. Fraser displays an accurate in-depth geographical knowledge of Kaiwharawhara throughout his narrative, so it is highly likely he was aware of fort's existence. The fort contained two sixty-four pound guns, one of which is pictured below (Figure Two). Around the time Fraser would have been writing the novel, shell practices and shows were plentiful, with the Evening Post regularly reporting these events in "The Volunteers" column. One particularly enlightening column, on the 14th of February 1887 describes the artillery as follows

The range was 1800 yards, 20 min., right deflection, and after each shell was fired the detachments changed rounds, so that each man present laid the gun and fired his own shot. The shooting, with the exception of one solitary shot, was capital, and had the mark fired at been a ship instead of a barrel, she would have had an exceedingly rough time of it. (Evening Post)

The "exceedingly rough time" described here is experienced by Fraser's hostile Maori who do "not like the 'bang-bang'" (139). Fort Buckley, along with multiple other artillery emplacements, were built in 1885, during one of many so-called Russian scares that New Zealand experienced in the second half of the 19th century. The Russian iron cruiser *Afrika*, had visited Auckland in 1881, and continued to patrol the Pacific for quite some time (Cooke 48). Tensions had been mounting between Russia and Britain over disputed territory in Afghanistan and this, alongside a supposed report about planned Russian raids on various Australian cities that was received by the New Zealand Government, sparked concerns that New Zealand was vulnerable. (Cooke 49). However, according to Fraser, the real danger to the colony was from hostile Maori who had grievances with the settler population, and the most prominent of these Maori was Te Rauparaha.

Te Rauparaha is represented by Fraser as an almost mythological figure who is never seen, but is constantly present: his haunting and fierce image always looms over the narrative. Hostile Maori chiefs such as Te

Rangihaeata and others are depicted, but their danger comes from their association with Te Rauparaha, not the very real threat that they pose themselves. While many other details represented by Fraser in his novel are soundly based historically, how accurate is his representation of Te Rauparaha? Te Rauparaha had a fierce reputation within New Zealand prior to serious European settlement. He and his Ngati Toa people drastically changed the nature of inter-tribal warfare through their early adoption of muskets. They migrated to the lower North Island and based themselves on Kapti Island. From this base much territory was conquered including parts of the Lower North Island and Upper South Island. Once the pace of colonisation accelerated, after Te Rauparaha and many others had signed the treaty of Waitangi, he began to contest land sales made. This ultimately resulted in a violent conflict dubbed the Wairau affray, where many settlers were killed attempting to arrest Te Rauparaha for crimes he believed he did not commit. His mana is such that a haka he composed, “Ka Mate”, is regularly preformed by the All Blacks.

As discussed earlier, at the end of the novel he is referred to as “the fierce maker of war” (224). Peace can only flourish when he is out of the picture. However, race relations during the 1840s in Wellington suggest that Te Rauparaha, having learnt from the mistakes made during the Wairau affray, had become a leader who was willing to reason, cooperate and negotiate with Pakeha, while Te Rangihaeata was more hostile. Wards comments on the position that both chiefs held towards the settlers writing that

Te Rauparaha was following a line that was consistent with his behaviour during . . . the previous year [1845], that his preference was for all to live in peace, that he would use the influence he had to this end, but that the final solution [to the inter racial hostilities] lay with Te Rangihaeata whom he would not encourage, but whom he would not encourage. (251)

During March 1846 shots were exchanged between Lower Hutt Maori and the settlers there, and on April 2nd some Maori killed two settlers. Te Rangihaeata probably did not instigate this act but he declined to forfeit those responsible, thus becoming the main British target (Belich 73-4). Later, after more encounters, Te Rangihaeata retreated from the Hutt Valley to his pa in Pauatahanui. From here Governor Grey mounted an expedition against the pa which resulted in Te Rangihaeata and his followers retreating northwards. Belich comments on this period of conflict, remarking that

The major British success was not a military event, but the seizure of the neutral chief Te Rauparaha on 23 July. Grey accused Te Rauparaha of secretly supporting Te Rangihaeata, but another motive was that the former chief could be captured, whereas the latter could not. The arrest of so important a Maori leader was a bold assertion of government power. (74)

Te Rauparaha was victimised not necessarily because of his actions, but because of the circumstance he found himself in. It is worth noting that in this situation the settlers are the aggressors, forcing Maori out of the Wellington region to free up land for settlement, thus creating conflict. Prior to his arrest Te Rauparaha wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mathew Richmond: “Take care lest Pakeha attack the Maori. The Maori will not be the first to attack; they will leave it to the Pakeha to strike the first blow.” (Rauparaha to Richmond, 19th May 1845). Te Rauparaha certainly was a fierce war chief, especially if one was his enemy. But the Pakeha were not his enemy, as he saw trade and cooperation as a way to better both his own people and those of reason who were making their home in New Zealand. During one of Fraser’s bush scenes he depicts two Maori who

were outlawed warriors, employed covertly by Te Rauparaha to harass the settlers, spy out their affairs, rob them if they could, and, in fact, do anything that might sow animosity between the settlers and Maoris. (67)

This is one of countless examples from the novel. Fraser’s account certainly clashes with both Te Rauparaha’s own words, and Ward’s assessment of him. It seems that Fraser has taken his literary representation from the myth of Te Rauparaha, rather than the man.

But perhaps Fraser can be forgiven. There were consistent racial tensions throughout New Zealand during the 19th Century and the infamous Te Rauparaha made an adequate scapegoat. It seems as though Te Rauparaha has suffered a crisis of representation, and this may be because he existed during a time when accurate historical record was extremely scarce in New Zealand. Over a hundred and twenty years after the publication of *Raromi or The Maori Chief’s Heir* his figure still haunts Wellington literature. Hamish Clayton’s debut novel *Wulf*, written somewhere in-between prose and verse, depicts New Zealand during a period somewhere in-between mythology and history. The novel is structured around absence – the absence that the traders feel from civilisation, the absence of the protagonist’s identity, the absence of a workable and harmonious historical accord between two very different cultures. In fact, the name of the novel comes from an old English poem 'Wulf and Eadwacer' in which a definitive interpretation is absent. The narrative follows the journey of both the protagonist and the crew of the trading brig *Elizabeth* to Kapti during 1830, a time when “That country lay in far and unstable waters. History lay in wait for that far and unstable country.” (13) The main trading partner they hope to engage with is Te Rauparaha who much like his representation in Fraser’s novel, is always present in the narrative but never actually makes an appearance

Every word spoken, sent like a raft of smoke onto the air of that strange country, smelled like the blood riding the breath of their great chief, fearful to us, the Southern Napoleon. Amongst ourselves we'd taken to calling him the Great Wolf, for the men imagined him falling upon us when our backs were turned . . . We knew he was coming.(13-4)

He is present in the minds of the characters because of his mana. He is evasive like Wulf of 'Wulf and Eadwacer' who is craved but never experienced. Clayton's goal when representing Te Rauparaha, which he explained during an undergraduate lecture, was "to write this poetic impression of the place that Te Rauparaha might have occupied in the imagination" (Clayton, "Wulf"). What *Wulf* essentially does is depict a period in New Zealand's past where imagination, myth and historiography combine. The three factors collide at the novel's conclusion during Te Rauparaha's sack of Takapuneke (near Akaroa), where he captured and tortured Te Maiharanui along with his wife and daughter. Te Rauparaha enlisted the help of Capitan John Stewart and his ship *Elizabeth* (the vessel central of Clayton's novel) to achieve this. The complicity of Pakeha traders in inter-tribal warfare concerned English authorities, causing the appointment of the first official British resident in New Zealand, James Busby, essentially beginning the process which would encompass New Zealand into the Empire. Clayton concludes his novel with this event, presenting a small verse

When she came aboard. When we went into the hold. When she strangled her daughter. When we threw the body into the sea. Then we entered each other's histories.(231)

Te Maiharanui and his strangled their daughter to spare her from a cruel and prolonged death, and the involvement of the Elizabeth in this incident has caused the history of Pakeha and Maori to become one.

As Clayton's novel suggests, the histories of Maori began to weave with that of the Pakeha during the 1830s, but a strong rope was not instantly created. The literary fibres that compile Te Rauparaha's representation have been grown in this country, but have not been properly woven. For Clayton Te Rauparaha existed in a distant past somewhere between myth and history. For Fraser he existed as a distant memory, conveniently filling the role of the hostile Maori outlander, whose mythical presence can be evoked whenever conflict is required for the narrative. Like Te Rauparaha's identity, Fraser's has been diluted largely because of the obscurity of his career. He produced two novels of questionable quality, probably lived in Wellington and Wanganui, and judging by his inactivity in the public record, probably mostly kept to himself and his evangelical associates. *Raromi or The Maori Chief's Heir* is a melodramatic temperance novel which details the successful salvation of Falconer, the protagonist of reputable upbringing who has fallen from grace in the colonies. In this sense it is a heavily didactic novel. It provides the reader with a template, realistic or not, for reparation of sin, or the ability to help lift others out of sin, with the end result being lavish success. The narrative is often laughable and implausible, but is generally entertaining. However, if there is any real value in this work, it comes from its vibrant literary representation of a city, our city, Wellington, during the crack of dawn. The content of Fraser's novel vibrantly details Wellington during the 1840s, with a good degree of accuracy. He depicts various civic practices, shipping and trade, adventure in the bush and something that could not be avoided, contact with Maori, both positive and negative. When surveying literature of this period Jones highlights Alan Mulgan's *Spur of Morning* as one of the novels of merit composed during the late colonial period (135). Mulgan writes that his story "is set in a time that to-day seems distant although it is within my own generation" (vi), much like Fraser's narrative, written in 1888, depicting a period roughly forty years earlier. While the quality of *Raromi* is questionable, it can be seen as one of many early novels that helped to lay the foundation for reputable future of New Zealand literature. Fraser's novel shows the country in first light, while Alan Mulgan's transmits the excitement and possibility of the morning. It would take another generation for the glorious heat of noon to appear, when more than just one Man Alone would be seeking shelter from the sun.

Mr A Fraser

Sixty-Four Pound Gun at Fort Buckley, 1886

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Title Page

Lithograph of three Maori warriors bursting into a hut, only to find a lone man sitting at a table, his head in his hands

Raromi or The Maori Chief's Heir

By A. A. Fraser Author of 'Daddy Crips's Waifs, Etc.

The Religious Tract Society 56 Paternoster Row, 65 St. Paul's Churchyard and 164 Piccadilly 1888

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Contents.

Chapter I. The Vow.

Come, Noble, let me help you. You'll never get home at that rate.'

'Ah, Falconer, how glad I am to see you—so bonny, so strong! You always put me in mind of a big, noble ship under full sail God bless you, lad!'

'Then, as you are making heavy weather of it, I, the big ship, must take you in tow.'

'My bonny sailordad, how often I think of you—and watch for you yonder, hoping—'

'Don't trouble about me, Noble, I'm not worth it. I'm only a—a beach-comber—on my "beam ends"—going to ruin!'

'To ruin, Falconer! No, never,' said Noble, stopping and looking up at the big sailor; 'weak, unworthy as I am, I will stand between you and ruin—God helping me.'

Serious thoughts filled each heart, and the two walked on in silence.

Noble always seemed to others to be contented and happy, minding his own business, and living a simple, earnest, hard-working life. Everybody thought his name was Noble, so everybody gave it him, and it suited him well.

Nobody, however, knew who he was, or where he came from, and yet everybody in Port Nic. knew him, and knew his kind, unselfish character, and his affection for the big sailor, Falconer.

Noble lived alone. He had a small wooden cottage and some land, lying back from the harbour, on high ground, and away from the town; and his view embraced the whole extent of the magnificent harbour—a panoramic scene of great beauty and of vast extent. Here Noble worked on his land, or made nets and fishing lines when unable to work out of doors.

'You don't get along to-day,' said Falconer; 'I'll carry you—on my back. I'm strong—and useless;—and you're weak, and always at work. You look ill!'

'It's nothing, lad; only a bit of pain in my side. But here we are at home. Come in and have a bit of supper.'

'Not now; I'm going to meet some lads down town.'

'Sit down a minute, then, and cheer me up, lad. That's it. Now I can see you. To see your bonny bright face, and hear your open, ringing laugh, puts new life in me; and I thank God with all my heart for giving us such big, brave, sailor-lads, like yourself. Yes, let's have a chat together.'

The deformed little man buzzed and hummed about cheerfully; now chatting, and now inciting Falconer to chat, until in a few minutes his little deal table was laid for supper, and a smoking dish of fragrant stew enticed the hungry sailor to stay.

'I'm off, Noble,' cried Falconer, jumping up.

'Listen! Falconer. Have a good plate of stew, and a talk with your old friend. Then, having warmed my poor old heart, and done me a world of good, you'll be just in time to go down town.'

Noble said grace with deep reverence, and the two sat down to a meal which was greatly relished, for both were hungry. Never had Falconer laughed more heartily, nor had the dwarf been gayer when listening to Falconer's boisterous mirth.

'Now I must go!' cried the sailor.

'Won't you stay a little longer?'

'Not to-night; but I'll soon come in again, never fear.'

'Oh, Falconer!' said Noble, holding the sailor by the hand, and speaking with deep emotion; 'don't go with the drunken gang at Barrett's Bar. With them you'll lose your manliness, your self-respect, your all; all that makes life of value and use. My heart yearns for you, oh, my son, my son, but you are in great danger!'

'Never fear for me, Noble.'

'But I do fear, lad. I must speak out the truth. Those men are a bad-hearted lot, a band of drunkards. Would you become like them? Brave as a lion before the foe, or in danger, you are as weak as water amongst false friends!'

'I'm not afraid,' said Falconer, with a laugh.

'That's what troubles me. I wish you were afraid to join that crew at the Bar; what will the end of it be?'

'I don't know, and hardly care!' replied Falconer, somewhat bitterly.

'Think! a blow, a false step, a plunge over the jetty, and a brave blue-jacket disappears for ever! Oh, Falconer, when I think of this, and tremble to think it might happen to you, my heart is full of sorrow!' Noble

trembled with emotion, and tears stood in his eyes.

His words were not lost. His heart, his life, had spoken to the sailor with irresistible force. And now, at last, the hidden forces of a noble nature responded to the call.

Falconer was deeply touched. He drew himself up, and looked straight into his friend's eyes, with the air of a man whose mind is made up.

'Oh! Noble,' he exclaimed, grasping his hands tightly, 'what you say is too true. I am utterly ashamed of myself. The companion of drunkards and fools, I shall soon be the same, if I'm not that already. But look here! In your presence I vow, before God, to give up the company of drunkards; I'll touch drink no more, come what may of it!'

'Your hand on it, Falconer.'

They gripped each other's right hand.

'I can trust you now, my bonny lad; but mind, the moment of trial must come. Let us both now work, act, and think together. Have something useful to do, and do it. You were meant for better things, I know it. God bless you!'

When Falconer was gone, Noble sat at the door of his cottage buried in thought; and his eyes and thoughts seemed to roam over the upland at his feet, over the great expanse of blue water forming the magnificent harbour; over to the lofty ranges bounding his vision; and then up to the clear blue sky forming the vault of the heavens.

'Alone, alone! A solitary old man!' he murmured to himself. 'Alone, and yet not alone. No. As I look round on this beautiful, wonderful scene, this Nature teeming with life, full of sunshine and beauty, I feel myself a part of it God speaks to me through it, as He never spoke in the olden time, and my fears are hushed. I listen and I hear Him. What care I for the wealth I once craved for, and sinned for, alas! God has stripped me of it to shew me how hollow and false it made me. There I am again, dreaming; and about myself, always about myself!'

'Falconer, my brave sailor, you should fill my thoughts, my life. The thought of you should nerve me to action. My debt to you is great; great shall be the payment, if God will only help me to do it.

'But will he stand the test? It must come. It comes to all of us, sooner or later. Will he stand the taunt, the sneer, the laugh, and not be turned from the right? Will he come out of all this faithful and true? If he does, he is saved. O God, help me!' cried the old man; 'help me to save him—to save him from ruin!'

Chapter II. Noble at Work.

Hullo, Falconer! Come along, hurrah! for a "tot;" you're late,' said the barkeeper. 'Good evening, boss,' replied the new-comer.

'Why, what's up, Falconer? You're late, and you look as sober as a judge!'

'Do I? I mean to keep so.'

'Here you are; fill up! Come on, Falconer, have a good "nip" for luck. Three cheers for—'

'Not to-night, lads. I've given up drink. Let me pay my score and be off.'

The barkeeper and the drinking crew of sailors and beach-combers actually stared at him, speechless for a moment. Never had they known a sailor, in health and in his senses, who refused to drink, and especially with his old companions.

'Why, what's up, Falconer? You're ill!'

'No! I'm first-rate.'

'He's turned "Methodiss,"' cried one of the gang, exasperated. 'Give him a white "choker!"'

'It would be a good thing for you,' replied Falconer, 'if you were a "Methodiss," if it kept you from drink, and taught you to pay your debts.'

'I told you so,' sneered another; 'give him a tub to stand on, he'll give us a sermon in a minute.'

'Yes, I'll give you a sermon in a few words, Garry: don't eat and drink until you've paid your debts like an honest man.'

'Ha, ha! that's good,' added the barkeeper. 'Come, Garry, my lad, what about your old score?'

But the half-drunken crew had had enough of Falconer's quiet humour. They were heated by drink, and were ready for mischief.

'No man ever refused to drink with me,' cried Garry, the biggest and roughest of the lot, 'or else—'

'Or else what?'

'Why, just look here, my fine fellow; you think too much of yourself, and I'll take it out of you!'

'Go away, Garry,' added Falconer, laughing. 'You'll lose the grog; see how the others are lapping it up.'

'Let him alone, Garry,' said the barkeeper. 'I know all about it. Noble's at the bottom of it all. He's always

prowling about after Falconer. I'll be one with him yet; he's my enemy.'

'I advise you to let him alone,' said Falconer, seriously. 'He's my friend, and whoever touches him touches me. But no one with the heart of a man in him would touch a poor cripple; I won't believe it!'

'How big we are!' sneered Garry; 'and yet led by the nose by a bit of a dwarf.'

'I tell you, man,' replied Falconer, warmly, 'that poor crooked body covers a brave heart, a noble soul, which is more than you can boast of having.'

'Speak for yourself, not for me.'

'Oh, I know my own faults, and I'm ashamed of them. By Noble's help I hope to shake off a few.'

'No doubt, and your old chums too.'

'Most of them, probably. And, seeing the little good they do me, it won't be much loss, I fancy.'

Falconer turned away and left the Bar; but directly he did so the drinkers followed him, 'to take a rise out of him,' as they said.

Noble sat on one side of his cottage, and, strange to say, his hands were idle;—he was dull and sad. His side, his whole frame, pained him, and he felt low-spirited.

'Come! come! Noble,' said he to himself, 'what a silly old fellow you are, you're down in the dumps again. You're poor, are you? You're going to starve, are you?'

'Ah! see what pride did for you—lifted you up to the skies, and then knocked away the ladder from under your feet, and down you came. Thank God, you silly old fellow, you have a shelter you can call your own, with a bit of garden. And you have the great privilege of working with your own hands, like the great Apostle Paul—what more do you want?'

'But mind, if you want any peace here, if you want to look up, and feel you have God's blessing, then, *he* must be saved, at all risks.

'And Clara? Two lives in my keeping! Perhaps their future for all time depends on me.'

'And yet I dare not reveal her secret—poor, faithful heart—nor his!'

Just then a heavy, blundering knock was heard at the door, the latch was lifted—

'What is it, my good woman? Why, it's Mrs. Crappy!'

Mrs. Crappy, a gaunt, hungry-looking woman, rushed in, threw herself into a chair, and began to moan and rock herself about.

'What's the matter, Mrs. Crappy?'

'He's dying—he's dying!'

'Dying! But who?'

'Crappy, to be sure! They had such a terrible fight down town somewhere, and he's dying—dying! May God have mercy on us! What shall we do? oh, what shall we do, Mr. Noble?' The poor woman broke down, and sobbed aloud in her misery.

The little man guessed that his help was wanted. He set to work at once. He gathered up lint, and ointment, and other little matters out of a small box, and put them carefully into a kind of old satchel. Then shuffling into a big overcoat, he opened the door, saying cheerfully, 'Come along, Mrs. Crappy, we'll see what we can do.'

Crappy was in a terrible plight. His mates had thrown him on his bed, and there Noble found him, dirty, battered, bleeding, and hardly conscious.

'Humph!' said Noble to himself; 'drink again!'

One arm was badly hurt; and when Noble felt amongst his ribs he groaned with pain. His face too was covered with blood, dirt, and bruises.

Noble worked hard and long, washing, binding up, and soothing the wounded man. He seemed to know what to do, and he did it with a quick and tender touch.

When Noble left, he toiled along homeward with great difficulty. Slower and slower he walked, suffering very acutely. At times he was racked by sharp pains and these took away his strength.

'My poor side!' he murmured, stopping; adding 'Come, come, Noble, be a man. A few more steps and then—'

But the little man had overtaken his strength. His head swam round. His legs gave way under him, and clutching at a fence to save himself, he sank down in a faint.

'Hullo! Who is this?'

'It's Noble,' cried Falconer, in amazement and g 'Who has done this? If I find out any of them had a hand in this,' he cried out fiercely, 'let them look out!'

Not long afterwards Noble gave a sigh, and opening his eyes found himself lying on his bed, and Falconer bending over him, at his wits' end to know what to do.

'It's only a faint,' said Noble; 'I'm all right now and so glad you are here. I'm better already—all directly you are with me.'

'Thank God!' exclaimed Falconer, greatly relieved.

'But do stay a bit with me. I am so—oh, what's that? Your head is cut; you have been hurt!'

'It's nothing. I was set upon by the loafers at the Bar. I got away from them and went home, but some how I couldn't rest. The barkeeper had threatened to ve you out, so I came along to see if all was right.

what a fright you gave me, when I found you on the found, insensible. I'll stay with you now and keep anchor-watch.'

Falconer finished the night by the fire.

Chapter III Dog's-Ear's Maoris.

If Noble was soon down in the dumps, soon overcome by weakness, he quickly recovered his usual gaiety, and he was soon up again.

'I'm like some of the flowers,' he used to say of himself to Falconer; 'a cold, sharp wind nips me, and I droop at once; but a bright, warm sun calls me to life again; and, like you sailors, "I crack on sail" at once.'

The next day the little man was working in his garden, active and cheerful as ever. The sun came out bright and warm, and numerous birds flitted about and sang amongst the trees at the end of his garden.

'Ah! my sweetie, you're there!' exclaimed Noble, looking up and listening; 'I knew you would come and give me a cheer up.' As he said this, a small bird of a yellow-greenish colour perched over him, and made the place resound with its rich melodies.

This is most likely a wax-eye or silver eye. It can only be found in Australia, New Zealand and various south-west Pacific Islands. It is suspected that the wax-eye only began to inhabit New Zealand after the arrival of humans, as its Maori name, tauhou, means stranger or new arrival. The species' permanent invasion of New Zealand occurred in or around 1856 ("Silvereye" <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/silvereye>). This is roughly ten years after the narrative is set, but thirty years before it was written, potentially making this detail contextually incorrect.

Then others came and joined in the concert. While it lasted, Noble, leaning on his spade, and in rapt attention, lost not a note of the band of warblers; he was filling his heart with melody for the day, as he often observed. The warblers ceased; then came the payment. Noble stood under the trees, and the birds flew about him, and picked up the bread-crumbs which he threw about, talking all the while as to old and valued friends.

The concert ended, the day's work began in earnest. 'I've forgotten the rest of my family, have I, Bouncer?'

The rough colley, Bouncer, had taken the tail of his master's coat, and was saying 'Good morning' as plainly as he could. A kind word sent him off frisking about like mad.

'Now, Bouncer; off those beds, sir, at once! and come and help me. We must dig some potatoes, and pull some lettuces and onions.'

'How early you are, Noble! Why, when do you git up, I should like to know?'

'Ah! Watts, how are you? I'm glad to see you. Won't you come inside?'

'I thought I was up early,' continued Watts, 'but you—'

'I mostly get up at sunrise, and sometimes before it The fact is, I like to lay in a stock of melody and courage for the day. I get up to meet the King?' 'King! I like that, Noble; what King?'

'The King and Lord over all. Then the King of Day appears,—the Sun. And after that, my concert.'

'Concert!' Watts stared in blank astonishment.

'Yes; I step down the garden, and my birds are generally waiting for me. They sing, and sing, until I fancy myself sometimes in fairyland, or in heaven.'

The birds were nothing to Watts, so he jerked out, 'You're like Robinson Crusoe out here; ain't you afeard a bit?'

'No—why?'

'It's so lonely-like; and you're away from the town.'

'To tell you the truth, Watts, I feel quite at home out here, and not so lonely as I should be in the town—'

'That's accordin' to taste, anyhow; but how about the Maoris?'

'What about them? Anything new?'

'They're up to mischief agin, haven't you heard of it?'

'No. What have they done?'

'They've broke out again; though it ain't exactly what they've done what troubles us, it's to know what they're going to do. They've come down upon Mills, out beyond Kai-wara-wara, and Mills has been brought in cut about by a "tommyhawk." So you see you're in for a lively time of it.'

'Is it Dog's-ear's tribe, do you know?'

'They say so; only he's been pushed to do it by the big bully as hates us all, Rangihaeata, from Porirua. He swaggers about, and says he'll drive all the Pakeha into the sea—and them as is left he'll eat!'

I'm surprised at this, Watts, because Dog's-ear and his men are so friendly with us out here. They're always coming to have a chat with me. Only the other day Dog's-ear gave me his staff, telling me it was *tapu* (sacred), and that my cottage would be *tapu* too.'

'It's a sudden quarrel has set them agin us. And I'm sent to warn you of it. It's for you to know what is best, but if I was you, I should leave this—'

'But tell me about the quarrel.'

'A small chief, a swaggerin', bullyin' sort of a Maori, struck one of Tommy Withers' boys. So Tommy gave him one between the eyes and sent him spinnin' on his back. He jumped up and ran off howlin' vengeance. And now all the Maoris round about are out on the war-party, so look out!'

Noble, attended by Bouncer, was away nearly all day in and about the town. He had to dispose of his produce and nets, make purchases, and look up his patrons, the sailor-fishermen, and get fresh orders from them.

When the little man arrived home, tired and hungry, he was surprised for a moment to find the door ajar. This, however, did not trouble him. The door was always on the latch, and any one could enter during the daytime.

His evening meal was soon finished, and he sat down to read, deeply absorbed. At this moment several dark figures glided up the garden in the dusk. When they reached the cottage they clustered around a partly-open window at Noble's back; they were Maoris, painted, armed, and on a war-party.

As the Maoris with fierce look watched Noble, only waiting the signal to act, he rose from his chair, shut the book, and knelt down.

The warriors were astonished; where was his God? they could not see him. It was his *Karakia*, they whispered. Was the white man's *Karakia* very powerful, very dangerous? What would happen to them?

Nothing did happen, and their courage revived.

In an instant they burst into the room and seized Noble; an axe gleamed aloft, just ready to descend!

'Stop, O friends!' cried Noble. 'You know Dog's-ear is my friend. He comes here—he eats—he drinks—we're friends; won't you eat?'

'Kapai!' they cried; 'yes, we'll eat'

The Maoris were ravenous, and Noble's food diminished fast. Eating seemed to appease them, and they called Noble a good Pakeha, although so very small.

Suddenly in dashed a young chief. 'Ha! Tau-reka-reka!' he cried, in a state of fury. He rushed at those Noble was feeding, and drove them out with hard blows.

'Pakeha, dog!' he exclaimed, 'your time is come—you die!'

'Look here, O chief!' cried Noble, presenting Dog's-ear's staff. 'I claim protection; this is *tapu*, the cottage is *tapu*, and I—'

With a fierce growl the chief rushed at him, bound him up as a prisoner—he dared not kill him—thrust him out, and drove him along the road towards the Maori camp.

The old pains came upon Noble. He begged to be allowed to rest.

'You Pakeha have insulted and beaten me,' hissed the young chief. 'I'll have revenge!'

At length Noble sank down, utterly exhausted and unable to march further. He was hoisted on to the back of a big Maori, to his disgust, and was borne thus into camp. There he was pitched into a corner, and left to himself.

He fainted, and for the moment was insensible to suffering.

Chapter IV. Friends and Foes.

Pakeha! Pakeha!' greeted Noble's ear as he came to and tried to collect his thoughts, feeling choked by a terrible thirst.

Noble looked up at his surroundings. He was inside an old *raupo* hut, still bound tightly, hungry, thirsty, and in great pain—altogether in an awkward plight.

'Water! water!' cried Noble, hoarsely. 'Oh, give me some water!'

In a minute an unknown hand had placed a gourd full of water to Noble's lips, and he drank on until the calabash was dry.

'Oh! how sweet it is, how sweet!

'But who are you, O friend? you are a friend indeed to the poor Pakeha!'

A voice whispered in his ear, 'Don't you remember old Pekapeka who—s-s-sh!'

Steps were heard. When all was quiet, the voice said again, 'Old Pekapeka who fell down ill amongst the Pakeha! and you, O friend, you had the white heart, and saved him—you saved the old Maori slave!'

'And he has saved me,' added Noble; 'so we are quits, Mr. Pekapeka. But tell me, what are they going to do with me?'

'Oh, my master, if I could only help you! but what can a poor old Maori slave do?'

'He can give a cup of cold water to those who thirst, and the great *Atua e Rangi* (God of heaven) will reward him some day.' The grateful old slave said Dog's-ear was not in camp. He was out somewhere with Rangihaeata. Dog's-ear did not want to injure the settlers. He said if there were bad men amongst them, so there were bad men amongst the Maoris, and both should be punished, but not those whose word was straight.

Much of the racial conflict in the novel comes from the Pakeha hunger for land, which is something that Chief Pakihure (only briefly introduced at the end of the novel) asserts: *We are not Pakeha. We cling to our own country. "Don't divide the crayfish;" we won't have our land divided*(222). Belich outlines three responses that Maori took when presented with this circumstance which are: Resistance, opposition to resistance as it hampered economic activity, and neutrality (73). Because some Maori are vilified throughout the novel it is significant that Fraser makes the distinction between so-called 'good' and 'bad' early in his narrative to avoid pigeonholing.

A slight kindness, a soft word, dropped like seed into a savage heart, had worked its way, it came back upon Noble fraught with pity and help.

This moment of calm was broken suddenly by cries, shouts, and firing of guns. Then followed that terrible, maddening rush—stamping, leaping, and wildest of all raging—the war-dance!

The hoarse, guttural respiration of rage, worse than a mere cry, was accompanied by so heavy a thud of naked feet on the dry ground that the very place trembled, as did Noble also, for it boded no good to him.

Soon afterwards a rush was made to Noble's hut. A blow from the end of a spear, given as to a dog, made Noble sit up. Facing him stood a chief of gigantic size, whose massive limbs betokened immense strength; he was the cruel, restless fighter, Rangihaeata.

'Dog of a Pakeha!' he shouted in a passion, 'we'll soon clear the country of you all—all of you! We'll drive you into the sea; or, better still, into the oven! I have said it.'

Soon after, amidst shouts and jeers, accompanied by blows and ill-usage, another victim was dragged forward, and thrown into Noble's hut. The Maori heart was steeled against pity at that juncture.

'Bill, old man,' said the new-comer, speaking to himself, 'you've never been "trussed-up" like this afore. It's wus nor the "irons," and wusser than the bos'un's mates tricing a feller up to the triangles!'

'Bill Worsall!'

'Eh, old shipmate, that's me. But who's that?'

'It's only Noble, my lad.'

'What, Noble! And you here with these blacky-moor rascals?'

'I'm a prisoner, Bill, like yourself. I'm afraid we're in a fix, my bold sailor; but how did you come here?'

'Why, you see, I was out on a bit of a spree—'

'Always those "sprees," Bill, those terrible drinking-bouts, those—'

'Why, what fun would you give a sailor-man? Can't he have a bit of fun somehows? a pipe, a glass, a song, and a dance.'

'Yes, but what follows? What about the next day?'

'You're right, old man, arter all; only I can't keep to ginger-pop and water-creases, and they don't mix like. I wants some grog to keep 'em down, and make 'em digest.'

'As I wur going to say, Garry, and Nobbles, and a lot of us, had a tall evening at the Bar, you see. The liquor flew about in any quantity. Falconer came in and "riled" the chaps, and then we all went out for a walk. The second time we went back did for us; there was quarrelling and fighting, and Bob's a-dyin' goin' on. Then Garry got an ugly prod; but I knows who did it—it wur foul work, and I'll tell all about it, if I gets a chance, I will.' 'But what about yourself?'

'I don't know how it wur, like. I found myself on my "beam-ends," and somebody whacking into me. Then I come to a-bit, and I saw it was Moories—and here I am, regularly "mittened."'

Bill's speech was cut short. Some Maoris came in, cut their bonds, and dragged them outside, making them sit down together under a tree.

'Bill Worsall!' said Noble, suddenly.

'Yes, old man, but be quick. If it's anything you've got to say, out with it—it will soon be all up with us; do—'

'Did Falconer drink? was he—was he—drunk, when you had that shindy?'

'Oh, no! Says he, "I won't touch a drop. I've guv my word, and I won't touch it," says he, just as we went out the first time. "Good-bye, Bill, I'm off home!" I wish I'd ha' gone off home too—that I do, old man.'

'Thank God!' burst from Noble; 'he's stood the test!'

The prisoners sat waiting for death. A group of scowling natives sat on their heels near them—in silence.

Up jumped the young chief who had captured Noble. 'Men of the Ngatiana, allies, listen to my words,' said he, as he walked to and fro. 'Are we not Maoris? Have we not marched down here in recent times under the great Te Rauparaha? Is not the land ours, conquered by our arms, by our bravery? Who can stand before us?

'But now these miserable Pakeha cross our path. Who are they? Slaves cast out of their own land, and lo, they come here to fasten on us. They cheat, and lie, and steal—yes, they try to steal our land and drive us away.

'Death to the Pakeha!' he shouted, brandishing his terrible club ferociously in high air.

The rest were greatly excited, but dared not move—they remained silent, as was the custom.

'They are nothing but women,' said another, in impassioned tones; 'they are only fit to drive the *Apokororo* into the net. Shew a bold face to these Pakeha—they run! Pursue them—they cry for mercy! Mercy! to the invaders of our land? Never! They came only to eat up the land; let them find the *mere*, and eat that!'

The *mere* being a club, the allusion greatly pleased the assembled warriors.

'Noble,' said Bill Worsall, 'it's "two-blocks" with us this time. Before we gits a crack with one of those clubs, I should like—'

'What troubles you, Bill?'

'It's the old dad, Noble. If you're saved, and ever see anybody as is going to Rotherhithe, tell 'em to ask for old Worsall, lighterman; tell him, his son Bill, as he's a dyin' man, axes his pardon, which he would on his bended knees if he could—my poor old dad, God bless him, and forgive me! for I didn't do right by him when I ran away—'

'Ah, they're comin'—shake hands, good-bye, Noble!'

A warrior crept toward them—his stone *mere* firmly grasped, ready to give the fatal blow!

But now a chief of noble and commanding mien walked proudly into the ring; and a murmur of respect and awe swept through the rude Maori throng, as he challenged and claimed each warrior's attention.

'What! who dares speak of war when Dog's-ear is not present?' he asked. 'Who dares go on the war-party against the Pakeha without Dog's-ear's permission—without his will, not led by his strong arm? Why are these Pakeha doomed to die?'

'They are slaves,' said the young chief, 'who have insulted us. I was beaten by these Pakeha; I, a chief of your tribe. And I demand revenge!'

'Good. But justice first—revenge afterwards. Stand up, Pakeha, and answer for yourselves. You are accused; speak out, and fear not!'

Noble tottered forward towards the chief. As he did so, Dog's-ear gave a piercing glance at the little man, now sinking from hunger and ill-usage.

'Oh, Dog's-ear,' he cried, 'did you not eat my bread—did you not call me your friend—did you not—'

With a bound the chief was by his side, ere he fell, overcome by weakness. He caught Noble in his arms as if he were a child.

'He's my friend!' said Dog's-ear, in a tone that admitted of no reply.

The abashed warriors hastened away, and the great chief carried his friend into his own hut, and waited on him like a servant.

'I never see the likes of that,' said Bill to himself. 'Just as that blackymoor wur going to do it, old Dog's-ear walks off with Noble as if he wur his own son. Go it, sonny. I'd walk off too if I could git anybody to be a parient like to me.'

Looking round, Bill Worsall saw a chief making signs to him, and as they were evidently friendly—referring to eating and drinking—Bill knew it was all right, and he crept into the chief's hut.

'Landed agin, old beauty!' he exclaimed, with a sailor's happy indifference, 'and in for a good feed too.'

'I shall see the dear old dad arter all!'

Chapter V. Hopes in the Dust.

Ge Aro Flat, Port Nic., at this period was loosely dotted over by rough weather-boarded huts or cottages. These mostly had two rooms and a covered-in outhouse at the back.

The outhouse, as we may call it, to one of these cottages had been converted into a sleeping-room. It had been partly papered with old newspapers, but having no chimney was ventilated by the window. This window was simply an opening without a frame, and was covered by a wooden shutter on hinges.

A low bed stood on one side, and a deal table in the middle of the room. There was one chair, and this was occupied by a young man, who leaned upon the table, and sat buried in thought.

This young man was Falconer, the sailor.

Falconer looked up at the bit of flickering candle—almost gone—and his thoughts seemed to oppress him. His was a manly face. His look was frank, and his features were pleasing.

He looks at his knuckles. As he does so, a fierce light comes into his eyes, but dies away as quickly as it came.

'Why should I get angry and despise them?' he says to himself. 'They are my companions—equals—friends. I'm only a sailor—a common sailor, living from hand to mouth. Why do I kick at my lot?'

Yet he did kick at it, and his thoughts evidently went in that direction.

'What can I do better?' he continued. 'And yet I *ought* to do something better, perhaps. It is true I was educated expensively, and lived at home in ease and comfort—as a gentleman. Then came the startling revelation, when fortune and home were swept away, that I *was* useless—that I *am* useless.'

'Father! Mother! Clara! Where are they? Gone! Gone!' Falconer bent his head, and a convulsive sob shook him—'Gone! And I, the most useless, the most worthless of all, left—the companion of drunken beachcombers!'

Falconer got up and pushed the chair aside. He felt stifled. He wanted air. His reflections choked him. He threw open the shutter, and looked out into the darkness.

He fancied for a moment he saw some moving figures. But he smiled at the idea. He had nothing to lose but himself, he said bitterly, and there were few thieves at Port Nic.

'I'm a coward, a selfish brute!' he muttered again. When the whirlwind came down upon the house of John M—, merchant, it was lost amidst the foaming breakers.

True. But who came up out of the wreck? An old man, sinking, dying, and a stalwart fellow who should have faced the world like a man.

'And what have I done to justify my manhood? Buried myself here among beach-combers and sawyers; drinking, quarrelling, and gambling my life away—and with it my manhood.'

'And Clara? Dear, patient, noble Clara!' Falconer groaned, as if suffering great pain: he was smitten at heart.

'Yes,' he added, 'and to finish my shame, I have even cast Clara away; thinking because I could not hold up my head proudly in England, I had the right to break my word to her, and bury myself here, indifferent to her suffering—to her love—to my own honour—only thinking of myself.'

His punishment had come home to him. His soul now pined for the real, tender sympathy of a pure woman's affection—and it was lost to him!

'I've spurned the woman who could have given me a hope in life,' he continued; 'and now what would I not give for one kind word from her, bidding me to hope—to rise up and be a man—for her sake?'

Mechanically he pulled out a piece of paper on which Noble had asked him to make a calculation for him one evening. He looked at it, and he remembered Noble's words that evening. Now, when he thought of them, they seemed strange—his questions about Liverpool—whom he knew there—whether he had lived there: all centring round Liverpool.

'Did he know my father?' asked Falconer of himself.

'He asked, too, if I knew Mr. M—, the merchant.'

I remember now, how I longed to tell him my history—to tell him all. But I dared not—not even to my best friend—for he is the only friend I can really count upon.'

Falconer's eyes had been wandering dreamily over the bit of paper in his hand; then he threw it down on the table. It turned over, and—

He seized it, with flashing eyes; and, holding it near the candle, tried to spell out some old writing.

'Hers!' he said, jumping to his feet; 'her very signature, or I never saw it. There's no mistaking it; the name is so uncommon.'

This piece of paper was a piece of an old letter. On the folded part, which had been hidden, was the following signature: Clara Banttza.

Falconer—as we shall always call him—was powerfully agitated. His affection for Clara awoke again with renewed force. The thought of her love being his threw a flash of deep joy in upon his barren, lonely heart. Hope arose at once, and beckoned him forward. He would get seriously to work—would make a name—create a position—and then offer all to Clara.

But the next thought, alas, brought down his towering, wonderful castles, and laid them in the dust. The thought was this, 'Does she love me after the silence, the indifference, the insults of the past?'

Then, too, how was it Noble knew her? for her signature was evidently on a letter—was part of a letter—to Noble.

His mind was in a tumult. His agitation was so great he could not rest. 'I'll run to Noble at once,' burst from him, 'and have the matter cleared up. I'll confess all to him—and he shall decide.'

This even he could not do then; it was not long past midnight.

'At any rate I must go out and have a turn in the air. I shall be stifled here, and sleep I cannot.'

As Falconer turned towards the door, the wooden shutter opened, and two men sprang into the room. As he faced round to meet them two others came in at the door—he was surrounded!

'What, Mr. Dawson! Is that the way you take possession of my room? What do you want?'

'You!' replied the head constable.

'Me!'

'Yes; you're my prisoner!'

'If so,' added Falconer, getting angry, 'there must be a charge—what am I charged with?'

'Murder!'

For a moment Falconer was dazed; but instantly recovering himself he seized the chair in his powerful grasp, and placing his back against the wall stood—defiant!

'I'm no murderer,' said he. 'I never lifted a weapon to a man in foul play—never! I have never been in prison yet, and alive I never will go there. Do your worst!'

'Come, Falconer,' replied the chief constable, 'this is a sad business for us as for yourself. But we have our duty to do; and you know it must be done.'

'On what do you found your charge?' asked Falconer.

'On this, they say—mind you, it is hearsay. You had a quarrel with some one at the Bar—you threatened each other—you went out and fought—he was found stabbed—and you're charged with doing it.'

'When was it done?'

'On Friday last.'

'I left the party at the door. It is true I had to defend myself, and got one or two knocks. But all the fellows went in again, I believe. I went and found Noble, and stayed with him; he can prove it.'

'I cannot argue the point,' said the chief constable. 'It is only out of consideration for yourself that I have explained what I know. I have simply a warrant to arrest you—here. Don't, however, trust too much to what Noble can do.'

'Why?'

'Because the Maoris have captured him; they say he's killed!'

Falconer put down his chair and sat down, his defiance gone, and his hope too.

Arraigned on such a charge, in the hands of those who were now enemies, his best friend gone, the one on whom all his hopes rested to prove his innocence—life itself was at stake!

'Lead on, Mr. Dawson,' said Falconer, 'but don't touch me. I'm afraid of myself just now. I shall be quiet enough if you let me walk as I am.'

Thus Falconer went to prison.

Chapter VI. Down at Last.

The young settlement at Port Nic was in danger, so the colonists thought, and every one was uneasy and fearful. The fierce, thoughtless blow given by Tommy Withers to the young chief had raised a whirlwind of passion in the native breast. Revenge to a Maori—complete revenge - is the dominant passion of his untutored heart. The proud, inflexible Maori bequeathed his feuds to his fellow-tribesmen, and *utu*, or payment for an insult—for blood—was exacted to the uttermost farthing.

Maori terms such as *utu* (balance, repaying, avenging) are unfamiliar to non New Zealand readers. Fraser explains the term here, italicising it to emphasise the Maori origin of the word. However this is inconsistent throughout the novel as Maori words and terms are not always italicised or explained.

The scattered settlement, exposed as it was on all sides, filled by colonists unaccustomed to war, and by women and children for whom there was no real shelter, felt its dangerous position. And the cry arose for arms, shelter, organisation, and help.

Invasion was a genuine concern for the settlement of Port Nicolson during 1844. Miller writes that "At Wellington four hundred volunteers mustered for inspection on Thorndon Flat, and worked from daylight till dark erecting batteries and drilling in the rain, until fifty-three grenadiers of the 96th arrived from Auckland and the townsmen, having been ordered in very peremptory terms to disband, confined their activities to rifle-shooting in their own gardens" (76-7).

But the settlers were shut off from the rest of the world, and were bound to help themselves. So they roused up, as Englishmen do when they are face to face with danger. They armed themselves, appointed rendezvous if attacked, chose officers accustomed to warfare, and waited ready-armed to see what the Maoris meant.

If Dog's-ear had been of the same character as the savage Rangihaeata, Port Nic. might have fared badly. It certainly would have had to fight for existence. But Dog's-ear, although pretending to humour his tribe in their wild outcry for revenge—revenge, which, when begun, could only stop by the Pakeha being killed and driven

away, as Dog's-ear thought—determined not to allow them to proceed to extremities.

Dog's-ear could not prevent a few barbarous acts; but, under the guise of dealing out fair justice, he began to stop all aggression upon the Pakeha, whom, from some cause or other, he chose to protect as friends: and a chief's word in those days was law.

Besides, the chief had a real liking for Noble. For Noble, with simple good faith in the Maoris, had treated them as friends. And Dog's-ear, unknown to his tribe, had spent many an hour in Noble's cottage, the one talking of the new country and its various resources, the other of the old country and its wonderful civilisation.

They were friends. This friendship had saved Noble's life. And it probably saved Port Nic. in its hour of danger.

It is midnight, and dark. Scarcely a star can be seen. Under cover of this darkness various dark forms creep stealthily along the rough roadway leading from Kai-wara-wara, and so towards the town.

Happily they meet no one. The town was asleep, and most of the outlying houses had been vacated during the scare, and their owners had taken shelter in town.

A short distance behind the Maori scouts—for such they were—came a body of Maoris. They were armed, and marched from very instinct stealthily and warily. In their midst was carried a kind of rough brancard, and in this lay Noble.

By his side walked Dog's-ear. And the cavalcade marched along in perfect silence.

The party soon left the roadway, and moved more inland, over broken ground and amidst wooded knolls, until the Maoris reached a deserted house. It was Mills' farm; but, though entirely deserted, not a thing had been touched inside the house since Dog's-ear had given orders not to touch Pakeha property.

The bearers now moved more rapidly, and the whole party soon reached Noble's cottage. Here, after close scouting, the door was opened, and once more Noble lay on his own bed—at home.

'Friend!' said Dog's-ear, 'rest in peace. Whoever touches you touches my head,'—which really implied death for so doing.

But Dog's-ear's friendship went further. He made his men put the place in order, light a fire, bring wood and water, and fill Noble's little store-room with kits of potatoes, onions, and *kumeras*.

'Now, O friend, stay!' exclaimed the great chief. 'I must go—'

'Go, O friend!' said Noble, languidly.

'Remember it is not war between us; only your people are angry—if they find us here there will be fighting—I go!'

'The great Atua over all bless you, O friend!' said Noble, feebly; 'and do to you as you have done to me in my hour of need.'

The noble warrior bowed, although he did not understand the allusion; and drawing off his men he disappeared as silently as he had arrived on the scene of action.

Noble tried to get up. He could scarcely move. His strength seemed gone, and he was racked with sharp pains.

'Down at last!' he groaned, wearily.

'Dumps! Dumps! I tell you again, you silly old fellow. Hasn't God preserved your life from the Maoris—even given you friends amongst them—and brought you home like a prince, and filled your house with food—and now you grumble! I'm ashamed of you! Just a few twinges, and down you go.

'That's it! Now, again!' and with great effort Noble crawled out of bed, guiding himself by a chair, and reached the table. Here he found some cool water. 'Delicious! Almost better than Mr. Pekapeka's in the hut yonder,' he exclaimed.

He crawled into bed again.

This time he was really down—with a bad attack of rheumatic fever.

Tap! tap! sounded at the door, but there was no reply.

'Mr. Noble, may I come in?' The latch was lifted slowly, and the widow Norris put her head inside, to find Noble quite helpless and almost delirious.

'Maoris or no Maoris, here I stay,' said she, putting her basket in one corner, and beginning to look round with the air of a woman who knows what to do and how to do it.

'God bless him!' said Mrs. Norris to herself. 'He's befriended a lone widow in her distress, and now I'll stand by him through it all.'

'I will save him!' cried Noble, speaking wildly. 'He's dearer to me than all, is he not—is he not? What do I not owe him? But I'll pay the debt—I will, I tell you! Why do you keep me here? let me get up!'

'Yes, yes,' replied the nurse, 'so you shall.'

Noble looked at Mrs. Norris for a moment, then he said, so piteously, 'Don't you know Clara? Poor dear, her heart is breaking! I must go to her—let me go!'

'So you shall—but drink this first.'

One day during the terrible fight with fever, pain, and weakness, the door opened, and in walked Scotty, who was perhaps the best of Falconer's friends in the town—at any rate the steadiest of them.

He stood just inside the door, staring with amazement at the pale, sunken features of the sick man, who for the moment was quiet.

Mrs. Norris made a signal—it meant, 'Be silent and creep out again.'

The two crept outside, and then Mrs. Norris told the young man all she knew of Noble's illness, and of his danger.

'But I must see him,' said Scotty, 'I must!' 'Impossible!' rejoined Mrs. Norris; 'it would kill him!'

'What can I do?'

'Call again in a day or two, and then we'll see what can be done.'

'Poor Falconer!' murmured Scotty to himself as he went away—'he'll be lost for want of evidence!—not one in his favour!'

Chapter VII. Falconer's Danger.

After a hard struggle with the enemy, Noble was conqueror. The fever was beaten, but he looked like a ghost.

Scotty crept in again—as he had done several times—and, in spite of Mrs. Norris's signals, told Noble how delighted he was to see him smile and nod at him as in the olden time.

'I'm so much better, Scotty.'

'Nonsense!' exclaimed Mrs. Norris; 'he's that weak he can hardly talk.'

'Such an old hulks, Scotty. But I'm going on first-rate. Mrs. Norris treats me like a prince. I'm right down spoiled.'

'I told you the Maoris didn't mean to harm us. Treat them well, Scotty, and they'll be good friends.'

'Perhaps so, only—'

'Only what?'

'You don't know how to take them. They've been well paid for all the land about here; and now others come forward and want to be paid over again; it's—'

'That's because we were such noodles at first. Look here, our people were so eager to buy land, that they raked together all the chiefs they could find, and then what did they do?'

'Talked them over.'

'Not exactly. But they dazzled them by offering them untold wealth—to their eyes. What was the result? These chiefs saw their chance. They put in their claims to land which did not wholly belong to them; they were paid handsomely for what they had no right to sell. Then the head chiefs—the principal owners—appeared, and we quarrelled with them for our own stupidity.

'Dog's-ear told me all about it—'

'Have you seen him—here?'

'I was with him and his tribe for some time, as you know, and for a time in an awkward position. Dog's-ear saved my life. Tell our people so. He brought me home, and has kept me in provisions since I've been ill.'

'I'll tell our people all about it,' said Scotty; 'they will be glad to hear it.'

'Do so; but oh, dear me, I'm forgetting Falconer! How is he? Do tell him I am anxious to see him.'

'He's all right, no doubt,' interrupted Mrs. Norris; 'you've been talking too long.'

'Just one word more: where's Falconer?'

Scotty looked grave, and was silent.

'Where's my bonny sailor? tell me, Scotty. Why are you silent?'

'He would like to see you, no doubt,—but—but he can't come.'

'Oh! Scotty; there's something wrong! what is it? I must know it all—and now.'

'He's in prison!'

'Falconer in prison!' Noble fell back with a sob of pain.

'Scotty,' he resumed, sitting up again, 'if you would not make me ill again—'

'No! no! I must forbid it!' said Mrs. Norris. 'Tell me all about it, Scotty!' cried Noble; 'I will know! Then I shall be quiet.'

'The difficulty,' replied Scotty, 'is to understand the affair. We cannot quite see how to defend him against the charge.'

'What charge?'

'Murder!'

Noble leaped up in bed as if shot. Then he bent forward and covered his face with his hands.

'This is the case as far as we know it,' added Scotty. 'He went to the Bar one night, and met the lads there. For the first time he would not drink,—so he says. Then he and Garry quarrelled. Presently, drinking and quarrelling became general, and in the end Garry was found stabbed.'

'But why take Falconer? I know Falconer It is impossible, Scotty—utterly impossible!'

'If we could only prove it! There are two things, the head constable says, dead against him.'

'What are they?'

'His quarrel with Garry that night—and here all the evidence seems to be in the hands of those dead set against him, wild characters like Black Charlie.'

'In fact, you have little evidence in his favour?' said Noble.

'None—or nearly none!'

'But the other point?'

'This: Garry being stabbed the same evening that, as everybody knows, he and Falconer had quarrelled together at the Bar. These facts put together go dead against him.'

'My brave Falconer! In prison!' murmured Noble, tears trickling down his wasted cheeks. 'But, come, this will not do; let us get to work!'

'Now tell me, Scotty,' said Noble, rousing himself, 'what was the exact time the party left the Bar? Did they go back—all of them, Falconer too? I want precise information here.'

'The party left the Bar at nine o'clock; and, it is said, Falconer was with them. I have found out this too, which may prove important; that the whole drinking party, *including Garry*, came back to the Bar after a time. They stayed there, drinking and quarrelling, and left late in the evening.'

'Was Falconer with them when they returned to the Bar?' asked Noble.

'He says he was not; that he had gone away home. If we can prove this assertion, he is saved!'

'It must be proved! It shall be proved! I will prove it!' cried Noble, springing up in bed, greatly excited. But he had overtaxed his strength, and he sunk down—exhausted.

Mrs. Norris now came forward, and actually pushed Scotty outside, refusing to let him speak another word to Noble that evening.

'Would you kill him?' asked Mrs. Norris, angrily. 'The doctor says he must be kept quiet, and you come and knock him up entirely.'

'Do listen!' begged Scotty at the door; 'the trial comes off to-morrow, and I believe Noble has direct evidence in Falconer's favour. If he can prove Falconer was not there when the others returned—'

'Good-night! Come in the morning,' said Mrs. Norris, curtly, shutting the door.

Noble lay very quietly when Mrs. Norris went to the bedside, to see what condition her patient was in after his great excitement.

'Ah! I'm one—he's two—and Scotty's three!' exclaimed Noble, suddenly.

'Good gracious!' said Mrs. Norris, 'he's gone off his head again.'

Noble was over-excited and restless, and kept saying, 'I'm one—he's two—and Scotty's three! One, two, three, and all in his favour! Hurrah! We shall win!'

He then fell asleep; and as he slept he smiled.

'He's dreaming,' mused Mrs. Norris; 'God grant his dreams may be sweet!'

They were sweet. Weakness, suffering, anxiety were all forgotten—he dreamt of victory.

It must be explained that the young settlement had just received a judge sent down from Sydney to act in criminal cases.

Englishmen in the colonies like to have a doctor to tell them when they are ill; a lawyer to settle their disputes; and a governor to hoist the Union Jack, and remind them of home.

The settlement at Port Nic. had its doctor, its judge, and, it was said, a governor was *en route*, who, with twenty soldiers and a subaltern, would overawe turbulent characters, and keep order and peace!

Sad to say, one of the judge's first trials was that of Falconer, for the wilful murder of Garry; and the trial, stripped of much of its ceremony—as conducted at home—was fixed for the morrow.

Chapter VIII. The Trial.

Falconer's position was critical. His independent, manly tone, his outspoken criticisms, and his refusal at last to drink with the rough crew he commonly associated with at the Bar, had turned nearly the whole party against him.

Scotty and one or two others, who respected Falconer, had worked hard to get positive evidence in his favour, but they worked in the dark. The rough gang at the Bar alone knew—so it was supposed—what had really taken place that night, the night when Falconer's vow was first made known to them. And of all the lot

none was so bitter, or witnessed so decidedly to every fact which told against Falconer, as Black Charlie, a man of fierce and repellent character. Falconer was proud at heart, and the cross-questionings of his friends to get at exact evidence in his behalf at length turned this pride against them.

'You do not believe me!' cried Falconer, bitterly. 'Like the rest, you evidently believe me capable of this crime. Do as you like; I shall answer no more questions.'

The very absence of any direct evidence in his favour made him the more sensitive, because his word had no support; and now his friends even did not believe his word! So he thought.

'Oh, Falconer!' said Scotty, the last thing the day before the trial, 'do not be obstinate; do at least help us to use all the means we can—'

'To force men to believe my word! I can't force opinion, it is useless to try it. If my own friends don't believe me, what do you expect of Black Charlie? Though he knows the truth, mark me; and will swear to anything to hide it—and will succeed!'

'Do tell me your suspicions even—anything you know. Do you believe Black Charlie—'

'What I believe I can't prove. Do you forget what I have said so often? I was not with them when the deed was done. But I believe this, if I had "boozed" with the lads that night, another would be here in my place.'

Scotty did not speak about Noble. He knew nothing certain about him. The invalid was so weak, too, that if he had any evidence, it was questionable if he could give it. But had he any? Scotty would make the last effort, and be sure about it.

So he crept up to Noble's cottage early the next morning, according to promise. He was afraid of Mrs. Norris, so he looked in at the window. Noble saw him, and beckoned him in. He was alone.

'When is the trial, Scotty?'

'To-day!'

Noble gave a cry, and nearly leaped out of the bed, so excited was he. He caught Scotty by the shoulders, and poured words into Scotty's ears with a force and vehemence almost alarming—words that electrified Scotty.

'He shall be found! hurrah!' cried Scotty, darting backwards towards the door. 'I'll answer for him!'

The young man ran his fastest to a neighbour's house, borrowed a horse, and pressed it by whip and spur at its utmost speed towards Kai-wara-wara.

'Mrs. Norris, be a good soul and help me; find my clothes, and put them on the chair.'

'No, Mr. Noble, I'll do nothing of the sort—there! It's madness—suicide—to get up, weak as you are; and mind, expressly against the doctor's orders. If you want to do anything out of doors, somebody must do it for you. You can't go; I won't let you go—there!'

'Yes, yes; I understand your kind meaning, Mrs. Norris; I know you, but—'

'No! no! I won't be talked over. It's this trial, eh? Can't it go on without you?'

'Falconer is like a son to me, dear to me as my life. I must save him—I will!'

'How? What can you do?'

'I have information, and I've sent for more, that will perhaps save him. Oh, if I had only known all this last night!'

'It will kill you, I know it will!'

A soft light came into Noble's eyes as he looked out of his cottage up into the clear blue sky; and he murmured to himself, 'It must be so—it must be done!' And he bent his head on his knees. When he looked up his decision was made.

The court-house was filled to overflowing. Outside, even, little crowds gathered here and there round well-known colonists, who spoke feelingly of the sailor who was being tried inside. There was a constant surging to and fro of people eager to see and hear what could be seen and heard of the trial.

But the talkers, the idle, and the curious all ceased talking at once; they were amazed, and their amazement increased.

A curious kind of procession approached them. 'What is it?' 'Who is it?' 'What does it mean?' were the questions asked by the crowd.

Some sailors were carrying somebody hoisted on high, who was evidently going to the court-house. 'Clear the way!' shouted the sailors, as they passed, bearing the rough palanquin,—an armchair fastened on poles.

Whoever was in the chair was so wrapped up in coats and comforters that no face was visible; and the form was scarcely human. Yet a brave man was there, bound on a noble errand.

When the whisper had passed from one to another, when the truth flashed through the crowd, and they knew Noble's errand, and recognized the courage and devotion which had prompted the act, there arose such a mighty hurrah! that it filled the court-house, rolled over the settlement, and stirred every heart that could feel.

Black Charlie gave his evidence.

He knew the prisoner well, had known him for a long time. They had often been 'chums' together and had

been shore-whaling up the Straits together. The prisoner was often 'stuck-up' and disagreeable, still he joined the lads in their speers. On that particular night they all were drinking together—and at first were very jolly.

'Did the prisoner drink with you?'

'Yes; he drunk like the rest of us.'

'It's a lie!' resounded through the place, and confused the witness.

'Give way for witnesses!' shouted a stentorian voice at the door.

Noble and his bearers could not enter. The difficulty was soon solved; the crowd handed the chair and its strange-looking occupant over people's heads, until both found a place near the judge.

Noble nodded and smiled at Falconer when he caught his eye; but the latter looked away—into space; the sight of Noble's ghostly, sunken face unmanned him.

Black Charlie stared for a minute with awe—fear—at the strange apparition; but, gathering courage, he went on again. He appeared to know everything that haphappened that Friday evening; he saw it all, and could swear to it all.

'You saw Falconer strike Garry—when the latter fell? Now, be careful! Think well before you speak!'

'The two quarrelled together, and began to fight.'

'Who?'

'Garry and Falconer.'

'At last Falconer struck him, and Garry groaned and fell down. He groaned again and rolled over. I didn't know till arterwards what sort of a blow it wor—how should I? They cries out, "The Moories are on us!" and we bolted for to hide. When we goes back, we finds Garry—and we carried him in.'

When the evidence for the defence was called, Noble's turn came.

Men hardly breathed as the ghostly-looking witness, too weak to stand up, gave his evidence.

'The greater part of the evening when, according to the indictment, the crime is said to have been committed, Falconer was with me,' said Noble.

'He found me in the evening, scarcely able to walk home from weakness; he helped me home, and stayed the rest of the night by my side.

'Falconer, early in the evening, had given me his word he would drink no more at the Bar. And I can prove that, though he went to the Bar to pay his score, he drank nothing. The party at the Bar followed Falconer outside; but when the party returned for more drink, *Falconer was not with them*—but Garry was!'

Could Noble swear to this from personal observation?

'No. It was given on the part of one who was with the party—who went out with the party—who returned to the Bar with it—who followed the drinkers out again—who can witness by whom the fatal blow was struck!'

'That witness must be found!' said the judge.

There was a pause. The judge took rapid notes.

'Give way for witnesses!' was cried again on all sides near the door.

When Noble heard that cry, he said to himself, 'There's Bill Worsall! I knew Scotty would find him.'

Bill Worsall it was; and his evidence, added to that of Noble, was conclusive.

Bill was a simple, straightforward sailor, and evidently spoke the truth. He gave the whole history of the evening's work—Falconer's refusal to drink—the animosity against him—the blows he received and gave outside the door—how he went off home, bidding Bill good-night—how the party returned for more drink. And he swore most distinctly on oath, that Falconer was not with them when they returned the second time for more drink, *but that Garry was*; for Bill treated him at the Bar.

Bill stopped suddenly, and, pointing to Black Charlie, cried out at the top of his voice—'There's the villain that did it!'

Bill was allowed to go on.

He saw Black Charlie strike Garry, and saw Garry fall. And, in the confusion, when the others ran at the cry, 'The Maoris are coming!' Bill stopped to help Garry, heard his last words, his denunciation of Black Charlie.

Bill was just then dragged away by some prowling Maoris—a prisoner.

Falconer was innocent—and free!

Order was at an end. People everywhere cheered, gripped each other's hands, and slapped each other's big, broad backs until tears ran down their owners' cheeks.

Falconer was surrounded, hemmed in, and could not move. At last he was caught up and carried out in triumph.

Then arose three mighty cheers; the heartiest and strongest that strong men could give their bonny, brave Falconer—innocent and free.

Chapter IX. 'He's Dead!'

Noble's return home was a kind of triumphal march. The crowds cheered him as he passed. He was the hero of the hour. Yet he replied to no one; indeed, so muffled up was his face that he could not be seen.

'He fears the wind; he is so weak, so tender!' said the people, as he passed homewards with his body-guard of sailors.

Falconer walked behind, and in silence. His was a strong, deep nature, and Noble's heroism had stirred it to its depths—he could not trust himself to speak.

The cortege reached Noble's cottage. The bearers entered with their burden, and Falconer and one or two personal friends followed.

'Stand back, lads!' said Falconer; 'I'm the one to help him now.'

He bent over the muffled form, and lifted Noble in his powerful arms with more than a woman's tenderness.

'How do you feel, Noble?' asked Falconer, in an anxious tone.

Noble was silent.

'Are you ill? What is the matter? Oh, do speak!' he continued, bending over the silent form now lying on the bed—motionless, speechless.

'What's the matter?' burst from Falconer. 'Oh! lads, do tell me, what is it?' He was so agitated he trembled with suppressed emotion, and could not undo Noble's wraps.

'Oh, Falconer, don't you see what it is?' exclaimed Mrs. Norris.

'No! Tell me!' he cried fiercely, clutching the widow's arm.

'It's death!—he's dead!'

'Dead!' cried Falconer, 'he can't be dead! Oh, tell me, lads, is he dead?' He looked round on the mute faces of his friends—he read the truth.

'Dead! Oh, why not me!' burst from him in loud agonizing tones, as cries a soul in its utter despair. He threw himself into a chair and covered his face. He would wrestle with his grief alone.

The sailors left him.

At length Mrs. Norris left her corner, gathered her few things together, and went and stood over Falconer, whom she touched gently on the shoulder.

'Leave him with God, my lad,' said she; 'for He has taken him from us; and come you out with me, for I must prepare him for his long rest.'

Falconer, without a word, walked out with Mrs. Norris into the bright sunshine—the sunshine which seemed to mock him just then.

He walked as in a dream. He was unnerved. He could not realize the momentous events of the last few hours in all their bearings, yet a crushing sense of guilt hung over him, and somehow he felt Noble's death was the result of his guilt.

He did not feel guilty on Garry's account. No. He was innocent there. He was guilty of throwing away God's greatest gifts to man—his life, hope, manliness, and honour. How could he answer this?

A few days later, Falconer sat reading a letter, just found: a letter addressed to Falconer by Noble; which affected him beyond expression.

This letter, after requesting Falconer to read it with attention, and begging his forgiveness for the wrong which, he had done him in the past,—at which Falconer stared with astonishment,—went on:—

'I found out some time ago you were the son of Mr. M—, the great Liverpool merchant. This discovery, however, troubled me much, until I could reach your affection; for your own proud silence as to the past barred *me* from speaking of it, as I ought to have done, and makes me leave this confession.

'I have done you, through your father, a great wrong. My debt to you is great. I hope that in some measure, however imperfectly, I have repaid some of it.

'I was eager to be rich; I was ambitious, and I led your father into my wild speculations. I involved him in my own ruin. He trusted me too implicitly, and I took advantage of him too readily. My ruin brought ruin upon him—and upon *you*.

'When I came to myself out here, a solitary, unknown settler, trying to live honestly, trying to make life useful and honourable once more, I came upon you. Then it was that a sense of what I owed you, a wanderer and disinherited, as it seemed, through my folly, struck me in all its force. Since then I have worked for you.

'I have left you two plots of land—the one here with my cottage on it, and the other a town lot. I believe these will be valuable in the future.

Noble's gift to Falconer echoes the way land was allocated by the New Zealand Company, which was one

of the driving forces behind bringing settlers to New Zealand. Land was sold as a package, with settlers receiving 100 rural acres for each town acre they purchased. The incentive for investors was the town acre, which became drastically more valuable as small settlements developed into towns and cities (“City history and people” <https://www.teara.govt.nz/en/city-history-and-people/page-1/>). While the Kaiwharawhara cottage is not on a 100 acre section, there are parallels, and it is possible that Fraser was aware of this settlement method when writing this passage.

It is all I can leave you. On no account sell them for years to come—but they are yours, and yours for ever. I have done my best to make these plots of some value hoping and praying they might enable you to make a fresh start in the colony, and gain a useful and honourable position.

'Just before I was ruined I became trustee for Clara Banitza, the only daughter of a noble refugee, whose mother was English. Her father died suddenly in my house. Clara visited me one day, after ruin had fallen upon me; she was then a teacher of music and languages. During this visit I learnt her secret—and yours.

'May I not speak to you now as to my own son? You won her love honourably—honourably it was given, and given for ever. Do not be false, Falconer. If ever a noble-hearted woman was worthy of a true man's love, that woman is Clara.

'Clara bound me to secrecy. Never until you came forward and avowed your love was I to divulge her secret—should I ever meet you—and put you in communication if you wished it.

'If your heart is faithful and true, let it speak out. Oh, Falconer, do rise from the dust and be a man. Break all ties of friendship with those who lure you to ruin. Take up life earnestly and seriously. Ask God to give you the heart, the will, to obey Him and do the right. Only be a man—true to God—to yourself—to Clara.'

Falconer's emotion on reading this letter cannot be described.

He now saw Noble's life in the colony had been one of self-sacrifice to repair an error; an error for which the world generally would not have held itself responsible.

To make restitution for the past, and save him from ruin—from his evil courses—at the same time opening out a brighter future for him, Noble had, it was now clear, sacrificed his own life.

Then that last scene, how could he ever forget that?

Knowing the fierce hatred of the desperate men led by Black Charlie, he shuddered to think what the result of the trial might have been, had not Noble, against all advice and all warning, boldly ventured into court to stay proceedings until witnesses could arrive, by which his innocence could be established—doing this, too, with the conviction that it would probably cost him his life!

'Oh, that I had Noble here for one short hour!' cried Falconer; 'that I might grasp his hand, might beg his pardon, might pour into his ear some of the gratitude which overpowers me; now, alas, for ever locked up in my own heart!

'Then, too, would I tell him my determination to take up life seriously and earnestly, not for my own selfish ends, but as held from God, in which to do my duty, and play a man's part to the best of my ability.

'Alas! It is too late.'

Repentance is never too late—reparation often is.

Chapter X. Light in Darkness.

Noble's humble cottage—his no longer—was silent. Death reigns there; and his presence paralyses the tongue even of the living.

Mrs. Norris sat and crooned to herself over the red embers of a big wood fire.

'Ah me! what a life it is! nothing fixed, sure, only that we must die. We're always dying, it seems to me, when we've just learnt how to live. Did anybody ever see such a man as he was'—turning her head—'and yet to die like that, throwing his life away, I call it!'

'Don't say that!' echoed a voice behind the window, which made her start and cry out.

'I'm sorry I frightened you, Mrs. Norris,' added Falconer; 'and yet your remarks hit me hard—but they're true; I wasn't worth the effort, the sacrifice of such a man!'

'I hope I haven't hurt your feelings, my lad; I forgot you, I was only thinking about him. There's plenty of bad men about; he was about one of the best I ever knew.'

'He was, Mrs. Norris; but for me—why is it the useless ones are spared?' There was silence for a moment. Then Falconer jumped up and paced to and fro.

'Sit down, lad; you loved him, I can see—you must have loved him—'

'Loved him!' cried Falconer, facing Mrs. Norris, looking pale and haggard, and greatly excited.

'Day by day he watched for me and over me—I see it now—as the angels do, they say, over those they love. No insult, no indifference, kept him from trying to call me back to the path of honour—back from the

living death of guilt and shame!

'Oh, blind, besotted wanderer!' he cried out, 'running blindly to ruin, held back by the love and self-denial of one I knew not, whose real life, whose real love were hidden from me, until now.

'And now it's too late! too late!'

'Too late, lad! it's never too late to mend; to turn from sin and folly; to seek the blessed love of Christ, which seems to me to be the only love that doesn't fail in this life.

'Think of this. Your friend's sole desire was to save you, you say?'

'It was, I firmly believe.'

'How? By leading you from sin and folly into the path of uprightness and honour. Follow out his desire, now. This is just the time. Perhaps it is the moment of decision.

'Decide, then! Men of your stamp—and will—often have a sharp struggle to get free; but, oh, it's for life or death!'

Falconer decided; but he had no force—no will—to act. The whirlwind had smitten him; who could stop its force? He felt powerless.

He jumped up suddenly and rushed out of the cottage.

He rushed along madly, feeling he must do something—go somewhere—anywhere, to get rid of the piercing, harrowing thoughts which, arming and pointing the tooth of despair, probed his quivering soul to its very depths.

Tearing along at great speed, he soon arrived on the beach. And now voices, gaiety, and laughter smote on his ear; and he hurried forward impetuously towards those who would doubtless welcome him and cheer him.

He stood before the open door of the Bar!

Light streamed out all around, and revealed the barkeeper, all smiles and cheerfulness. To and fro flitted those who danced, sang, and rejoiced with an air of such thorough gaiety and happiness that Falconer felt irresistibly drawn to join them.

Was he not miserable and lonely? was not all dark and forboding without? and did not remorse and despair gnaw at his heart and madden him within? He would fling it all off, and be gay, be—

'Come in, lad,' cried the barkeeper; 'don't stand out in the cold!'

Out rushed the drunken, reeking, howling crowd, polluting the very air by their obscene oaths.

Falconer turned and fled, a very tempest raging in his soul. He saw the gulf at his feet, and rushed away ere he should be drawn into it. His very will, too, failed him; that gone, he was lost!

To flee from the Bar was comparatively easy; but to See from the power of evil, from its allurements, from his inner self!—how could he do this?

The evil he had nourished in his heart was like the boa, it threatened to strangle him the moment he put forth an effort to be free!

Falconer tore along the road leading away from the settlement, he cared not where, out towards the forest.

Fierce, angry cries burst from him; then low, muttered words like prayers; but now, at times, convulsive sobs shook him. At last, standing still, and stretching out his arms in the darkness, he cried out, 'O God, have mercy on me, and save me!'

Forward again. But he is getting exhausted. He stumbles over a fallen tree, and lies for a moment, rises to his knees, and now bursts forth a wailing, despairing cry to God for mercy and help. He waits for help, kneeling—hoping—fearing—yet pleading.

Light breaks in upon him. Hark! The still, small voice that once calmed the storm on the Lake of Galilee speaks to him—to his soul—and the tempest is hushed. There is a great calm.

Suddenly, while he is still kneeling, a whirring sound is heard, and a tomahawk buries itself in a fallen tree beside him.

He arose; and as he did so, a blow came from an unseen hand, and Falconer was stretched senseless on the ground.

'Have we caught the Kaka?' asked a painted warrior.

'Yes,' replied another, 'it's the big sailor from Poneke.'

A Maori name for Wellington, derived from the English name for the region, Port Nicholson. It is used twice on this page, reinforcing that the dialogue being exchanged is between two Maori warriors. This is significant because the narration during this chapter was following Falconer, and these warriors appear very abruptly, so this repletion of Poneke helps to avoid confusion.

'We've done our work, and now let us get paid for it.'

'But be warned; if Dog's-ear hears of this—he's the friend of the big sailor—he will send us to the Reigna, if he can. E Taringa Kuri

Translated into English this roughly means Dog's-Ear. As explained in endnote six, this is to reinforce the abrupt switch of narration from Falconer to the Maori warriors.

is mad after these Pakeha, and has ordered his own warriors not to touch anybody from Poneke.'

'What is that to us? We care not for Dog's-ear; we care not for the Pakeha.'

'Good. But is it not strange, one Pakeha makes friends with us to kill another Pakeha?'

'Oh! I am Maori. I am ready to kill all the Pakeha! And, look here, O friend! Te Rauparaha wants to do this.'

'Ah! say you so?'

'I do; but he fears.'

'Fears what?'

'To lose the big guns and the blankets these Pakeha bring in their *kaipuke*.'

'Come, let us go back into the forest. We shall find the black Pakeha towards Makara.'

These were outlawed warriors, employed covertly by Te Rauparaha to harass the settlers, spy out their affairs, rob them if they could, and, in fact, do anything that might sow animosity between the settlers and Maoris, of which he hoped to reap the advantage as occasion served.

Day is breaking.

Mrs. Norris has been sitting up all night. All through the night she went outside from time to time, looked round and listened, and then went in to crouch by the fire, wondering where Falconer was, and praying God to have him in His keeping, and bring him home in safety.

Where is Falconer?

Yonder, dragging himself painfully along the bit of even road before turning up to the cottage.

'I can't do it!' he mutters, and sits down again, as he has done so often that terrible night.

'Shall I give in?' he asks himself. 'No! By God's help, it's now or never!' And he makes his last struggle.

Mrs. Norris hears a confused noise outside, staggering steps; and then, as she rises wearily to go outside, Falconer totters and falls, forcing in the door, and falling at her feet.

Thus it was Falconer reached home.

Chapter XI. Wallaby Farm.

Falconer was not seriously injured; his scalp was broken, but the wound had not penetrated to any depth, and nursed by Mrs. Norris he soon grew better.

The mournful, tearful widow served the young sailor well in his trouble; and he, by his buoyant, cheerful manner, was a source of great joy to her.

One evening, the following important conversation took place between nurse and patient. Falconer had been talking of Noble's connection with his own family, and Mrs. Norris had followed the narrative with much sympathetic interest.

'And were you really strangers?' she asked, as the sailor finished his story.

'He knew my father, it appears, and my family, but not myself. I never remember seeing him.'

'And yet he clung to you so tenderly.'

'How little I understood him when he used to beg of me to sit down and talk to him! The last evening we spent together will always be fixed in my mind,' said Falconer.

'Tell me about it, lad.'

'I went home with him that Friday evening when Garry lost his life, and directly we arrived he laid the cloth and put out a delicious stew. I, fool that I was, jumped up to run off.'

'Run off! why?' asked Mrs. Norris.

'I had promised the wild crew at the Bar to have some fun with them that evening. You know what that means.'

'Poor lad!'

'You may well say that. However, Noble looked at me so wistfully, and begged me so earnestly to stop with him, that I could not refuse. I had supper with him, and we laughed and chatted together right merrily, for I liked to make him laugh. Ah me! if I had only stayed with him *all* the evening—well, perhaps he would be here now. Still, I've just this consolation, I did make him happy before I went.'

'Eh, lad, I'm glad of that for your sake.'

'I was so touched by his distress and alarm on my account, that I vowed to drink no more at the Bar; and it was refusing to drink any more with the gang at the Bar which turned all my drinking companions into enemies. And you know what danger I was in, Black Charlie trying to swear my life away.'

'At any rate, Noble's advice still lives and finds a place in your heart, I hope,' said Mrs. Norris.

'His words, Mrs. Norris, come back to my mind constantly, charged with light.'

'Thank God for that, my lad; make them yours, and they will be charged with blessing too.'

'They are already. I begin to see light where all was darkness, and hope where all was blank despair.'

'I'm so glad of that. When did this light and hope break in upon the darkness you spoke about?'

'When does the day dawn? It first makes itself felt *in* the darkness. It really first came to me in prison yonder.'

'That seems strange,' said Mrs. Norris.

'I did not think so then, but now I can see it. God was bringing my lofty, proud looks down. When I looked humbly at the path I was following, I found out the narrow path that led up to the light—to Him. The difficulty was to get into it and follow it.'

'That's the path, lad; it leads home, home! Oh! if I could only guide my poor boy into it. Where is he? O God! save him, and bring us home together!' cried Mrs. Norris, much excited.

'How is that?' said Falconer. 'I didn't know you had a son.'

'Yonder in Australia I had husband, son, and a tidy home, and was, as I thought, happy and comfortable for life.'

'And now—but there, don't speak about it, Mrs. Norris; it hurts you, I'm sure.'

'It's like this, lad. When I see a big, brave lad like yourself, my poor heart begins to beat quick. It won't keep quiet. I think of my Will, my own big lad; for, you know, there's a yearning, craving desire always there, night and day, to see him once more, to hold him once more to my poor weary heart, that he might take the sting away—yes, the sting!'

'The—where is he?' jerked out Falconer.

'Where is he?' echoed Mrs. Norris, looking at Falconer, as tears welled up and stopped utterance.

'I'll tell you all,' she continued; 'and before I do so, let me beg this favour,—if ever you meet my Will, tell him I forgive him all! And bring him back to me, that I may die in peace!'

'I will, Mrs. Norris; I give you my solemn word.'

Mrs. Norris laid her right hand in that of the giant, and smiled through all, saying, 'Oh, if you would but lead him into that narrow path that leads up, up, to the Light!'

'If God will only use me, I will; weak and unworthy as I am,' was the reply.

'We had a nice farm near Liverpool,' said the widow, 'on the road running from Sydney towards Goulburn. We weren't too far from Sydney, so my husband run in his farm produce, and took ready money, and brought out what stores we wanted. Ah me! we were so happy. But the clouds worked up; the storm came on me unawares. Our happiness fell; alas, it was not founded on the rock. My husband had too much money. Being generous, he often treated others, and was often treated to drink himself. He took to drink. He was ashamed of himself at first, and vowed he would give it up. But the habit had become too strong for him—it was master.'

'Calamity came at last. But before that, Will, my son, a big strapping fellow of seventeen, who used to go to town with his father, got into bad company. All this came out afterwards. At the time I didn't know it, for an awful accident, which carried off my poor husband, swept all other troubles out of my mind.'

'I can't tell you the details, they're too painful. My husband was brought home dead, and laid on the bed he had left in the morning in good health and spirits. That was the first blow. Then came the other, which was almost too much for me—and has left a sting in my heart.'

'Will became dissatisfied and restless, often leaving me and the farm for days together. Then followed disobedience, and, at last, defiance. He left me; I hardly dare say how, but the manner of leaving me carries a sting with it which will ever remain until *he* comes and takes it away.'

'What was the name of your farm?'

'Wallaby Farm.'

'Didn't that part suffer in a great fire in—'

'Fire! In a fire!' cried Mrs. Norris, covering her face with both hands, as if to shut out some terrible scene.

'Has my question brought up painful recollections?' he asked.

'Yes,' was the reply. Mrs. Norris looked at Falconer with a troubled expression. 'It was fired!' she gasped, '*fired by him!* He burnt out his own mother!'

Falconer started; but Mrs. Norris did not observe it.

The thought that flashed through his mind was this:

'The man who had burnt out his own mother was Black Charlie!'

Falconer started, as we have said, for here was a man shut out from society, and lost to every sense of right, truth, and honour.

If Black Charlie was Mrs. Norris's son, how could Falconer dare keep his word, and introduce a ruffian who would finish the work he had begun—break his mother's heart!

This man, Falconer remembered, when half-drunk one day, had boasted of the very deed which had filled his mother's heart with such a terrible unrest that life often seemed too heavy a burden.

Yes; there was little doubt of it. He did not mention his mother, but he let fall the name of the farm, and

Falconer remembered it. And this man, Mrs. Norris's son, his sworn enemy, he had promised solemnly to seek and save by all means in his power.

'You are silent, lad,' said Mrs. Norris.

'I am thinking of your great sorrow, Mrs. Norris; and whether we cannot find out some means to help you.'

'May God in His infinite mercy bless you!' cried Mrs. Norris; and then she wept in silence.

'Come, this won't do,' said Mrs. Norris, getting to work in the cottage. 'The Lord has laid a heavy load upon me; but, in my weakness, I always forget He promises to bear it for me. He gives me the cross to carry—His strength must bear me and the cross together.'

'Just one question, Mrs. Norris; how long ago was this?'

'Eight years. Will ought to be twenty-five—just entering his twenty-sixth year.'

'How should you—I—recognize him?' asked Falconer.

'That's what troubles me, lad. I'm afraid he's so grown, so changed, I shouldn't know him. He was so dark too—a big beard would alter his face altogether.'

'Nothing else?'

'Let me see. Yes; he has a scar across the palm of his left hand.'

'That's the mark for me,' said Falconer to himself. 'When I see that, I shall have proof positive—but he's the man, and I dare not at present bring him here, even if I could find him.'

Where was Black Charlie at this time?

Various crimes had been brought home to him; and to these were added murder and perjury. He had, however, escaped from prison, and had joined a band of Maori desperadoes, men whose deeds of blood were equalled by his own. Some of their doings will be revealed as we proceed.

Chapter XII. Falconer Draws on the Future.

Dog's-Ear had become the firm friend of Falconer; for the latter visited the chief in his *pah* after Noble's death, and made over to him blankets, tools, and other objects of great value to a Maori, as a legacy from the man whom Dog's-ear had saved and befriended.

Thus it was Dog's-ear, charmed by such a fine, good-looking fellow, by his generosity and good-nature, declared his friendship for Falconer, and vowed he would be friends with him for ever—he and his followers, the Nga-ti-tama.

This friendship—the open expression of it—lost Dog's-ear a partizan.

Wetekina, the fierce, fiery young chief, who had fled from near Lake Taupo because of a murder he had committed there, had attached himself to Dog's-ear with one or two adherents, truculent savages like himself, and he hoped to get power and fame under Te Rauparaha.

Dog's-ear's saving Noble and Bill Worsall—the former from Wetekina's savage fury, as already narrated—had estranged this young chief at once; and now Dog's-ear's avowed friendship for the hated Pakeha made Wetekina furious. He deserted Dog's-ear, and made for the forest, and two adherents with him.

Wetekina, the fiery savage—for that he really was—now became the leader of a much-dreaded band, few in number, but terrible on account of their intense hatred to Europeans. This band roamed the forests on the Tina-kore hills, about Karori, and amongst the glens between Port Nic. and Porirua.

One of Wetekina's band had given the blow which had laid Falconer low. Luckily the blow was given by a *mere*, and not by a tomahawk. The blow, too, as Falconer turned his head, fell upon the brow, and here Falconer's stout caprim took off half its force, and saved his life.

The law of necessity had forced Mrs. Norris to study the treatment of wounds as a part of bush education. Add to this a certain natural skill in that direction, and Falconer's speedy recovery is easily understood.

As soon as the invalid was about again, two serious problems had to be solved:—

Falconer had to get his living—but how?

And Mrs. Norris, alone in the world, had to get hers.

'I'm off to-day,' said Falconer, at last; 'I must get to work.'

'True, lad; and I must be off, too; I—'

'No, no, Mrs. Norris, stay here. This cottage and ground are mine. I shall live here. But I shall want you to stay and take care of the place; and me, too.'

'Dost mean it, lad?'

'I do. You can help me very much, and I shall be able to help you; so we can work for each other.'

'Let it be so, then,' added Mrs. Norris. 'I can't help feeling like a mother to thee, lad. And perhaps an old woman's advice you might accept.'

'I will accept it; and act upon it.'

'You'll have a sharp fight of it at first, lad. You'll have to master yourself; that's hard work. And then the lads down yonder will be dead set against you. But fight it out on this line, as Paul did, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."'

Those words struck the young man forcibly. He never forgot them.

Mrs. Norris was looking out for Falconer when he came home in the evening. She had on her best gimped cap. 'I feel as if it was Will coming home,' said she; 'and I must make things cheerful for him; he'll have enough to do to fight his way along on the beach, or my name is not Norris.'

'Good evening, Mrs. Norris; how do you like our mansion?'

'I'll tell you by-and-by; but come to table, you're tired and hungry, I can see.'

The room looked quite cheerful. A big log blazed up the chimney, and threw a ruddy glare over the modest apartment; and the table, covered by a dazzling white cloth and smoking viands, bore evidence of Widow Norris's desire to make Falconer comfortable. The old well-known chair was near the fire, and a pair of old slippers lay underneath.

'Mrs. Norris is a treasure,' thought Falconer, as he sat and ate like a man who is in downright need of a hearty meal.

'I've been all day,' said Falconer, at length, 'on a couple of ship biscuits and a morsel of "junk."' 'Hard at work, eh?'

'Not all the day, no; and yet I've got a good job, in spite of the Bar gang;' and Falconer laughed heartily, as he used to do.

'You were right, Mrs. Norris, I've had a warm time of it. The fellows on the beach are all dead set against me.'

'They're nothing, lad; only don't anger them.'

'I'll tell you my adventures. After box-hauling about all the morning, I went in the afternoon to Mr. Soames, who sends boats off to bring cargo ashore. I asked him for work—in his boats—telling him how I was placed.

"I shall be happy to give you a job in one of the boats," said he, "but you know the fellows I employ; if they take a set against you, you'll have to leave—at once."

"No harm shall come to you," said I, "through me. If the lads won't have me, I'll go and dig potatoes."

"Black Charlie has escaped," said he, "but I'm obliged to use sailors from the beach, so look out! for most of them are his friends."

'At the last moment, when the boat left the bit of wooden jetty, I jumped aboard. But I jumped into a hornets' nest.

'The wind blew fresh, and we scudded off under small sail; but the men jeered at me, and tried to enrage me.'

"What is it you want?" said I; "what do you want me to do?"

"If you're not out of this, sharp," said Harry Brown, "we'll just pitch you overboard."

"We're close along side, lads," was my reply. "Let me get aboard, and I'll trouble you no more."

'Five minutes later, I was engaged by the captain of the ship to break out cargo at eight shillings a day for a fortnight or so.'

'You've got into the line of duty, lad,' said Mrs. Norris; 'now go ahead, and trust in God.'

The next evening, tired as he was, Falconer, in an abstracted mood, took his pen, and began to write and figure.

'I have it!' he cried, jumping up.

'What is it?' asked Mrs. Norris.

'I've been thinking of the future—drawing out my plans.'

'That's good. Only don't live *on* it; live on the work of to-day.'

'This is just the country to do something good in by-and-by. But I want to strike in now, and be ready for it. Instead of being a common sailor, I want to employ them, and help them and myself, too.'

'How?'

'At first to build a craft of fifteen or twenty tons, and trade in her up the Straits. We shall have a fine trade here, one of these days, with Sydney; not in oil and flax, but in potatoes, onions, sawn-timber, and English goods for settlers and natives.

'I must get Scotty to work with me; and then, perhaps, we shall get old Nivens to work for us; he's a good shipwright.'

'You must keep him sober, then.'

'We must first catch him, Mrs. Norris; and then keep him. He's a good workman, but no one can use him. We will try him; yes, and we'll win him too.'

'Let me see; suppose I say a craft of fourteen tons. Carvel built—hard-wood frame and top-sides—pine planking. She must be decked, of course, and have well-raised combings, and a sliding scuttle aft. She must

have a straight stem and stern, and the rudder must be hung outside—like a billy-boy. Then for rig, we'll have fore-and-aft schooner rig; with a gaff top-sail aft, and a main-staysail on occasions.'

'You've fixed on that, then?' asked Mrs. Norris.

'Yes. This is the first step. Scotty and myself must work her at first. We will sell our cargoes for ready money to the people who work that Sydney schooner, the Alert.

'I like the idea, lad; and it will take you away from the rough lot on the beach, who are now, I fear, dead set against you.'

Scotty was charmed with the idea. The compact was made between them at once—they were partners.

'If Nivens will not only work himself, but direct us,' said Scotty, 'we can both help at off-times. You one day and I another. Your land here will keep us going. With pigs, fowls, and what *kakas* and pigeons we can knock over, we shall live cheaply.

The New Zealand pigeon, or Kereru, was abundant during the early years of colonisation, and was readily hunted due to their plump nature. However, since 1922 they have been protected from hunting ("Large forest birds" <https://www.teara.govt.nz/en/large-forest-birds/page-4>. Hunting native birds is a recurring scene within the novel, so much that Chapter XV is called *Death Amongst The Kakas*.

'You shall be admiral, old boy,' he continued; 'and I'll be chief mate, cook, and crew.'

'We must lay her down,' said Scotty, 'at Kai-wara-wara, which is not far off; and back in the woods there, we can easily get what wood we want. I'll try and draw out the ship's plans; I'm rather good at designing—Nivens will be a check upon me.' 'You're worth your weight in gold, Scotty.' 'I know it, Falconer, only I've never been able to put my valuable self in the market. Now you have done it for me. Yours is one of the finest ideas out. This trade with Sydney will be first-rate. They grow few potatoes there; it is too hot. And their wood is too hard; our soft pine woods will sell famously one of these days.'

'When we're ready,' said Falconer, 'we must go back in the woods at Kai-wara-wara and see what wood we can find to suit us.'

'Capital idea,' added Scotty. 'We'll take our guns and some food, and get a few *kakas* and pigeons.'

Chapter XIII. Rain—But no Water.

Falconer and Scotty, well-armed, their legs protected by heavy gaiters, being, moreover, well provided with food, in case of accident or delay, started by a short cut to explore the country over the hills towards Makara—a part rich in trees of all kinds, but wild, little known, and difficult of access.

Pushing along small tracks at the back of Falconer's cottage, they penetrated the woods easily at first, as the Maoris had evidently used these paths constantly to climb the hills.

'There is no good timber for us here,' exclaimed Scotty; 'but we shall find plenty over the hills. Those *ti* trees are pretty; and look—'

'Where?' asked Falconer.

Scotty had pushed through some underwood and stood under a graceful tree, which was covered with white, sweet-smelling blossoms.

'Don't you smell the blossoms, Falconer? It's a bouquet—delightful!'

'What is it? I don't know trees.'

'I forget the Maori name

The white flowers depicted here suggest this is a Cabbage Tree, or *Ti Kouka*. These trees can grow to be up to twenty metres in height and one metre in diameter, and flower during the spring ("Shrubs and small trees of the forest- Cabbage trees" www.teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/13829/ti-kouka-new-zealand-cabbage-tree.

, but it's no use to us. We are after that which is useful. But tell me, captain, what shall we call our good ship when she's built?'

'Don't talk nonsense, Scotty. Let us build her first. You are the first Scot I ever knew whose head was turned by a nosegay in the pursuit of—'

'Fortune, eh, old man? Well, be it so. I am sentimental, I can't help it, in these beautiful woods.'

They soon reached the high ground forming the western heights, overlooking the harbour.

'Look, Falconer! That magnificent harbour, as yet unknown, will one day hold brave ships, charged with the "wealth of Ormus and of Ind," or I'm no prophet And Te Aro Flat, now dotted over with wooden shanties, will one day be a noble mart for the commerce of the nations. And amongst the names of its merchant princes, Falconer, Scott, and Co. shall be pre-eminent!'

'I thought I had caught a hard-headed Scot,' was the rejoinder; 'keen, 'cute, and up to *bawbees* and such things; and here you are spouting nonsense, and the day slipping away from us,'

The two came suddenly upon a piece of rough-made road.

'This must be a bit of the Karori road, Falconer.'

'I never heard of it. Where does it go to?'

'Nowhere'

'I don't want to go there, Scotty; I'm after timber, and birds.'

'Most sapient Englisher, perhaps you know on the other side of this savage peninsula lies Porirua; and some wiseacres began to run a road straight across to it.'

'And here it is?'

'No. Here it isn't! This is only a bit of the wiseacres' folly. It was given up. Some day, a fellow with a head on will make a good road, I daresay, through this region of hills and dales, woods and glens, inhabited by silence, *kakas*, and—'

'Maoris!'

'Yes; perhaps so; but we are under Dog's-ear's protection, remember. It is only that band of wild young savages sometimes called "Moa-pauks" we need fear—but they *are* dangerous

Two birds native to New Zealand, the Moa and the Morepork, have been portmanteaued, to create a fierce name for hostile Maori. The Moa was a large and powerful flightless bird (now extinct), and the Morepork is a cunning and deadly night predator.

'I'm hungry,' cried Scotty; 'let's dive into our larder. I'm keen set, and that settles it.'

They encamped under some lofty *miro* trees, thick enough to shelter them from the sun, and explored the recesses of their haversacks.

'Here's long life to Mrs. Norris!' cried Scotty, gaily; 'two meat pies for a beginning is not bad.'

'No—only one, lad; keep a reserve.'

'Just what I was going to observe—now for a snack and off.'

'I fancy I can see some *ratas* yonder, Falconer; just what we want.'

'What?'

'*Ratas*; false-hearted parasites.'

'Who ever heard of a false-hearted tree?'

'*Ratas* at first are creepers. Growing stronger, they at length envelope the original tree in their fatal embraces. The original tree perishes, and the monster becomes a huge, lofty tree in its place. That's what I mean when I call them false-hearted. Gnarled, tough, and hard, we must use the *rata* for the frame of our ship.'

Off ran Scotty to one near them.

'Here's a beauty!' cried he. 'You see that hollow stem and the crooked arms. What splendid "knees" we shall get out of that fellow, and just the size we want—mark him!'

Not long afterwards a cry from Scotty brought Falconer to his side.

'Here's the kind of wood we want for the outer planking of our craft. The *tawai* is tough and hard to cut, but strong and durable; this one is too big for us.'

'Yes; we could never cut that fellow.'

'Here's another, Falconer; a young one. We'll mark him, and take bearings.'

'What's that? Listen!' said Falconer.

The two were standing under masses of thick, towering trees, and Falconer was trying to find the sky.

'What do you see—or hear?'

'I thought I heard rain, but I can't see the sky.'

'Rain!' exclaimed Scotty, laughing heartily; 'that's no more rain than I am.'

'But don't you hear the *pattering* of the drops?'

'Something is falling, it is true,' added Scotty; 'but that something is *miro* berries, that the birds—*kakas*, I expect—are gathering, and letting fall on the dead leaves.'

'Let's have a shot, Scotty. But how can we see the birds?'

'You can't see them. They stick at the top of the trees, and you may crane your neck a long time before you see one.'

'What shall we do, then?'

'The Maori dodge, or—'

'What is that?'

'A Maori going to catch *kakas* alive mounts a suitable tree, with simply a good stick and a wounded *kaka*. When amongst the foliage the Maori makes the wounded bird cry out; the other birds near flock round their wounded mate, and watch it in mute despair, when whack! whack! goes the stick, and down fall the birds.'

'You were going to speak of another mode?'

'Which is simply to find a good clearing, where the trees are thinned out, and one can see the birds flitting about. Then we may get pot shots, but sitting; you'll hardly shoot a bird on the wing.'

'Do you see where the sun is?' asked Scotty.

'No, but I guess it's getting late. We must find our path and get back.'

'Come along, then; this is the way.'

The two were soon plodding along as fast as possible, winding in and out amongst *totaras*, *ratas*, and *miro* trees, and were getting tired, when—

Bang! went Falconer's gun; the charge cutting twigs and leaves near Scotty, who cried out, 'Halloa, Falconer, what's up?' But looking around, he burst into laughter.

This laughter was caused by a sight of Falconer's doleful appearance as he picked himself up from the ground, and limped away towards his companion.

'Have you been shot, Falconer?'

'Yes; "over the bows," as sailors say. My foot caught in a sort of a trap, and over I went, head first.'

'You ought to know *kareaos*—supple-jacks—abound here; forming loops for the unwary.'

'I do know it, Scotty; I've just found it out.'

For some time they tramped on in silence; but at last Scotty stopped, and, facing Falconer, said, 'Do you know, old fellow, I believe we're lost.'

'Let's steer due east by the compass, and we must strike the harbour.'

'I've lost it, Falconer. I must have left it when we sat down to eat.'

No sun was visible. But the day was evidently falling fast. No opening through the woods could they find, no pathway. Scotty had been too busy marking two or three trees to cut, to notice how they bore from each other, or from their old path. Both were, in fact, too inexperienced in bush life to find their way unaided.

They reached the side of a deep, dark ravine; and very far down in its hidden depths they heard the distant noise of a gurgling stream. It was dangerous to wander more. In truth, they were too tired—they were beaten.

'We must camp here,' said Scotty.

'I'm not a good hand at wood-ranging,' added Falconer, 'so I've let you have full swing. But now we must both keep our wits alive. We are close to the ravine, and no one can take us on that side. This clump of trees will hide us in front. Whoever comes, I fancy will come by that bit of path we have just discovered.'

'Bravo, captain! You're right again; that bit of path goes into the ravine, or along it, I'm sure; and all invaders will come along it from one part or the other.'

Scotty made a screen of big fern fronds; and behind this screen, bundles of fronds of the beautiful tree-fern made capital beds.

'Turn in and sleep, captain,' said Scotty.

'No, Scotty; I'll take the first watch, but sleep with one eye open.' As soon as Scotty's head was down, he slept; and Falconer, lifting his heart in prayer, watched over his sleeping companion.

But Falconer was really too fatigued to watch. He could not pace to and fro, as a sailor would do at sea. Forced to stand still, he made every effort possible to throw off the numbing influence of sleep, which was gradually overpowering him. At length he nodded, his head fell back, and he reclined against the bole of a huge tree—fast asleep.

He slept as a sailor learns to sleep; and happily for him, without movement—but his waking must be given in another chapter.

Chapter XIV. 'I Can'T Hold Out!

Falconer awoke in a great fright. His head slipped, he gave a start; and, opening his eyes to a sense of great danger, he fell flat on the ground behind the big tree, and remained motionless.

He lifted his head cautiously and peered through the fern screen—to which he had crawled—and this met his view. Right in front of him, some hundred yards distant, was a big fire, which threw a weird, ruddy glare on everything around. Behind the fire, sitting sideways to Falconer's view, their figures thrown out in bold relief by the ruddy glare of the fire, sat two Maoris and a European. The Maoris, painted, nearly naked, and of ferocious mien, were laughing and chatting; and from time to time they drank out of a bottle handed to them by the European.

While watching this party, one of them—the European—turned his head and listened. His face was turned towards Falconer, and the fire revealed the well-known features of his greatest enemy.

'It's Black Charlie, and two of those terrible "Moapauks,"' muttered Falconer to himself; adding, 'If I can't get away from them—here ends my life.'

'Shall I wake Scotty?' asked Falconer of himself. 'No. He'll make a noise, and we shall be found out at once. The Maoris are drinking spirits. After a time there will be a scene, and then they'll fall hard and fast asleep.'

He watched Scotty, and he watched the drinkers.

The liquor soon began to tell upon the Maoris. They jumped up and began to whoop and dance as if they were mad. Their features were distorted, their tongues thrust out—they acted like demons.

'Shut up, you noisy critters!' shouted Charlie, in English; 'you're beginning your hanky-panky tricks agin; I'll stop your grog, so 'vast heaving and come to a anchor agin.'

The Maoris began to cry out for *wai-pero*.

'Not a drop more, you black, cantankerous swabs—not half-a-drop,' said Black Charlie. 'I wants all I've got to keep the cold out.'

Speaking in Maori, he made them understand when they had caught *him*, and had taken *utu* out of *him*, they should have as much *wai-pero* as they liked.

The Maoris slipped down and fell asleep.

Black Charlie still sat before the fire. He talked aloud to himself, and certain dark hints he threw out opened Falconer's eyes, and made him very wide awake.

Falconer now roused Scotty and told him all.

'Listen, Scotty,' said he, 'I'm going to reconnoitre that path; and I must go behind their camp, to make sure of our retreat, and see if we have any more enemies.'

'It's hazardous!'

'It is; but the danger's mine.'

'This is my plan,' replied Scotty; 'we'll go together. I am convinced that path winds through the ravine, and leads out of the hills into the woods at Makara.'

'I'll get into the path, and wait for you. If you are found out, run along the path to me, and we will both go into the ravine. If I'm right—and I believe I am, for I've been through it once—it's the Pass of Thermopylæ for us; we could hold it against any number of enemies.'

'But no firing, Scotty! it is useless with small shot, and we're not loaded with ball. Remember, my boy, we stand or fall together.'

They shook hands in silence and started.

They worked in concentric circles towards the path on reaching which their hopes were fixed. Scotty kept the outer circle, and Falconer the inner one, leading him close behind Black Charlie's camp.

Both walked warily; the glare of the fire even helping them to pick their way, to find shelter, and avoid dry underwood. Scotty breathed more fully when he reached the path, and saw it was the well-beaten track leading into the glen, as he had predicted.

But Falconer did not come.

He was behind Black Charlie, watching him, his camp, and his sleeping companions.

If Black Charlie refused spirits to his dark companions he indulged himself. The drink took effect. From talking he took to singing. He broke out suddenly with:—

""Then up jumped a whale,
With his 'normous great tail,
And sang out, Boys, let us make sail;
Windy weather, stormy weather,
When it blows we're all together.""

The song having ended, Black Charlie began to dance wildly before the fire. His dancing became wilder; he leaped in the air, shouted, and yelled, and at last fell headlong over the sleeping Maoris. As he got up he caught sight of Falconer slipping away.

Catching up a gun, he fired, and the ball whistled over Falconer's head. The two friends, being sure of their path, ran along it into the ravine—and into utter darkness.

'Let us go easy now,' said Scotty. 'The Maoris won't follow us in the darkness. Besides which, the path, to tell you the truth, is becoming dangerous.'

'How dangerous?'

'It's safe enough if you keep *in* it; but it winds along the face of the steep, rugged hill facing the ravine on this side; and to slip means certain death, deep down on the stones below.'

The night seemed long, and the narrow, tortuous path interminable, as the weary travellers plodded on, keeping constant touch with the wall of rock on their left hand.

'Let us stop and rest, Scotty.'

'We must go on, Falconer, until we reach an open space. If we stop we shall sleep, and if we sleep we shall roll over into the ravine.'

Scotty, who was walking ahead, gave a cry. He slipped—rolled—and over he went.

'Scotty! Scotty! where are you? Speak!' cried Falconer.

'I've slipped—am hanging to a narrow ledge!' came up from below.

'But where?'

'I can't tell you—I'll try and hold on—but I'm so tired—I shall fall!'

'I'll come and help you.'

'No! Whatever you do, don't move; if you slip, we're both lost.'

Falconer, strong and powerful, seemed condemned to inaction. What could he do on that narrow ledge, and in darkness?—and his friend to perish!

'Fal—Falconer!'

'Yes.'

'I can't hold out—I must go!'

'Hold on a moment!' shouted Falconer, tearing off his jacket; 'here's my jacket sleeve, can you feel it?'

'Yes; thank God—hold fast above there!'

'I will.'

'Then I'll try to crawl up again.'

Falconer lay flat along the narrow path, one arm hanging over the ravine, and holding his jacket sleeve—to which Scotty clung by the other arm with desperation—the other hand was thrust into a cleft of the rock by which to hold on.

It was a dreadful moment of suspense.

If either slipped, or if anything gave way, one at least would perish.

With quickened breath, his strength almost gone, Scotty worked his way up, until Falconer felt his grasp on his wrist.

'Come on, lad,' whispered Falconer; 'walk over me, and sit down.'

Scotty just managed to crawl up over Falconer, and then he sank down with a gasp.

Falconer slowly drew his lacerated fingers out of the cleft in the rock, and sat down beside Scotty, holding him to his heart with a joyful hug.

These two brave men sat there in silence, and forgot all their pain, loss, and weariness; Scotty was safe, and Falconer had saved him!

'Scotty!'

'Falconer!'

'God bless you, Falconer! I was all but gone.'

'Let us always stand shoulder to shoulder, Scotty—as you did to me yonder, when the world seemed to be against me.'

The two sat there, leaning against each other, and propped against the wall of rock behind them. There they passed the weary time, nodding, sleeping, yet often starting out of sleep to clutch each other in alarm, until dawn appeared.

'Now let us decide, Scotty.'

'Shall we go forward to Makara, and rest for a bit, or return, and risk meeting our terrible enemies?—for such they are, at Black Charlie's instigation. Can you go forward, and put up with but little food? or must we fight our way back at all hazards?'

'No, Falconer; we must go forward and rest. I have lost my gun. You only have yours. If we get into the Makara forest we can hide; and Charlie and the Maoris will watch for us *at the other end of the ravine.*'

'Agreed on, then. Besides, if we are held prisoners for a day or so, some of the settlers, or perhaps Dog's-ear, will search the woods for us.'

'True, O captain.'

'It's food and shelter—warmth—we want just now—you're done up, Scotty.'

'A quiet nook, a wood fire, and some roast *kakas* will set us up at once; so now for Makara's forest glades.'

Chapter XV. Death Amongst the Kakas.

On emerging from the glen, Falconer found, as Scotty had predicted, the woods just in that visisy locality were thinner. They soon came to an open circular space free from trees—a clearing.

'Hulloa! Scotty, here's a hut; some one's been here to—'

'It's a Maori *raupo* hut, run up for temporary shelter.'

'We'll use it, Scotty; it's just what we want.'

'No! Falconer; I don't like the affair. Somebody has not long left it. Suppose the "Moa-pauks" are using this hut, they will fall upon us just when we don't expect them—we shall be trapped. No; we'll go to the opposite

side of the clearing; there the woods will shelter us again, and from that point we can watch all intruders coming upon us from the glen.'

'I begin to feel confidence in you, Scotty.'

'Thanks, old boy. Do you know I've ranged Australian forests, and they sharpen a fellow up, although they are altogether different to these.'

'How so?'

'Here you have hills and dales, masses of trees which shut out the light, and thick undergrowths which hold the moisture and promote verdure. There you have flat plains—where I was—a burning sun, with immense gum trees, the leaves of which hang down like spear-heads, and give no shelter whatever.'

'Here we are, Falconer.' 'Yes, I know, at Makara.'

'Ay, but at home—look!'

Scotty had searched along the lower side of a rough ridge, and had found a shallow cave.

'Here, captain, we're sheltered—fern fronds for beds—a good fire in front, hidden too—and *kakas* in abundance. What do you want more?'

'*Kakas* will do, Scotty, but where are they? Hark! I hear the berries falling!'

'That's the *rain* we want,' cried Scotty, laughing; 'and now to work. If I fail—why, then, the gun.' 'What are you going to do?'

'Look, and follow me;' saying this, Scotty furnished himself with a stout stick. Then dragging Falconer with him, he cried out suddenly, 'Here's our tree! Put your back against that tree.' While Falconer was thinking of the next manoeuvre, Scotty was up the tree and hidden amongst the foliage.

All at once, strange, sharp screams—which for the moment startled Falconer—came out from amongst the foliage, well up the tree. A confused fluttering of wings was soon heard, and *kakas* screeched and fluttered by the dozen over Falconer's head.

Whack! whack! went Scotty's stick; and the secret was out—one after another, *kakas* fell under Scotty's powerful blows, and came tumbling to the ground. 'How does that look from a breakfast point of view?' asked Scotty, as he came down.

'It's first-rate.'

These hungry travellers were soon grilling pieces of parrot in front of a big wood fire; from time to time eating the part well done ravenously, each holding the delicate morsel by a long wooden spit.

'Aren't they tough?' said Falconer, at last.

'So they are!' replied Scotty; 'how glad I am I've finished.'

'Before we lose any more time,' exclaimed Scotty, after the breakfast of roast parrot, 'I must set a "dodger-trap."'

'What's that?' asked Falconer. 'I have heard of "man-traps," and even of "soul-traps" amongst the natives of the Pacific—'

'Captain mine, I'm practical—come and see. First, we'll cut some of these;'—meaning reeds found in a swampy corner. These were tied in a bundle. Then Scotty took his rough jacket, and buttoned it round the bundle.

'It's a scare-crow,' cried Falconer.

'We shall see,' was the reply.

Then Scotty took the bundle and fixed it inside the doorway of the hut, so as to be well exposed to view from the outside.

'Now for a hat,' he cried.

'Here you are!' Falconer had found an old one made of reeds in a corner of the hut.

'Now I'm ready. This dummy with my hat on—not the reed one—shall sit there. Do you see the reason of it?'

'To scare the Moa-pauks?'

'No, sir; I'm astonished at your density. Any of the Moa-pauks, crawling out of the glen, will see the figure, and think it is one of us. And I shall be surprised if they don't put a ball into it—and rush it. But this is the great point,—we shall be warned.'

The two had no sooner crawled back to their cave than Scotty, utterly overcome by fatigue, fell soundly asleep. It was one of those sleeps such as powerful men fall into after undergoing great physical fatigue.

Falconer watched him. He could not sleep. He sat and thought. Then he pulled out a small book and read; after which, on his knees, he poured out his thanks to God, and lifted his heart to Him.

Falconer now again watched Scotty. Still he slept—and slept heavily.

Slipping out of their hiding-place, Falconer mounted the ridge above them, and walked along it some distance, until he could get a good view over the clearing towards the hut—towards the entrance to the glen.

He sat there and watched.

Before long, what was his surprise to see two Maoris creeping towards the clearing. Hiding behind trees and bushes they advanced slowly and cautiously, until they had a clear view of the hut. Now they were hidden. All at once a gun was fired, and then Falconer saw two natives bound into the hut. Did the dummy alarm them? Was there a hidden foe? passed through Falconer's mind; for, as he sat and watched, he heard the noise of a terrible struggle going on inside.

The reason was soon made apparent. The two Maoris rolled out of the hut, and fought and struggled together like madmen—over Scotty's cap!

They forgot all else. Each one, it seemed, was determined to have that cap, or die for it.

Falconer was amused at first at the trifle which had diverted their attention, to obtain which life even did not seem too great a sacrifice. But he soon saw what a danger they had escaped, and what great service Scotty's cap had rendered them. And Scotty's wisdom appeared more conspicuous than ever.

Chapter XVI. Raromi of the Strong Grip.

Falconer's thoughts were soon brought back to himself and his friend—to a keen perception of their danger. Their bitterest enemies were upon them. Scotty must be warned; and Falconer crept back amongst the trees, making a *détour*, so as to keep well hidden.

Passing a huge forest giant, he found himself in a small natural avenue, the top of which was open to the sky—a sylvan nook of great beauty.

As he stepped into the avenue from behind the tree, another man came into it from behind another tree; and the two stood face to face.

The other man was Black Charlie!

For a moment the two stared at each other in silence; the next moment, however, Charlie fired; and when the smoke had cleared away Falconer was lying on the ground.

'Ha! ha! got him at last!' shouted the ruffian, as he rushed forward, clutching his gun as a club.

Falconer—who had tried a ruse—sprang to his feet, and launched a stone with such force at his assailant that he dropped his gun, and stood still, from sheer amazement.

'Ah! you think you've baulked me, do you?' cried Black Charlie, darting forward, and tugging away at a long hunting-knife in his belt.

In an instant, before the knife was drawn, Falconer was upon him, and a desperate struggle commenced.

Falconer's strength was immense, and he was young and fresh; while Black Charlie, although noted for pluck and muscle, had for years drawn largely upon his strength by debauchery and drink.

'Give up, man!' cried Falconer; 'and let us cry quits.'

'Yes—let go—and I'll—'

'But I must have this knife first;' and Falconer drew it out adroitly and threw it away.

The two men, panting and heated, stood apart and faced each other.

'Why are you banded with Maori assassins on purpose to kill me?' asked Falconer.

'Because I hate you!'

'You tried to swear my life away—surely that's enough for your hate!'

'I'll never rest till one or the other of us goes down!'

'But why do you hate me?'

'What a memory you've got. Don't you remember when we were whaling for a few months in Joe Gibson's boat?'

'I do.'

'Well, that fight we had.'

'You struck me, Charlie, and insulted me; and it was a fair fight. Besides, you know the beach-comber's law, "A fair fight clears off old scores!"'

'It don't—and I'll have your—'

Charlie had sidled toward the knife. Picking it up, he darted upon Falconer with renewed fury.

Falconer, unarmed, picked up the fallen gun, and swinging it round felled Charlie as he rushed upon him with his long, keen knife.

At this juncture, Scotty, hearing the noise, and close to, kept crying out, 'Falconer! Falconer!'

'Here, Scotty; what is it?'

'The Moa-pauks are upon us—in our rear!' cried Scotty, seizing Falconer. 'Back to the ravine again, before *they* get there—there's not a moment to lose.'

'But Black Charlie is lying there—I'm afraid I've—'

'Let him lie! Let us run—it's now or never!'

While the Maoris were working round to get at the Englishmen unobserved, the latter ran as for very life into the ravine once more—but this time by daylight.

The ravine was a beautiful spot. The path wound in and out along the face of a precipitous height—a weird, huge rampart of rock above, and an unknown, fearful deep below. In places the rock overhead seemed ready to fall and crush the intruder; in other places the path was covered in by creeping plants, which formed beautiful vegetable screens as seen by daylight, but causing utter darkness at night.

In the depths of the ravine gurgled a noisy stream, as if to give indication of its presence, and a warning to those who should tread the sylvan heights above carelessly.

'Here's where I slipped!' remarked Scotty, indicating the spot where he fell over. 'I really wonder, Falconer, how I could have got up again!'

'I believe God helped us, Scotty; let us trust to His powerful arm still—and ask His protection.'

Scotty turned and looked at Falconer—the two looked at each other as men do who would read the innermost thoughts of each other's souls.

'You hardly think me sincere, Scotty?'

'You are not the man to be false,' was the reply; 'but are you not mistaken in taking up the religious tone? Religious people don't shew up well, in my estimation.'

'Scotty, God has called me in *His way* to turn from my evil ways. This is not talking, but doing. It's hard work for one whose companions were the worst characters on the beach; but I accept His word, and I'm trying to obey.'

'You surprise me, Falconer; but I respect you as I never did before—you at any rate are sincere.'

'I am surprised at myself, Scotty, but when God calls a man, He gives him light to see; and now I see that to follow those at the Bar means—ruin! Religion, for me, is not in talk, nor in profession exactly.'

'What is it, then?'

'It's a living principle, which, in practice, means being and doing.'

'Being!—being what?'

'What God wants us to be.'

'And doing?'

'What He tells us in His Word we must do, to answer the supreme end of our being.'

The two at last cleared the glen. And now, on higher ground, and nearing the scene of their earlier exploits, both Scotty and Falconer hurried along the path leading towards home.

'Hark!' said Scotty, suddenly, and he bent low and listened—'it's the cry of the Moa-pauks,' he remarked, 'calling to one another.'

They pushed on at their fastest. The Maoris, too, followed them through the glen; were there any more about?

'They're gaining on us, Falconer, and we're getting done up.' In fact, cries came from two opposite parts of the forest.

'Is your gun loaded, Falconer?'

'It is.'

'With ball?'

'Yes.'

'Now, off with your jacket, and give it me!'

Scotty hastily put the jacket round some dry sticks, and stuck Falconer's cap on top. 'That will stop them a few minutes,' said he.

On again ran the two, the fresher on account of their rest.

'Ah! listen, captain; they're rushing your jacket—'

'And they are fighting over it, if I'm not mistaken. Hark! do you hear those cries?'

These cries ceased suddenly; but imagine their dismay on looking ahead to see a dark foe bearing down upon them, and, on looking round, to see those behind closing in upon them.

They were hemmed in!

'That's Wetekina stopping our path,' said Scotty. 'Here, you face *him*, Falconer, but back to back. Cover the chief well, but don't fire—unless forced to do so.'

'What then, old fellow?'

'I'll play these others with my old pistol; perhaps the chief will work round and join the others.'

'And then?'

'Our path is clear; and we must make a rush. It's clear they have no powder—or we should not be here!'

Wetekina bounded on towards Falconer. But the long gun in a line with his head stopped him. He swerved to the right—and the deadly aim followed him. Then he rushed towards the others, to join them for a final swoop.

'Now's the time!' cried Scotty; and, with a bound, the two sailors dashed along the track, the Maoris bounding after them, yelling with rage.

The Maoris gained; the sailors put forth all their powers to keep ahead. Scotty half turned his head, his foot caught in the root of a tree, and down he came with great force. 'Up, lad!' cried Falconer, facing round and aiming at the foremost Maori.

'I can't walk, Falconer; but I'll crawl up and help you.'

'Courage, my hearty! We must make sure of one each; and I'll tackle the third man—and God help the right!'

On rushed the Maoris. One of them was very near, and was just in the act of raising his tomahawk, when Falconer fired, and the native fell.

'Here, take the pistol,' said Scotty; 'I'm useless!'

Falconer now prepared for the final rush. The Maoris separated, and, tomahawk in hand, were creeping nearer step by step to make the fatal rush, feeling sure of their victims, one of whom was helpless.

A piercing whoop burst out behind them, which went to the brave men's hearts.

Falconer fired, and down fell another Maori, badly wounded.

'Dog's-ear!' cried Scotty—'we're saved!'

Before Wetekina could spring on Falconer, Dog's-ear bounded upon the young chief; and now began a fearful struggle.

Dog's-ear was an oldish man, but his muscles were of steel. Wetekina was young, but powerful, and agile as a cat. Wetekina's axe having dropped, it became a struggle of sheer strength for the mastery. Still, let but one right hand get free, and Wetekina's knife or Dog's-ear's *mere* would settle the fight.

Gripping each other fiercely, now swinging forward and now backward, stumbling, falling, but rising and gripping each other anew, the struggle went on.

At length with a fierce yell Dog's-ear caught the young chief as he wished, and threw him so violently against the bole of a tree that he seemed to be lifeless. With a bound he rushed upon him and the fatal *mere* was uplifted.

His arm was caught firmly by Falconer.

'O chief!' he cried, 'he is mine! I claim his life!'

'Good! O Pakeha, was the reply. The old chief sank down, panting and exhausted.

'Father of brave hearts!' said Falconer, 'you have saved our lives; I'm your friend for ever!' and he gripped the chief's hands in token thereof.

'My son shall you be,' said Dog's-ear; 'Raromi, for your grip is tight, your word straight, and your heart is true

As discussed in the introduction, this is one of many new names given to Falconer throughout the novel. Significantly, this is the first time he is called Raromi, a name incorporated into the title of the novel.

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Lithograph of a melee involving two Maori warriors and a bearded pakeha settler.

Chapter XVII. The Launch of the Kahawai.

Falconer sat in his little cottage, trying with all his ability to find how to make both ends meet.

His little vessel finished and equipped for sea was the end and aim of his ambition, and he was struggling manfully and painfully in the mazes of bewildering calculations, fearing he should never arrive at the consummation of his hopes.

A thump at the cottage door interrupted these calculations.

The door being pushed open disclosed Scotty, followed by Nivens—old Nivens, he was mostly called—and both of them carrying loads, comprising the whole of the worldly effects of the shipwright.

Old Nivens was a character—an odd one. A cockney, and brought up in London, he had passed a lifetime in all kinds of adventures and hairbreadth escapes. Yet he was active and strong. He was also clear-headed and shrewd, and only needed separation from drink to be a good companion, and do good, honest work.

While the wind whistled and roared outside, Nivens, Scotty, Falconer, and Mrs. Norris—who was a woman with clear views—sat round a roaring fire, and discussed their plans respecting the future.

'I say, skipper,' broke in Nivens, at length, 'I suppose you've laid in a stock o' rum, eh? We can "bowse up the jib" when the work's done, till all's blue.'

'Mrs. Norris keeps the key of the locker,' replied Falconer; 'she deals out the grog.'

'Come along, Mrs. Norris, out with the key,' cried Nivens; 'none o' your six-water grog and a tea-spoon—but a good nipper.'

'Here's the grog,' said Mrs. Norris, putting a small bottle on the table; 'this is the allowance, but it's real rum.'

'You don't drink then?' said the old man, looking round with astonishment.

'No,' said Falconer, 'not a drop for me—I want to keep my head clear for work.'

'Play us something on the concertina,' began Scotty, speaking to Falconer, who tried a jig, to which Scotty began to dance with great spirit.

'That ain't the step,' cried Nivens.

'No! How then? Shew me.'

'Look here, I'll give you the double shuffle, in a brace o' winks.' He stood up to dance.

'Play up, fiddlers!' he shouted.

Falconer brought all his skill to bear on 'Jack's the lad;' and away went Nivens, crossing, doubling, giving toe and heel, with crossed arms, and head thrown back, in real man-o'-war style. He danced with great ease.

'Capital! Hurrah!' shouted Scotty.

Scotty tried another jig.

'That's a bit better like,' said Nivens, taking just a sip of rum and water; 'but your heels are too heavy, old son; a feller's heels must be as light as a feather.'

'Play us something, Nivens, and let me have a try,' added Falconer.

'I can't grind a tune out o' that 'ere wind-bag,' was the reply; 'if I had a flute, or bit o' fife, I'd give you a few "shanties" as 'ud lift your heels for you.'

'I have one,' said Falconer—jumping up to get it—'though I can't play it.'

Nivens took the flute and turned it over and over in silence; then he chuckled to himself.

'This 'ere flute cost money, good money, in its time,' said he; and he undid it, examined it, and put it together again.

When Nivens started with a jig, it electrified everybody, Mrs. Norris included, and sent Scotty and Falconer into uproarious fits of dancing.

Mrs. Norris looked on, nodded, laughed, and tapped her feet, and seemed for once to be happy.

Dog's-ear, since the adventure in the forest, had become intimate with Falconer. He called Falconer, Raromi, his son; and Falconer, on his part, became attached to the old chief, who spent much time at the cottage.

The old chief found out Falconer's plans respecting his new vessel. He had them explained to him.

'You are my son,' said Dog's-ear; 'take what wood you like at Kai-wara-wara; cut down the trees, the Nga-ti-tama will drag them down for you. We will build Raromi's *kaipake*, and then we'll sing the *toto-waka* and drag her down to the water. I have said it.'

'Where shall she be built?' asked Falconer.

'At Kai-wara-wara,' replied Dog's-ear. 'At the entry of the glen, O Raromi—that is the place.'

'That *is* the place for us,' added Nivens. 'Old Copper-nose is right—right as a trivet!'

Nivens threw himself heart and soul into the work of building Falconer's little coaster. Living with those who treated him kindly, he tried to do his best; and he brought all his resources, all his great experience, to bear upon producing a craft that should do everything but speak, as he phrased it.

'And with nicest skill and art,
Perfect and finished in every part,
A little model the master wrought;
Which should be to the larger plan
What the child is to the man.'

Nivens' little craft was but a model, yet as perfect as he could make it. Of only fourteen tons, yet built to brave the stormy seas round Cape Terawiti, to run to Ahuriri on the east, or Taranaki on the west.

This will not be surprising, however, when it is known that craft of seven tons only

1 I knew a craft of seven tons which was blown out into the Western Ocean for a week in a gale of wind; she returned in safety to Port Nic.

This the only footnote that Fraser provides in the novel. It is also the only time Frasers addresses the reader in the first person singular. Regardless of the factual accuracy of Fraser's claim here, it does foreshadow the forthcoming episode, during Chapter XXII. *Pump Or Sink – Pumping And Sinking*, where Falconer and Scotty get swept out to sea but miraculously survive.

engaged in the coast trade afterwards; craft that weathered many a storm of wind and rain. More surprising than this even is the fact that men engaged in shore-whaling often took their open whaleboats across Cook's

Straits in bad weather; often ran out to sea when it blew hard, and fastened to, and killed whales, where ordinary boatmen would never venture, nor ever dream of venturing.

It took all Mrs. Norris's skill, however, and all Falconer's courage and unflinching perseverance to carry on the building of the vessel with so few resources at his command, living principally on the produce of his partly-tilled land, and often pinched for food and funds.

Dog's-ear was delighted and astonished, as he walked round and surveyed the, to him, noble craft, as she stood in the yard completed as regards the hull. His tribe became so excited that they began a wild dance, and they went in a body and begged Raromi to fasten ropes to his little craft, that they might drag her down to the sea, as they did their war canoes, singing a *toto-waka*—a hauling song.

The evening before the launch, when all were talking and laughing together in the cottage, Nivens exclaimed suddenly, 'Why, Falconer, we've forgotten the name.'

'Yes; what shall her name be?' was the enquiry.

'The Kahawai,' replied Falconer. 'It's a good name, and if she slips through the water like a *kahawai*, I shall be satisfied.'

'Mark my words, Falconer,' added Nivens, 'that boat will sail well. She'll turn to wind'ard like a Deal lugger, and heave-to in a sea way like a Ramsgate trawler.'

His words came true. But Falconer little dreamt how his Kahawai would be proved, nor under what circumstances.

When at length the Kahawai slid down the ways, and slipped into the sea like a duck, shooting out well, as if she meant to have a race on her own account, the assembled Maoris gave the wildest whoops and cut the fiercest antics of which they were capable; while Nivens and Scotty, being Englishmen, gave three hearty cheers, and went on board the Kahawai to join Falconer.

The Kahawai had been safely moored off-shore, and the three builders stood on shore admiring her, when Nivens roared out, 'The-ere she blows!'

'There again!' he cried out, greatly excited, as all whalers are when a whale is in sight; and then rushed to the dinghey.

'We must go after the whale,' said Scotty, 'and take Nivens, or we shall lose him.'

'Come along, then,' added Falconer. 'We'll take the whaleboat and a scratch crew. A good fifty-barrel sperm would put us on our feet at once.'

The whale had found its way into the harbour, and was quietly amusing itself, not having found out it was almost a prisoner.

'Jump in, lads!' cried Nivens. 'I'm "headsman"; Falconer "steerer"—I'll lay you on to a affy-graffy.'

The 'irons' and a good lance were placed ready, the whale-lines attached to the harpoon coiled down with great care, and the axe at hand to cut the line if it fouled—to prevent being dragged down. And five pair of strong arms sent the boat flying into the open harbour.

But other boats had put off. Half the sailors in the place were whalers; and the sight of a whale blowing was to them like the cry, Tally-ho! to a hunter—it stirred their blood as nothing else could do.

'What shall we do, Nivens?' was asked. Nivens was turning over a quid in silence.

'It's no use to fasten-on helter-skelter like,' was the reply. 'No; that won't do in this 'ere harbour.'

'There, see; Bill Green is fastened; but he'll have to cut away agin.'

Nivens was right. The whale 'sounded,' but finding the water shallow became alarmed, and flew about so wildly—made such sharp turns—that the boat fastened to the whale had to cut adrift again.

'Give way, lads! I see what's the game.'

Nivens steered straight across the harbour to the entrance—about a mile across. He then breathed his men, and told them to get ready for a 'spin.'

Whalers are the finest boat-racers in the world. Not only are their races for speed, but they are often of such length as would utterly exhaust the fine rowers at Putney and elsewhere.

I once saw two whaleboats row a race at Auckland on the Waitemata. The course was some five miles each way. It was rowed without a rest, and the crews came in neck and neck, and had to row the race again the next day.

The whale made a dart, and got into the wide entrance to the harbour, into deep water.

'Give way!' And Nivens' boat got outside; and the whale too; then, finding room, it took a rest.

Just then a strange boat shot out from the east side of the harbour, and there was a race between the two boats; the whale rolling about meanwhile, and spouting at ease.

'He's fust, arter all!' cried Nivens, stamping with vexation, and throwing his quid away—but he was wrong.

'Never mind; keep your eye open, Falconer; and give the "iron" sharp when I cry out.'

'It's a rum crew,' said Nivens, speaking of the other boat. 'Who are they? Ah, missed! No! The headsman has jumped for'ard. He handles the "iron" (harpoon) beautifully—they're fast!'

The harpooner missed the whale. This so enraged the headsman steering (he steers until killing time comes), that he jumped forward and lanced a harpoon with such precision as to gain Nivens' applause. But the boat swung round too much.

Down went the ponderous head! Round swept the enormous tail with fearful force on one side!—on that side was the strange boat!

Crash! went the tail into the boat. The fore part of it was smashed!

'Smashed up!' said Nivens, coolly. 'Give way, and pick up the hands.'

Nivens' crew gave a few sweeping strokes, and the boat was in the midst of the wreck. Three men were picked up at once.

'Where's Charlie? And Long Bill?' was the cry.

'There! There he is!'

The boat was now alongside some débris, out of which a poor fellow was drawn very carefully, for he was helpless and insensible. The other man was seen nowhere. Search as they might, and did, he was never found—never seen more!

'I'll steer home,' said Falconer, 'and look after the wounded man.'

Nivens took the bow oar, and with lusty strokes the crew forced the whaleboat homewards.

'What, "gallied" (frightened), old tub-thumper?' shouted one of the Bar gang to Falconer, as the two boats passed each other.

'No! We've picked up the hands of a boat, smashed at the Heads—one hand badly hurt—we're running him home for the doctor.'

The wounded man moaned and moved uneasily. Falconer gave him some rum and water, which he drank eagerly; then he covered him up.

Falconer stood up steering (as whalers do), and looking down, saw the wounded man's left hand had slipped over at his feet, palm uppermost. He stooped to put it gently aside—there was the old scar right across the palm!

'It's Black Charlie!' said Falconer to himself.

'Poor mother!' said he, 'I am indeed bringing him home to you—but how? Shall I reveal him?'

'No! not now. Let her find out the secret. When she has found it out, she will be prepared for it.'

Chapter XVIII. Tinirau's Pet Whale.

On landing from the whale-boat, Falconer hastened to find Mrs. Norris. 'We have picked up a poor whaler badly hurt,' said he; 'I must bring him up here. Shall I put him in my bed?'

'Another in family, Falconer?'

'True; but I can't leave the poor fellow on the beach to die.'

'Oh, no; bring him up—I'll do the best I can for him.'

His three mates and Falconer took him into the cottage. When they had done so, Falconer asked them to follow him.

He took them into the storeroom. Here, a table was set out with a good meal for each; and a small stove flared and roared most cheerfully.

'Eat and warm yourselves, lads,' said Falconer. 'I know you all; but under my roof, placed as you are, I think only of your misfortunes. I am sorry I can do no more for you, but when you have fed and rested, I should advise you to leave quietly.'

'And Charlie!' said one of them.

'I'll heal him, if possible; and then he shall go free—as you do.'

The fact was these men were gaol-birds, and Charlie was evidently their leader. They vowed Falconer was a good fellow. Unknown to everybody in the cottage, they disappeared, and were lost in the forest.

'I'm afraid there's no hope for him!' was the doctor's verdict upon Black Charlie. 'He is in a fearful condition! Besides which his past life—'

'Do you know him?' asked Falconer, eagerly.

'I do—well.'

'Then, for my sake, and'—here he whispered in the doctor's ear—'keep this secret.'

'I will.'

'At any rate let him die in peace—his secret will come out at last, and you will know why I ask you this.'

'How is he?' asked Falconer, a few days afterwards; just, in fact, before the Kahawai sailed on her first voyage up the Straits on a trading trip.

'He's marked! His days are numbered.'

'Oh! don't say that.'

'I must say so,' replied Mrs. Norris, 'for I see it. But there's a mystery about him—'

'Indeed; what?'

'Do you know, whenever I ask him if he is comfortable, or if I can do anything for him, he's so gruff, and actually hides his face from me!'

'He's very ill; men are always gruff when they're ill; they're not used to it.'

'The other evening I sat here; you and Scotty were out; I was looking into the fire and thinking about the poor sailor. I turned to look at him. The light from the fire fell on his face.'

'Was he asleep?'

'No. He seemed to be watching *me*. But directly I caught the expression of his eyes I was reminded of my Will. It was foolish, but I began to cry.

""Don't cry, missis," said he; "t'ain't no good. Cheer up! Let's finish off plucky like!"

'And that voice! Oh, Falconer, it was his voice! I haven't heard it for years now; but it was his voice!'

'Who is he?' asked Mrs Norris.

'A whalerman; a sailor; a kind of waif who has drifted into our little harbour of refuge.'

'I must speak to him, and tell him about Will. Perhaps he's met with him, and seen him; sailors roam about every where. Oh! if he's dead! dead! Yet, mind you, lad, I've prayed for him night and day all these years, and my faith and hope somehow get stronger. I seem to feel—I don't know why—I shall see him again.'

'Poor heart!' murmured Falconer, deeply touched. 'You think he's turned out bad, do you?' Falconer turned his head—he could not command himself.

'You believe it, Falconer? Then will I lead him to the Saviour's wonderful love, which finds out robbers and lost women—to Him who saves and loves the lost ones, when everybody spurns them and turns away from them.'

The Kahawai was about to sail. Nivens was delighted with her. The three builders and Dog's-ear had cruised about the harbour, even in half a gale of wind, to try the Kahawai's sailing qualities and rate of speed.

'She's a right-down spanker, she is,' said old Nivens. 'I've done my best, lads—and, to tell you the truth, she'd never a bin done like that 'ere, only you sly dogs you kept the grog away from me.'

'But you've been happy with us, Nivens?' said Falconer.

'Happy! Jolly as a sand-boy. I wish we could allus sail together.'

'What sail will she lie-to with best?' asked Falconer.

'The foresail.'

'We'll have a good one, then. It may be our only chance, if we get caught, to carry the foresail close-reefed.'

'Quite right, lad; allus look ahead.'

'No water-casks on deck for me,' said Nivens. 'If you gits in a bubble, and gits washed about, away goes the casks. No. I've put slidin' panils in the bulk-heads fore and aft. You can cook in the hold, and you can git stores out o' the forepeak, and all without going on deck.'

Bands of Maoris stood on shore and fired their old muskets, and shouted farewell in one of their ancient lays; to which the crew of the Kahawai—Scotty, Falconer, and Dog's-ear—replied by three hurrahs! that made the welkin ring. And the Kahawai stood away on her first cruise.

As the Kahawai drew near the Heads, the wind fell light. And as it was useless to run out into the violent tide-rips outside without a smart breeze, Falconer, upon Dog's-ear's advice, came to an anchor.

The evening was lovely. The setting sun from behind a cloud shot out rays of all colours and of great intenseness, which swept over land and sea, meadow, mountain, and peak, bathing them in floods of glorious tints that no living painter could limn.

'There, on the flanks of the Tararua Mountains,' exclaimed Dog's-ear, 'the sad remnant of the once-powerful Nga-ti-tama still hunt the *kiwi*, still snare the *kaka*, but their *pas* are deserted, and their *kaingas* are empty. Behold, Raromi, the old warrior joins hands with the Pakeha, and longs for peace. May the Atuas of our great ancestors now teach us how to live in peace!'

'But you live for war,' replied Falconer; 'it breathes in every word of your songs, and shews itself in the way you treat your enemies.'

'True, O Raromi! I will speak straight to you. This stone *mere*'—holding it up—'has been raised in anger, and has struck down the foe without pity or mercy, and yet—' he hesitated.

'Speak, O father,' said Falconer.

'That time is passed; I'm tired of war. Many a word—good, straight words—your friend the little Pakeha (Noble) spoke to me in the house yonder. They have sunk into my heart.'

'Oh! Dog's-ear,' exclaimed Falconer, 'I owe you undying friendship; for when alone and in danger you saved him, and stood by him, as you saved me and stood by me!'

'Say you so, Raromi! Your words smite my heart. I will keep them there. May the great Atuas of our

ancestors send me to the Reigna if I cleave not to you—as you do to me!

'But I'm afraid, O friends, I have been too eager about this voyage. The tribes up the Straits are uncertain, jealous, and ready for revenge.'

'But Rangihaeata is your friend—your ally—so we shall be in no danger at Porirua, where you want to land,' said Falconer.

'With me he is straight. But the wily one at Kapiti, who leads him, would plunge us all into war for a dozen muskets.'

'It's Te Rauparaha, then, who does all the mischief?'

'All, all, Raromi; and he is chief over all. He is our Ariki—we are bound to him. Yet the tribesmen sing, when alone:—

"Go and find out the
Good of Rauparaha;
Is he good, or is he bad?
He is a deceiver.
Don't forget! Don't forget!"

'Suppose we have supper', said Falconer.

'Yes, supper,' echoed Scotty—yet the two men hesitated, and looked at each other in silence.

'Come, Scotty! this is weakness. One of us must cook—must be cook—though it goes against the grain. Let us draw for it.'

'No! no!' replied Scotty, darting through the panel; 'I said I would do it, and I will.'

'Kapai!' exclaimed Dog's-ear, sniffing the odour of cooked steak; 'it's the sweet smell of Tutunui.'

'Tutunui! Who was he?' asked Falconer.

'Tutunui was Tinirau's pet whale; but I will tell you the story.'

'Tinirau, one of our ancestors, fell sick. Now there was a celebrated priest, named Kae, noted for charming away the spell (Maoris believe, or believed, sickness was the result of some evil spell; charm away the spell, and the sickness would go); and Tinirau sent a messenger for him, although he lived at a great distance, to come and charm him.

'When Tinirau was well, Kae begged to be allowed to return home quickly on the back of Tinirau's pet whale, Tutunui.

'Tinirau called the monster close in shore. "Mind," said he, when Kae had climbed on the whale's back; "Mind this; when you get home, and in shallow water, Tutunui will begin to wriggle; you must then jump off his back at once, and send him back."

'Tinirau gave his orders to Tutunui, and it set off at great speed.

'Now when the whale reached Kae's place, and in shallow water, it began to wriggle; but Kae kept his seat, until, in fact, Tutunui was fast aground, until it was left high and dry ashore.

'The wicked Kae, as soon as the whale was dead, began to cut it up, to roast it, and to eat it.

'Tinirau waited anxiously for his pet—he called it—he was angry. It came not. He went out in the wind, and the odour of the dead whale, his pet, reached his nostrils.

'Since then, when we Maoris smell anything good, we say, "Oh! it's the sweet odour of Tutunui."'

Chapter XIX. A Fair Captive, Unfairly Captured.

A Wonderful panorama opens out on all sides, when the voyager, having left Port Nic., is well off Cape Terawiti, and has opened out Cook's Straits in all their beauty in fine weather.

Looking northward his eye catches the glittering peak of Mount Egmont, at least one hundred miles distant; and on his right hand, close to, the wild, broken peaks and glens, and bluff headlands of the Taranaki range, where it comes down to the Straits. To the south the lofty Kaikouras, and the rugged scenery of the elevated parts of the Middle Island, add to the wild beauty of the scenery; which is completed by the bold, weird-looking coast on the left hand, hiding one of the most splendid series of harbours in the southern hemisphere—Queen Charlotte's Sound.

The Kahawai was in the midst of this coast scenery. But the weather had changed suddenly. It seemed inclined to blow.

'Raromi,' said Dog's-ear, 'you must run in and make fast the big canoe close under the island, Mana; very fast! It will blow, but hold on to Mana!'

Following Dog's-ear's advice, Kahawai was run in between Mana and Porirua, close under the lee of Mana, and was anchored in two fathoms of water—so close, it seemed as if one could throw a biscuit ashore.

Mana lies just off the harbour of Porirua. Here the truculent, savage chief Rangihaeata lived and ruled; a magnificent Hercules, but a thorough savage; who once, after this period, even before the governor, 'thrust out his tongue, which quivered like a serpent's, to an unnatural length, and rolled his bloody eyeballs like a demoniac,' in a moment of anger.

Dog's-ear went ashore on Mana, to find means of crossing over to Porirua. At this place he was going to try and trade on Raromi's account. In fact, as Scotty and Falconer were amusing themselves, looking up and down the coast opposite, they saw the chief cross the roadstead, enter Porirua harbour, and disappear, on board a big canoe.

Our two sailors, cooped up in a small cabin, found inaction almost insupportable after a time.

'We'll take the dinghey and go ashore,' said Scotty; 'I must have a turn.'

'We can't go together, Scotty.'

'Why not? Under the lee; the Kahawai moored as if she were in Port Nic. harbour. Come along, and don't be disagreeable, old fellow.'

Falconer yielded; the two stepped ashore, and hauled up the boat, high and dry.

'There ought to be a village close by, for I fancied I saw the top of a *whare* before we landed,' said Scotty. 'Perhaps we can get some potatoes—who knows?'

'Here's a discovery!' cried Falconer, who had hurried up from the shore; 'here's a deserted *pah*. Look! what a splendid bit of carving is on that *whare*; it must have been a chief's house.'

They had, in fact, stumbled on a deserted *pah*, not long before deserted by Rangihaeata for a stronger *pah* at Porirua. They stood before his *whare*.

This *whare* had been called by its owner 'Kai tangata' (lit. eat man); and from its name the reader may guess at another feature in the huge chief's character.

The boards facing the portico, or verandah, always carried out so as to leave an open space in front, were finely carved with grotesque figures, the eyes of which were made of mother-of-pearl. Each figure also had the tongue thrust out to great length (the Maori style of shewing defiance). Inside was the carved image of a most hideous form, which supported the ridge-pole; said to have been carved by the chief himself.

'Suppose we take possession, old boy,' said Scotty. 'You're a bit of a chief, Mr. Raromi; and Dog's-ear is your friend—father, I ought to say, for he has adopted you.'

'Suppose the owner found us here! However, we'll look round—and then aboard.'

A tall, scowling native crawled round the *whare*, and, with his head nearly on the ground, looked in at the front of the house, and watched the two young men as a cat does a mouse.

'But where are the natives?' asked Scotty.

'It's deserted, don't you see? I'll warrant it belonged to Rangihaeata. I heard he was building a new *pah* at Porirua.'

'Here's an odd crib!' now burst from Scotty, whose eyes were everywhere; 'let's go inside and explore. It's quite romantic: what else shall we find?'

This was a semicircular house, made of wood; the roof was carried out, and made a kind of verandah. In front of the verandah hung what had been a costly and beautiful mat; and tufts of albatross feathers hung about in bunches.

The Maori spy saw them enter the house, and as he watched them his eyes dilated with fury. He clutched a short club with a nervous grasp, and jumped to his feet—he ran inland and disappeared.

If the two friends had known it, they would have gone a hundred miles in another direction, would have run any risk, rather than desecrate the *Wahitapu*, or most sacred resting-place of E Tohi, sister of Te Rauparaha.

This simple event, this slight accident, changed the current of their future lives.

'I've had enough of this deserted *pah*,' said Falconer, at length; 'let's get aboard—I'm anxious.'

'How jolly!' cried enthusiastic Scotty. 'What a discovery we've made!'

The sailors now hurried down to the shore, towards the boat. But behind them, and keeping well out of sight, crept some stealthy Maoris.

'The boat's gone!' cried Falconer. 'What's the meaning of this?'

'I'll swim aboard,' said Scotty, 'it was my—'

'Yes, Scotty, but I must find the boat. We can't go to sea without a boat!'

Hearing a slight noise, Falconer faced round, when instantly a small band of Maoris rushed at them with such headlong speed that Falconer and Scotty were thrown down, and before they could recover themselves they were prisoners—and bound hand and foot.

'Why is this?' cried Falconer, with pretended fury. 'Maori and Pakeha are at peace. E Taringa Kuri is with us, visiting Rangihaeata; his fury will be great when he—'

'Ha! Dog's-ear is with you!' said a young chief.

'He is. We are under his protection, beware his anger!'

The only reply to this was a hurried order by the young chief, when the two friends were roughly hauled aboard the Kahawai, and, after lying a few minutes on deck, were unceremoniously bundled into the hold. The hatches were replaced.

They were in utter darkness!

Now came confused noises of those talking, of the pattering of hard feet overhead, of hungry natives rummaging and quarrelling in the cabin. But these sounds ceased suddenly, and were succeeded by others more ominous of trouble and disaster.

The natives were hauling up the anchor—were trying to get the schooner under weigh!

'She's under weigh!' said Scotty.

'My poor Kahawai!' said Falconer, sadly. 'What will they do with her?'

'And with us, captain?'

The Maoris jumped about overhead,—the Kahawai heeled over,—the water swished against her sides,—she began to plunge and heel over; she was evidently outside the harbour—out at sea!

Then came over Falconer and Scotty a moment of depression and despair, such as the brave feel at times. The brave fellows, who had borne up under trials, difficulties, and dangers without number, felt unmanned.

Their pretty Kahawai, their fortune, their future, swept away, and themselves prisoners!

'Those Maoris dogged our steps!' said Falconer, at length,

'Yes, and they're in possession. I'm sure we're running along the coast. Oh, if—there, I've done it!'

'Done what?'

'Got one hand free. Now for the other—and now the legs.'

Scotty had freed one hand, had reached his pocket-knife; their thongs were cut—they were free!

There was a sliding panel in the bulkhead which separated the cabin from the hold. A very slight opening here enabled Scotty to scan the interior of the cabin.

'I say, old fellow,' whispered Scotty to his mate, 'there's—why, only fancy!—there's a Maori lass in our very cabin—a beautiful girl, too!'

'A woman?'

'Yes, and a young chief talking to her like a "lovyer" of the British type;—and yet that's the rascal who has run off with our Kahawai.'

'And ourselves!'

'Yes; let me think. I must find it out; there's a reason for all this. What is it?'

'I have it, Falconer,' said the irrepressible Scotty; 'I see through it all.'

'Do you? I wish I did.'

'These two are lovers. Their friends were against them; their tribes enemies, perhaps. They have run away. They care little how they get clear, so that they are not caught; once at home with *his* tribe, and they are safe. Maori chiefs often run away with noted beauties like that'

'That's small consolation to me, Scotty—to know I shall pay for this, and be ruined!'

'Not so fast, Captain Falconer; you don't look far enough.'

'Tell me which way to look, then; any way out of this fix!'

'I believe these are runaways; they found us ready to hand, and they will use us. The rascals will run into some creek or river, will jump ashore, the gentleman will fly with his lady-love, and we shall be free.'

'Think you so, my brave Scotty?'

'I do; I believe it.'

Scotty was partly correct. Tuimoa, a dashing young chief of a band attached to the Ngatiraukanas—loose allies of Te Rauparaha—had seen the beautiful Kahoki, a niece of Te Rauparaha, and had loved her. She came from the Rotorua district, where her father was a noted chief.

Rakapa Kahoki's father was Te Wehi-o-te-rangi of the Te Arawa iwi (a tribe from Rotorua, as Fraser details). Her mother was Rangi Te Kuini, of the Ngati Toa iwi, who was a figure of such stature that she warrants an entry in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Rangi Te Kuini was also a niece of Te Rauparaha. Significantly she was one of only five women to sign the treaty of Waitangi. ("Topeora, Rangi Te Kuini" <https://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t1-g1-t203/topeora-rangi-te-kuini>). Less is known about Rakapa Kahoki, but Fraser is correct in describing her as beautiful, as Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins' hand-coloured tinted lithograph 'E Wai and Kahoki' (Figure 1) from his 1847 book *The New Zealanders Illustrated* depicts.

In one or two general assemblies of the allies under Te Rauparaha at Porirua the two had met, and Tuimoa had made known his love by the pressure of the hand—the Maori fashion. Their love was reciprocal, but the wily Te Rauparaha wanted to get rid of Tuimoa's small band; they were not to be trusted.

Te Rauparaha warned the fair girl against Tuimoa. There was an ancient feud, he said, between the two tribes. Besides, she was the destined bride of a distinguished chief, and her father had agreed to him.

Kahoki said nothing. She soon after, however, went over to Mana, giving out it was a visit to an aged relative who lived at the back of the island.

Tuimoa, unable from the strong wind to take a canoe and escape, saw the Kahawai from his hiding-place close at hand. His love and desperation on the one hand, and hatred to the Pakeha on the other, led him to seize the schooner, and make use of her for his own purpose.

The young chief was wily. The desecration of the 'sacred place' of E Tohi served his purpose admirably. Under pretence of bringing the two sailors to justice amongst the Maoris themselves, he could secure his bride, make his own escape, and plead if necessary in justification his horror at the invasion of one of the most sacred spots under the law of the *tapu*.

In the main, as we have shewn, Scotty had guessed right as to the position of affairs up to a certain point; but the greatest danger to which he and Falconer might be exposed had so far escaped him.

Their great danger was this. Only let the young chief for his own ends excite the cupidity or malice of the fierce, savage spirits in the tribe, and both vessel and crew would be probably sacrificed to the fury of those who longed for a pretext to shew their hatred to the Pakeha.

Chapter XX. The Fire-Demon at Work.

The two adventurers were free of their bonds; but of what use was this freedom to them? What could they do? They were all but unarmed; there were but two of them; while their foes outnumbered them three to one at least, and were well-armed.

One of the most action packed scenes in the novel follows, involving conflict with rockets, as discussed in the introduction. Here Fraser is intentionally creating dramatic tension, making the arbitrary discovery of rockets more plausible by highlighting the fact that Falconer, Scotty and Dog's-Ear are unarmed.

They felt doomed to inaction and this inactivity, this sensation of helplessness in utter darkness, unnerved them.

But it did not last long.

'Ki uta! Ki uta!' shouted the young chief; and an answering shout of joy came from each Maori throat on board.

'The cabin is empty,' whispered Scotty; 'everybody is on deck.'

'Now's our time,' replied Falconer. 'Look about you, Scotty, and pick up all the food you can get, while I keep a look out.'

Falconer pushed the panel back gently and crept into the cabin. He looked up from under the scuttle. The schooner was running into a small river; and everyone's attention was directed to the shore.

Scotty quickly visited every nook and corner of the cabin, picking up fragments of food which the Maoris had pulled out of various lockers, but had not time to eat. This food he took into the hold.

With joyful shouts the Maoris on shore replied to their friends on board, rejoicing in the capture Tuimoa had made, but utterly indifferent to the conditions under which it was made.

The schooner ran into the small river with the rising tide, and soon after, bumping against a fish-stage, was moored there, and her sails dropped. One of the hatches was now dragged off by some natives from the shore; but the dark, scowling faces and muttered threats they heard were not pleasant to the two below.

Scotty and Falconer looked up—their mouths filled by cold potatoes—and their enquiring look was met by a yell of savage triumph.

The next moment the hatch was pulled over, and the friends were in darkness once more.

'We're in a fix, Scotty,' said Falconer, preparing to open the panel.

'Wait, Falconer! Let us think; it will soon get dark.'

'Yes, but delay is dangerous here, I can see. We had better strike a blow for liberty before we're stung to death in a wasps' nest, as this is!'

Falconer slipped the tomahawk Scotty had found in his belt, and peeped up on deck. A Maori sat by the fore-mast eating fern-root and potatoes; and two others sat on their heels, covered to their face by flax dresses, their faces turned ashore.

'Scotty! Scotty!' cried Falconer, hurriedly; but there was no response.

Falconer, however, stood there spell-bound, for as he gazed landward he saw Wetekina, surrounded by a mob of Maoris, evidently the riff-raff of the tribe, all armed, and all hurrying down to the schooner.

Looking again, to his great consternation, he saw Dog's-ear rush out from a hiding-place and place himself in front of Wetekina.

Wetekina raged and danced to and fro, jerking out angry words; and Dog's-ear followed suit, as became one chief haranguing another.

What did it mean?

Alas! Dog's-ear's suit had failed—a suit which Falconer guessed referred to them, pleaded by Dog's-ear in danger of his life—and some armed ruffians dragged him away violently.

Then arose a shout, loud and fierce, the chorus of a band of infuriated savages led by Wetekina, and the shout was—Death to the Pakeha!

'May God have mercy on us!' exclaimed Falconer; 'for we shall get none from these savages!'

'Scotty! Scotty! Come up—and—and die!' burst from him.

'No! no!' replied Scotty; 'come down instantly!'

'They're coming, Scotty, with Wetekina, to kill us!'

'Let them come. I've a pill for them they won't like—but come at once!'

Scotty's words inspired hope.

'We'll leave the panel wide open,' said Scotty, 'and a corner of this hatch off, for a little light. Now, follow me and don't speak. It's life or death, I know—I mustn't fail!'

The hold was clear. A flooring of beach-ballast was spread fore and aft. The fore end of the hold was dark. Scotty led Falconer there, and through the open panel into the fore-peak.

'What is it?' gasped Falconer, as the yelling fiends jumped on board.

Scotty whispered in his ear, 'Rockets!'

Then Falconer's eyes were opened; and he gave a terrible grip to Scotty's disengaged hand.

Seeing the panel wide open in the cabin, the Maoris, worked up to fever heat, rushed into the hold after their victims; those in front groping about as those behind followed.

'Fire away!' said Falconer, and away flew a big rocket into the hold with great force. It struck one, then another, rebounded and returned, hissing, darting and striking on all sides with great force, with great noise, until it finished with a fearful explosion!

The screeches and yells of the astounded and wounded warriors were frightful. They fought one another desperately to get out of the hold, out of the way of the terrible Fire-demon of the Pakeha.

Those somewhat burnt jumped overboard to cool themselves, and the rest jumped ashore and ran off as fast as their legs could carry them.

'Keep the other two ready, Scotty!' shouted Falconer, jumping on deck; 'and now let's cut and run! Up foresail, lad, while I cut all clear!'

Falconer gave one or two chops with the tomahawk, cutting the ropes which held the Kahawai alongside, and the schooner was adrift.

As the two hoisted the foresail, it caught a strong breeze off the land; and, heeling over, the Kahawai darted down the river.

'Raromi! Raromi!' came up from the river—alongside.

It was Dog's-ear, who had, in the confusion, escaped, and, jumping into the river, had swum off to intercept the schooner.

'Look! look, Raromi!' was Dog's-ear's first cry on getting on deck. A big canoe had put off to intercept them, filled by armed Maoris.

'Send the "bang-bang" after them,' cried Dog's-ear. 'Quick! Maori not like the "bang-bang."'

Scotty launched another 'bang-bang' at the canoe, which sent the crew ashore, howling with fear and rage.

The Kahawai was free!

The two friends hugged each other for joy; then dashing to work, they sent the schooner bowling along with all the canvas they could set.

'The wind shall be strong when the sun goes to sleep,' said Dog's-ear; 'and great must be your care in the night. But they say your Atua (God) is above the wind, and stronger than the sun; is it so?'

'He is a great King above all gods,' said Falconer; 'in His hand are all the corners of the earth. The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands prepared the dry land. He is the Lord our God.''

'Make *korakia* to Him for yourselves, and for me, the old warrior of the Nga-ti-tama; but say, I'm tired of war. Is He God of peace?'

'He is. And do you not want to live in peace? Do you not want love for hatred, peace instead of war, friends instead of enemies? If so, let us obey the great Atua who is God of all.'

Atua is both specifically a Maori concept, and also a more general Polynesian concept for a supernatural being, deity, ghost, object of superstitious regard or ancestor with continuing influence. However it is often translated as God, the Christian God, which is a misconception of the real meaning

<https://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/word/494>

'We will, Raromi; we will,' said Dog's-ear, lifting his right hand. 'Your God shall be mine—the God of

peace.'

Fraser's novel is heavily didactic throughout, with this example being one of the most blatant passages championing the virtues of Christianity. This is unsurprising, as the novel was published by the Religious Tract Society. Fraser's decision to ignore the traditional meaning of Atua (discussed in the above note) was probably a conscious choice to help promote the underlying Christian values of the novel, rather than an unconscious one, as he clearly had in-depth knowledge of Maori terms, exemplified by his knowledge of the term *utu* throughout the novel (notably pages 37 and 217).

The wind increased fast. Falconer, fearing it was going to blow, dared not run into the Straits in the dark, so he reduced sail, and laid the schooner's head to the north-west.

The great ocean lay before them, and they were drifting away from the land.

Chapter XXI. 'Oh, Pilot, 'Tis a Fearful Night!'

The scuttle covering the entrance to the small cabin was pushed forward, and Dog's-ear and Scotty, standing up in the said small cabin, looked out at the threatening sky, the rising sea; and then, bringing their thoughts back, they began to think about themselves.

'What a day of excitement for us all!' said Scotty, looking at Falconer, who was steering.

'Yes; and those Maoris won't forget your "bang-bangs" in a hurry. Old Nivens never made a more valuable present in his life. But our "excitement" is not yet ended, I fancy.'

'Come! I vote for a rest,' said Scotty, laughing. 'Just think: we've tried exploring, we've "assisted" at our own capture, have been boarded by pirates, we've carried off an heiress, and passed a day on cold potatoes—' And shall pass several more.'

'Don't interrupt, steersman; we've been carried *nolens volens* into a "wasps' nest," and the Kahawai—sensible creature that she is—has carried us out of it, without being stung.'

'True; but why not add, that we stung the wasps—and that they won't forget it in a hurry?'

'The bang-bangs very good,' said Dog's-ear, joining in. 'Maori not like—if you not have bang-bangs—'

'Not have cold potatoes, eh?' queried Scotty.

'Listen, friends,' said Dog's-ear, speaking in Maori; 'Te Rauparaha used the Ngatiraukawas when he was in trouble—as he used us Ngatitamas—but since—now he is strong—he stirred the Ngatiawas against the others, to weaken them, to—'

'Destroy them, eh?'

'Yes, to destroy them. He's like the *rata*, he climbs up by his friends, and when he's strong enough he destroys them. The Ngatiraukawas came to the feast at Mana, but they and the Ngatiawas quarrelled. Many men were killed, and now there is enmity between them.'

'And you, alone, went amongst your enemies!'

'I did.'

'I saw you pleading with Wetekina for us!'

'You did. I heard at Porirua that Tuimoa had seized Kahoki, the sweet maid of Rotorua, and that to take her away he had seized your vessel.'

'I had great fear. I could not rest. I said, Raromi is in danger. I knew Tuimoa was a friend of Wetekina, and that he hates the Pakeha; I knew those fierce fellows who follow Tuimoa would burn, fight, destroy anything for that wild fellow—to capture and keep Kahoki.'

'Didn't I guess right?' asked Scotty.

'You did, Scotty; you've the head to think.'

'You risked your life for us, Dog's-ear,' said Falconer.

'I see it all; but how did you get into the river alongside the Kahawai?'

Dog's-ear drew himself up to his full height, and looking Falconer in the eye, replied, 'I thought you were lost. I saw the band go aboard. I heard the cries and shouts. I could not endure it. I dashed down my guards, and seizing a tomahawk, ran down to die with you, like a Maori chief. Then came the rout, and I dashed into the river—"I will go to Raromi, or die," said I, "for he is my son, I have no other; alas! no other!'"

'No!'

'All have fallen—all—' The old chief was silent, and tears ran down his furrowed cheeks. 'My last brave boy died by my side in the war near Taranaki. He was dragged away'—here a shudder passed through Dog's-ear. 'But now, Raromi, you have come to me. In you I see my own brave boy. You are my son. I have said it. Where you go I'll go; my land is yours; your Atua is mine. He is the God of peace—I'm for peace.'

'Let's reef down, Scotty!' broke in Falconer, 'and prepare for the worst—it is coming!'

The Kahawai was soon under close-reefed mainsail, foresail, and a small bit of a staysail. The weather

looked bad. It was dark. And the little-schooner was now being driven away from land. The three voyagers at first rejoiced, as men do who escape violent death; but now they were tossed on the great ocean, without compass to steer by, without any means of knowing where they were by observation, and, worst of all, without food.

'All hands to supper!' cried Scotty, suddenly, from the hold.

'Dog's-ear is starving,' said Falconer, 'and I'm no better—pass on the roast beef at once!'

'The bill of fare,' added Scotty, 'is potatoes grilled *in* the fire, salt beef *au naturel*—what's left by the *naturals*—and a few pawas (haliotis), which our friends left on board; and if they won't try your teeth, say I don't know leather when I see it.'

'Have you *the pawa*?' asked Dog's-ear.

'Yes; here's some leather, alias haliotis. Try them, O chief; your teeth are good; eat, and "may your shadow never grow less."'

Pawa, potatoes, odds-and-ends, all disappeared. The crew had fed; and Dog's-ear went to sleep.

'Scotty, just one serious word with you. What have we got to live on—until we get hold of land again?'

'A few pounds of cooked potatoes,' was the reply; 'some haliotis—one or two—and a few morsels of salt beef; with water for two days—no more!'

The next day the weather was worse. The gale increased, and the sea began to labour and get wrathful. It was like a great giant feeling his immense strength, and lashing himself into fury against the first unhappy victim within reach.

The Kahawai was hove-to under a close-reefed foresail.

Falconer now stretched life-lines across the deck aft, so that any one on deck should not be washed away—for there was no shelter.

Huge seas now began to curl and break. These are very dangerous, even to a big, powerful ship. Here and there a wave-top would acquire a fearful impetus, and come swooping along, hissing and foaming like a racehorse for speed; and woe to the craft struck by the full force of such a wave.

How then would it fare with the little Kahawai?

This seemed to fill Scotty's and Falconer's thoughts, and made them both serious. Scotty standing with his head up the scuttle looked down; and Falconer with a small book in his hand looked up.

'We've weathered a good deal of danger lately, Falconer.'

'We have, Scotty.'

'But—'

'Shall we weather this? What do you think?'

When Scotty looked again, Falconer, overpowered by fatigue, had fallen asleep. His book lay at Scotty's feet. He picked it up, and read about the storm on the Lake of Galilee, and his thoughts centred in Him who calmed the storm.

Falconer woke up with a start, and began to prepare for the night.

'Where are you going, Falconer?'

'On deck. I must watch. Besides, the tiller ought not to be lashed—it will be broken.'

'God bless you, Scotty!' said he, wringing his companion's hand. 'Don't forget Him who calmed the storm, Scotty. You know what He said?'

'I've just read it.'

The brave fellow gripped Scotty's hand again, and went on deck to his weary, dangerous vigil.

Chapter XXII. Pump or Sink—Pumping and Sinking.

Dog's-Ear was ill. Sea-sickness and 'hunger for the land,' as he said, had disabled him. He had crawled into a little berth, and waited stoically for death.

'Try and sleep, Scotty,' said Falconer. 'I'll call you to look out by-and-by.'

Scotty in turn, from fatigue and the constant motion, fell asleep on a locker. Oh, how sweet is such sleep to the worn-out sailor! Sailors like Scotty seem to sleep twice as hard and twice as fast as landsmen do on ordinary occasions.

It was very dark. But the white crests of the curling waves, as they reared their angry heads, relieved the darkness from time to time. The howling of the wind and roaring of the sea, however, made a din that seemed to stun Falconer after a time.

Only those who know what heavy gales are at sea can comprehend properly the stunning sense of fatigue

one feels when exposed for a few hours to the roar of the gale, the hissing of the white-crested waves, and the whistling and shrieking of the wind through the rigging.

Falconer suddenly gave an involuntary cry of alarm; a huge, topping, roaring sea threw its white crest aloft, and seemed to rear its tremendous head over the Kahawai, preparatory to her destruction.

Scotty started up with alarm, but the next moment he was thrown down on the cabin floor; and a swirling mass of water seemed to go right over the little craft—tumbling down the little hatchway on to Scotty below!

'We're lost!' cried Scotty. 'May God have mercy on us!'

Scotty, however, picked himself up, and found—although he was hardly sure of it—he was still afloat.

'Falconer! Falconer!' he cried out; but there was no reply.

He crawled on deck. Oh, joy! Falconer was there. Yes; but stunned and insensible!

'Falconer!' cried his friend. 'Oh! what can I do?'

'Eh, what?' exclaimed Falconer, sitting up and staring about 'I've had a crack on the nut How it aches!'

Scotty got a light, and helped Falconer below. The water had drained into the hold.

Falconer's face was badly bruised. Blood came from his nose and ears. He was sick, too. And his friend hung over him helpless, for he had no restoratives—not even a morsel of food.

'I feel I must sleep,' said Falconer; 'I can't hold up my head. The whalers, you know, let oil float about ashore to calm the sea when they're "cutting-in" a whale. Try it. Tow something overboard to wind'ard with whale oil in it. 'His head sunk, and he fell asleep.

'That's good,' muttered Scotty; 'why shouldn't it answer at sea as well as near shore? I'll oil the monster's locks at once; 'and he did so.

Scotty lashed himself on deck, and took the watch. After a time he nodded, and sank down, hard and fast asleep.

The crew of the Kahawai slept, and slept soundly; and the little craft drifted to and fro, the sport of the angry waves, a real ocean waif.

When Scotty woke up the sun was shining brightly. The little craft was rolling and tossing about in fine style; the wind having fallen, the Kahawai had not sail enough to steady her.

'How is it on deck, Scotty?'

'Much finer, Falconer; the wind is falling fast. But the sea looks ugly at times.'

'Look! Scotty; the sun is aft—risen, say, half an hour. We're heading just now for Australia!'

'Are we? I'm not particular, old boy, where we make land; so that we *do* make it.'

Falconer went on deck. The reefs were shook out, the staysail set—the sheet to windward.

'Why heave-to now? - asked Scotty.

'Just because we can't steer. Don't you see that heavy sea carried away our rudder?'

The gale had passed, the wind falling as by enchantment. It fell calm; and there was not enough wind to steady the little craft while the sea went down. So hove-to, and rudderless, she rolled to and fro under a scorching sun—a helpless log, as it were, with a helpless crew.

Scotty, impelled by hunger, crept into the hold to search for scraps of food. He had not long been absent, when a cry, as of one in distress, reached Falconer, who dived down below, crying out, 'What's the matter?'

'The matter! Oh, heavens—we're sinking!'

The Kahawai had received damage when she was struck, and was making water fast.

'This won't do,' said Falconer, as the two sailors stood paralysed for a moment 'We've weathered the storm, thank God, and I believe we shall weather this. Courage, lad!

'Fetch the pump! It's a clumsy affair, but see if it will work. Try it, while I get at the leak.'

'Well, how is it?' asked Scotty, when Falconer came up.

'I think the stern has been twisted a bit, but I can't find out where it is! 'That *it* meant a good deal; it meant pump or sink!

So the weary hours passed—so the day passed; pumping and resting, resting and pumping. Yet each getting weaker, each approaching the moment—and they felt it, but said nothing—when they could do no more but lie down and—sink!

Another night passed. The pumping just kept them afloat But if they should fail? and Scotty's strength was failing fast

'Chew a bit of rope's-end, Scotty.'

'I can't; my throat is parched; we're out of water!'

Towards daylight they slept; and when they awoke they felt much refreshed. Rain had fallen, and was falling, and they caught several gallons of the precious liquid. Then the pumping went on with vigour.

The day passed slowly. It kept fine, and was hot But in the afternoon Scotty lay down, saying piteously, 'It's no use, Falconer, I'm done up—worked out!'

'Take a rest, Scotty; you'll be better presently.'

'I hope so, but not—not here—my time's up!'

Falconer drew his friend to him, and the two brave fellows embraced silently, and wept; then Scotty lay down to die. But Falconer knelt down, and prayed to God for help.

It was now, as Falconer saw, a question of endurance. 'How long can I hold out?' thought he. 'Will a craft heave in sight in time?'

He drank a little water from time to time, and chewed a bit of rope's-end. When he rested, he gave water to Scotty, who drank like a child in a dreamy condition. Dog's-ear, too, drank heartily, and seemed refreshed.

On, on, went the pumping, but with frequent intervals for rest, intervals growing longer and longer. At length Falconer sat down beside Scotty, worn-out; he hadn't strength to get up again. Such men give out all at once; their reserve force expended, all is over with them.

He looked up at the sky, so fair and bright, and round upon the sea, so treacherous and false; and with a muttered prayer to God for help, his head sank down like lead.

Lithograph of seven occupants in an open lifeboat, rowing away from a sinking ship in a storm

He lay helpless beside Scotty, like him, overcome by stupor.

'Schooner, ahoy! Rouse up there!'

These and other cries came from a brigantine, which, having brought a breeze with her, had now reached the Kahawai—in a sinking condition.

'Luff! luff!' cried the officer of the watch.

'Luff it is!'

'So! so! Pass as close alongside as you can.'

As the brigantine sailed by the schooner, luffing up in the wind, some of the watch ran up the weather rigging, to see what could be seen of the little water-logged craft, which gave no signs of life aboard.

'There's a couple of hands layin' on the deck aft!' came from aloft.

'Round to!' shouted the officer of the watch. 'Topsail to the mast! lower away the quarter-boat, and look sharp, lads; for the bit of boat will sink in a few minutes.'

The noise of the sailors, their shouts, their jumping on board, roused Falconer a little. He tried to rise, and fell back again.

'Quick, lads!' said one; 'this one first,' pointing to Scotty. 'And now the other.'

'No! no!' moaned Falconer; 'below!'

'Oh! There's another below—here goes then.'

'Look sharp!' cried the others; 'she's sinking!'

Two men now dragged up Dog's-ear, who, moaning and helpless, fell into the boat; and they pushed off.

'There she goes!' cried the second mate. 'That's what I call shaving it close!'

With a slight quiver, the Kahawai gave a plunge forward, and disappeared for ever. The sailors in the boat, always moved by the death-agony of a craft at sea, rested on their oars in silence—it was saluting the dead—and then pulled aboard with the rescued crew.

With not much life left in them, the three waifs were put into warm berths and fed like children. And the brigantine Alert bore away with the freshening breeze for Sydney.

Chapter XXIII. Mother and Son—Sorrow and Joy.

Let us return to Black Charlie for a moment. He, it will be remembered, was left dangerously ill in Falconer's cottage from the terrible blow given by the whale's 'flukes'—ill, past all recovery, and in the hands of Mrs. Norris, his mother, who did not know her own long-lost son.

It must not be forgotten that twice at least, out of sheer, implacable hatred and dark revenge, he had tried to compass Falconer's death; and twice he had been baulked in the moment of supposed triumph.

And now this man of iron will, of fierce, untameable passion, whose life had been a succession of crimes, without shame and without conscience, lay helpless as a child—face to face with himself.

Falconer knew without a doubt that Black Charlie was Mrs. Norris's son Will. The deed of shame which had left such a sting in his mother's heart had been openly boasted of and joked about, when he and others of the same stamp were recounting their deeds of bravado over their cups; deeds which excited no horror, and met with no reprimand, from those who listened.

But Falconer's tongue was tied. He could not run the chance of subjecting Mrs. Norris's tender, high-strung feelings to the insults of one who had not a particle of regard for her—insults which, coming from her son Will, would have killed her. Such were his thoughts.

He believed, too, if anything would bring the hardened man to repentance, it would be suffering, weakness, and the sense of utter dependence on one whose love and devotion would at length reach his heart.

Black Charlie knew his mother.

His mother unconsciously revealed this to Falconer. Black Charlie, hated and hated by all, turned from all—was silent, rough, hid his face. Yes, for his mother was there, and her presence was a constant, bitter reproach.

And Mrs. Norris?

She had no real knowledge of the big, powerful, hirsute man, whose beard covered half his face, as being her lost son. Yet something spoke to her out of the past, and spoke constantly to her of her son Will.

'Why does he remind me of Will?' she asked herself very often; and as yet could find no answer.

Mrs. Norris often sat and watched him, watched the turns and expressions of his face. As she did so, visions of her husband and Will came up before her and moved her to tears. She tried to make the wounded man speak; and when he spoke she said to herself, 'He has Will's voice.' And yet how could that huge, bruised, and broken mass of humanity be her Will?

She would ask him if he had ever seen anybody like her Will. But it was hard to do so. He turned away from her so roughly. Besides, he was really very ill, dangerously ill, and might die.

As the days passed, and languor and weakness took possession of the wounded man, his real character came out. He gave way to passionate bursts of swearing, which shook him terribly.

'Oh, my poor lad!' exclaimed Mrs. Norris one day, when he was thus violent, 'what can I do for you? You are weak and ill, and it must be so hard to lay there—'

'Hard!' he hissed fiercely; 'why should I be tormented like this? I'd give all I have if you'd shoot me through the head. I've served others so—it's my turn now; only these soft-hearted boobies won't, I know. If I could only git a knife!'

He writhed and twisted about, giving himself agony as he moved, swearing all the time; his face was disturbed by passion, and it made him terrible to look at.

Mrs. Norris stood spell-bound at his side. She felt so helpless here; and this sense of helplessness made the tears roll down her cheeks.

'My poor lad!' she murmured, tenderly, putting a cool hand to his heated brow; 'try and bear it I'd help you if I could—help you as if I was your own mother.'

'My mother!' he repeated, staring at Mrs. Norris, but not in anger; the paroxysm had passed.

'Yes; I am a mother; and my poor boy—O God! where is he?'

Black Charlie turned away his head, murmuring to himself.

'Oh, my poor Will!' burst out Mrs. Norris, clasping her hands; 'if I could but hear him repent of that one act towards me, I should live, I should die in peace—yes, and happy.'

A shiver passed over the wounded man—a low groan escaped him.

'You're in pain, I'm afraid.'

'No! yes! only—but there, never mind!' Something troubled him—big beads of perspiration covered his forehead.

'When my poor husband was brought home and laid on his bed, and—and—I was a widow, I said, I have Will left; he will be my comfort, he will stand by me, his love will be mine. Poor boy! he turned against his own mother, against my love, and—and—nearly broke my heart. I would have passed over all else, all his thoughtlessness—boys don't think—but at last to—to—'

'What? what?' gasped Black Charlie, shutting his eyes.

'May God have mercy on him, and on me, for he—for he—he's—' Mrs. Norris fell on her knees, sobbing.

'Mother! mother!' cried the sick man, hoarsely, trying to sit up, ghastly pale, with horror written in every line of his face.

'Mother! I did it!'

'You! my Will! my boy!' rang through the room, as Mrs. Norris sprang to her feet, and, clasping Will's unwounded hand to her heart, gazed with a yearning pity no words can describe into her son's sunken face,

Those two looked with anguished vision into each other's eyes: the mother startled, yet restful; pained, yet joyful; sad, yet so happy that now she could open the floodgates of her pent-up affection, and lavish it all upon him who needed everything—and, above all, a mother's love.

'Can you forgive me?'

'Can I forgive you, Will? Oh, that is the sweetest music I've heard all these long years. My poor boy, I've been waiting for that, praying for that, night and day. For I said, if he will only take away the sting from my poor stricken heart, God will hear a mother's prayers, and give him His blessing.' 'God's cursed me, mother!'

'Hush!' she whispered; 'He's here, Will; ready to pardon to the uttermost all those who come to Him by Jesus Christ.'

'Yes, but I'm no longer the boy you knew. I've done the devil's work—not God's. I've bin agin God and man. I'm an outcast. If they knew I was here—I should be—' 'What, Will?' 'Hung!'

'Will! if they take you they shall take me; if they—if they—kill you they shall kill me—we live, or die together!'

'Poor mother!' burst from the sick man, tears actually running down' his cheeks. The deep-down, long-hidden feelings of his better, nature had struggled to the surface, called forth and sustained by a mother's undying love.

It was a touching sight to see the broken-hearted mother hanging over her newly-found and repentant son. She forgot herself, forgot the past, and even her son's desperate state morally and physically, in the great joy of having found him, of his having taken the sting from her life—of his being repentant.

The doctor, who had unwittingly heard much of this at the door, now made a noise and walked in.

'Good day, Mrs. Norris; how's the patient?'

'It's no good, sir,' replied Will, at once. 'You've been very good to me, and I've been a brute; but it ain't no good.'

'No! why?'

'I'm done for; and you know it. How long shall I hold out?'

'My good fellow, as your eyes have been opened to it—make your peace with God; your time is short!'

'Save him! Oh, save him!' cried Mrs. Norris, piteously. 'I've only just found him; and now to—'

'Don't cry, mother said Charlie. 'I've lifted my hand agin you—and agin all men—and God has cut me down!'

'Listen, doctor,' said he, in a whisper, as Mrs. Norris left them; 'I'm Black Charlie! But you won't tell on me? It'd kill her, poor mother! Let me die in peace.'

The doctor was so affected by the whole scene that he could hardly speak.

'My good fellow,' he replied, 'don't fear me. Falconer, who brought you here, did it expressly. He took every precaution.'

'Falconer!' exclaimed Charlie, excited and eager; 'bring him here. I'll tell him all—confess all—in your presence.'

'I cannot, I'm sorry to say; he's gone up the Straits, trading. Shall I send a minister?'

'No, sir, not now. My mother's wonderful, never-dyin' love to a wretch like me, that's my minister. If God will shew any mercy to me, it's because of her—because of her prayers.' Such was his thought for the moment; and can we wonder at it?

The mother's love seemed to weave a spell around the dying man. The heart that had felt no pity, tenderness, or love for others, and, in truth, had received none from others, now yearned for the tender word, for the slightest expression of a mother's love and sympathy.

Speaking humanly, with our dim perceptions of the actual working of God's pity and love in a sin-stained, crime-laden soul, it appeared God used a mother's love to lead the dying man to a knowledge of His—to Himself.

'I must see Falconer, mother,' said Charlie, suddenly; 'I'd crawl on my knees to him, and beg his pardon, I would! I can't die without that!'

'My poor boy, he's gone up the Straits, and—no, it can't be!'

'What can't be?'

'They say he's—he's lost!'

'Lost! Falconer! What, has God spared a wretch like me—and taken him? I can pray now.'

The widow knelt down, and holding Charlie's sound hand, poured out her soul in agonizing prayer—the prayer that clings, pleads, and supplicates, that believes, realizes, and accepts God's promises, and brings the blessing down.

The dying man lay still. All his vitality seemed concentrated in his face. His eyes were fixed with such a tender, beseeching look in them on his mother's, that she seemed spell-bound by them; the two gazed into each other's soul without a word.

Thus they sat looking at each other; he resting, it would seem, on that sweet mother's love he had lost for so long; and she silently pouring out her heart's love and pity on him she was to lose again so soon.

'Mother!' gasped Charlie, suddenly; 'His love is—'

'Unfathomable to all who repent and—'

'Who—repent—through—'

'Through Christ, and believe in Him.'

'Through—Jesus—Christ—'

When Nivens came in, Mrs. Norris knelt beside her dead boy.

God had heard her prayer.

Chapter XXIV. Storm-Tossed, but Safe.

The brigantine Alert lay alongside the wharf in Darling Harbour. And not a few people walked down to the wharf, to see the two heroes who had fought night and day against hunger and thirst, the howling wind and the raging sea, in a kind of ship's long-boat, who had been rescued at literally the last moment. But no heroes were seen—not as the imagination had painted them—for the simple reason they were hard at work, one at the winch and the other in the hold.

'This is one of the men, sir,' said the captain of the Alert to an elderly gentleman who stood on deck looking about him.

'Good morning, young man,' said the owner, speaking to Scotty; 'I'm very glad indeed to hear of your wonderful escape. You can rest and live on board until you feel in good trim again.'

'Thank you, very much,' was the reply. 'We've lost all our belongings—but here we are, hearty and strong again, and ready for work. Falconer!' he cried out, 'come up a moment.'

'I have just thanked Mr. Morgan, the owner,' continued Scotty, 'for his kindness—'

'But allow me,' added Falconer, 'on my part, to say, if it had not been for the promptitude and kindness of your people, Mr. Morgan, we should have perished.'

'Thank God you are safe,' added Mr. Morgan; 'but where is the Maori chief?'

Dog's-ear was called aft, and with much native dignity and grace he spoke of the kindness of the Pakeha.

'You know, my lads,' said the owner, 'my trade is with New Zealand, and hence I am greatly interested in all that happens there. I have had several chiefs with me at times. I like to entertain them.'

'If I may ask a favour,' said Falconer, 'it is this: will you kindly put Dog's-ear to lodge somewhere with trustworthy people? We will work for him and keep him.'

'I will take him,' replied Mr. Morgan. 'He is my guest. No destitute Maori shall ever pass my door.'

But the chief hung back.

'No, Raromi,' said he; 'you work, Dog's-ear work too.'

'Raromi! Who is that?' asked Mr. Morgan.

'I,' replied Falconer. 'Dog's-ear has, so to speak, adopted me—that is my Maori name.'

'Listen, Dog's-ear,' said Falconer. 'This English chief loves you, and will treat you as a friend. Go with him. Let it not be said the Pakeha has no heart, no hospitality.'

'I have a favour to ask, my young friends,' said Mr. Morgan when leaving; 'come up and spend the evening at my house to-morrow. I shall be very glad to see you—very glad indeed.'

Mr. Morgan, very kindly, had made arrangements by which Falconer and Scotty were to call at his office. And the chief clerk had been directed to supply them with money and clothes until they could do something for themselves.

'This is the very merchant I thought of going to for help,' said Falconer, 'if we had reached here in the Kaha-wai. Everybody speaks well of him in New Zealand.'

'Why not now, then?'

'How can I treat with him as a merchant when I come as a beggar?'

'Let us have a talk with the chief clerk; we'll see if he thinks we can be trusted with goods to trade with on our own account.'

Falconer had been directed, as he and Scotty left the Alert, to ask for Mr. Jarvey.

'Jarvey!' muttered he to himself—'surely I know that name well enough.'

At length the two friends stood in Mr. Jarvey's own room, before Mr. Jarvey himself.

'Glad to see you, young men—very glad,' said Mr. Jarvey. 'Mr. Morgan has spoken to me about you; now what can I do for you?'

'You are very kind,' replied Falconer. 'I purpose to borrow just money enough from time to time to fit us out again—for we've lost everything—and we will repay it by our daily labour at the wharf.'

'That's good—honourable. While you do that you may—Good gracious!' suddenly exclaimed Mr. Jarvey, whose eyes were fixed on Falconer; 'why—'

'Don't be alarmed,' said Falconer, laughing; 'the young man you knew at Liverpool is not the same you now see—at least, I hope not.'

'Why, it's Harold—Harold Morpeth!' gasped Mr. Jarvey.

He rushed forward, seized Falconer's hand, and wrung it again and again. This was to gain time. For the good man's eyes had so dimmed his spectacles he could see no more through them.

'Oh! what a joyful day! To think I've found my dear old master's own boy!' cried Mr. Jarvey. 'How delighted he would have been to see such a big, splendid fellow! God bless you, Mr. Harold!'

Mr. Jarvey was now obliged to wipe his spectacles—and take breath.

'Here is my best friend and companion,' said Falconer, presenting Scotty—'a right, true, good fellow.'

'If it wouldn't make him vain,' added Scotty, looking at Mr. Jarvey, 'I would tell you there isn't a finer, braver fellow going than Falconer.'

'Falconer!' said Mr. Jarvey, looking mystified.

'Let me explain my identity,' added Falconer. 'When I came out here beggared, and, as I thought, disgraced, wanting to hide myself from the world, I took another name—my mother's. I have always been called by that name.'

'Oh, dear, how glad I am—thank God—oh, what a joyful day! What can I do?'

The dear old faithful servant of the Morpeth family was so overjoyed, that what with getting out of breath, and what with blowing his glasses and then taking them off to wipe them, he was fully occupied.

'How stupid I am!' he cried out, suddenly. 'You must be hungry. Here! boy, boy, put out something to eat and drink at once in my little room.'

'Now come, my dear young friends, and eat and drink; and don't mind me, for my poor old heart works out through my eyes, and I can see nothing but the dear, dear boy of my poor old master, whom God bless for ever and ever, Amen!'

'May I ask how you happened to come here, Mr. Jarvey?'

'It was like this, Harold. When the firm ceased—'

'Was ruined!'

'When it was wound up, Harold, and I could do no more, I thought of Sydney. I had a relative here, and through him I came to Mr. Morgan, and became his chief clerk. And here I hope to end my days.'

'You're just the brave, earnest, good man you ever were, Mr. Jarvey,' said Falconer. 'It was you who always forgave me yonder when I should have been exposed, and sheltered me when I should have been punished.'

'Say no more—say no more—my dear boy. My poor old heart dances for joy. I'm fit for nothing—I can do no more to-day. Come along, I'll fit you both out at once; come along home with me at once, and—'

'No! no! I've got to work for my living—and hard, just now. I'm tired, and I must go aboard the Alert, to begin work early to-morrow,'

'I too,' said Scotty.

So taking some money, and giving a receipt for it, the two young men left, greatly, it must be confessed, to Mr. Jarvey's astonishment, and perhaps vexation.

A couple of hours later the office boy handed Mr. Morgan a letter, at his private residence at Woolloomooloo. It was from Mr. Jarvey.

The letter was as follows:—

'DEAR MR. MORGAN,

I am delighted beyond measure to give you my report respecting the young men you sent to me to-day. They are fine fellows, and you may admit them to your family circle with the utmost confidence.

'Try and imagine my joy when I say I discovered the elder to be Mr. Harold Morpeth, only son of the eminent merchant, of whose goodness and generosity to me I cannot speak too highly.

'Formerly he was rather wild—warm-tempered—but frank and open. He disappeared—after that sad event—and now he turns up from New Zealand with his friend, Mr. Scott, who is a nice fellow also, and an educated man, too, I am sure.

'My old heart danced for joy to-day when those fine fellows refused all aid but what they needed for the moment, declaring they would repay the money advanced by their daily labour on board the Alert. In fact, they refused my offers of a general fit-out, and went on board the schooner to be ready to begin work to-morrow morning.

I said not a word respecting the letter from Liverpool. The joy of breaking the good news to such a worthy young fellow I leave to you, sir; but I shall be overjoyed indeed if I am made the means of helping Mr. Harold Morpeth at such a critical point in his history.

'Your faithful servant,

'W. Morgan, Esq.'

'H. Jarvey.'

Chapter XXV. Good News.

Scotty and Falconer had accepted Mr. Morgan's invitation with great pleasure. They were delighted and greatly impressed by the merchant's easy manner and evident goodness of heart. The young men knew what society was, and having been excluded from it for so long made them the more anxious to accept the invitation, the more eager to taste again the sweets of civilized society.

As they thought the matter over the next day at work, their illusions were dispelled. Our heroes had hardly any clothes—evening clothes was out of the question. And the small sum they had borrowed was to supply present necessities.

A note was sent to Mr. Jarvey, begging him to make excuses for them to Mr. Morgan, whose kindness they greatly appreciated, but whose invitation they could not accept. Mr. Morgan was closeted with Mr. Jarvey when the note reached the latter.

'These young men won't come to my house, Mr. Jarvey; what is the meaning of it?'

'Humph!' muttered the clerk; 'I see it all.'

'Then pray tell me what it means.'

'The young men know how they should be dressed to meet ladies—according to rule—and to be dressed thus is more than they can afford.'

'I see. Then send the boy to the Alert, and let him ask Mr. Fal—Morpeth—'

'You must say *Falconer*, sir, for the moment.'

'Yes; let him ask Mr. Falconer to step up and see me. Stay; send a note, and say I have important news for him—only that.'

'I'm very glad to see you, Mr. Harold,' exclaimed Mr. Jarvey, when the former appeared. 'You feel all right now—quite recovered?'

'As well as ever, thanks, and in just the trim for work; though just a little down for the moment'

'Come with me at once, please; Mr. Morgan is anxious to see you.'

'To see me!'

Yes; something to tell you. God bless the lad!' said the faithful old man, when, having ushered the young man into Mr. Morgan's room, he retired.

'Good day, Mr. Morgan. I hope you will not think us indifferent to your kindness—to your kind invitation—but—'

'Say no more, Mr. Falconer. I appreciate your delicacy. I didn't think for the moment that your position is a difficult one. Just now I want you, for I have some good news for you. Let that cheer you, my young friend.'

'Good news for me!' said Falconer, looking astounded.

'Indeed I have. Please give me your close attention, and don't be offended at a few direct questions; I must put them, for I act in a judicial capacity.'

'Your correct name is Harold Morpeth, is it not?'

'It is.'

'Hence Falconer is only an assumed name?'

'It is an assumed name. When I went to New Zealand, feeling disgraced and ruined, I took my mother's name—Falconer.'

'Your father was Mr. J. B. Morpeth, the well-known Liverpool merchant?'

'He was.'

'He fell into misfortune, did he not?'

'He did, and was utterly ruined. It killed him. That was why I ran from England, to hide myself where I was utterly unknown.'

'Not long since, Mr. Morpeth—for I must now always give you your right name—Mr. Jarvey received a letter from Liverpool. This letter was from Mr. Bowster, the lawyer charged with settling your father's private affairs. It was to 'the effect, in two words, that an outstanding asset of some value had just come to light—clearly belonging to your father. This lawyer, acting for your father's heirs, has already recovered part of this money.'

'Mr. Bowster, having Mr. Jarvey's address, wrote to him, wishing him to advertise for you out here, as it was known you were in one of these colonies.'

'Your sudden appearance—and to Mr. Jarvey—puts matters at once on a right footing. Upon certain formalities being carried out, I can advance you £800 at once. And Mr. Bowster believes you may reckon on a similar amount a few months later.'

Falconer grasped Mr. Morgan's offered hand and wrung it heartily. His voice, though, quivered at first, as

he expressed his hearty thanks for Mr. Morgan's ready and careful attention to his affairs; adding, 'This comes, Mr. Morgan, most opportunely to my rescue. When the little Kahawai went down she took my all of worldly possessions—except some land yonder—with her. I now see a way out of my difficulties—how to become a merchant on my own account.'

Mr. Morgan now entered critically into Falconer's position, into his aims and wishes, discussing them with an expressed intention of helping him as much as possible.

The old merchant and his new acquaintance became greatly interested in each other. The sitting was prolonged, for Mr. Morgan advised Falconer strongly to set up in New Zealand, and began at once to explain the difficulties and necessities of the Sydney market.

'Come in, Linton,' cried Mr. Morgan, as a gentleman who had just opened the door was about to retire. 'Let me introduce a friend from New Zealand. You ought to know each other.'

Mr. Linton and Falconer fell at once into conversation; and drifting to New Zealand became so occupied with it, and with each other, that Mr. Morgan had to remind them of the hour.

Falconer rose, begging Mr. Morgan to excuse him; but the merchant detained him; and in a few minutes he found himself snugly installed in Mr. Morgan's sanctum, dining with Mr. Linton, and chatting familiarly as with an old friend.

'I'm a sailor', said Mr. Linton; 'I was so from choice.'

'I am one from both necessity and choice,' added Falconer. 'I found myself suddenly obliged to earn a living, and I chose a manly way of doing it.'

'But you are a merchant?' queried Falconer.

'And so are you,' added Mr. Linton, with a laugh.

'Yes; of two hours' standing. Mr. Morgan has just inducted me, so to speak.'

'He's a good one at that. He took me in hand once like that, or else I know not where I should be at this moment'

'Somewhere, Linton, doing your duty like a man, no doubt—that's the great point.'

'The day is wearing fast,' said Mr. Linton, at last; 'I purpose taking Mr. Falconer to Rose Farm with me. A few days there will do him good.'

'It will. I advise you to go, Mr. Morpeth.'

'Morpeth!' exclaimed Mr. Linton.

'Don't be too curious just now, Linton,' added the old merchant; 'Mr. Morpeth will explain matters when you have his confidence.'

Mr. Morgan has just revealed to both the reader and Mr. Linton another identity that the protagonist upholds. His Christian name is Harold Morpeth, which is how Mr. Morpeth identifies him, as they were associates back in England. On this page he is referred to as both Falconer and Mr. Morpeth. As outlined in the introduction, Falconer's identity progression is aligned with his teetotalism, hard work and upward social mobility, so it is no surprise that he is identified as a merchant of *two hours' standing* on the very same page that he is identified as Mr. Morpeth or Harold, not Raromi or Falconer.

'Can you find room for another?' asked Harold.

'Certainly; but who?'

'My companion and closest friend, Scott'

'I'll go down with you and pick him up, and we'll drive off at once.'

Scotty was astounded to see his friend step out of a smart buggy, and still more surprised when he found he was to start at once to pay a visit up the country to people of whom he had never heard. But he was equal to the occasion, and the two friends started with light hearts in quest of health and up-country adventures.

Chapter XXVI. Noble Thoughts, Nobly Worked Out.

Mr. Linton called himself a sailor when speaking to Harold Morpeth, and those who knew his chequered career knew this well. But he had given up ploughing the mighty ocean, and had taken to ploughing dry land instead, which yielded apparently much more profit with much less adventure. He was now a farmer—as well as merchant; and though crops, according to English ideas, did not much occupy his thoughts, cattle, cattle-rearing, and 'wool-growing' did; and in this direction he was considered a successful man.

'What beautiful orange trees!' exclaimed Harold Morpeth. This expression of surprise was sudden and natural. And it happened thus:—

Mr. Linton had taken his guests to see his fruit garden; and, turning round a clump of trees, the three found

themselves amidst rows of beautiful orange trees in full fruit. So Harold's exclamation was natural and true, for few trees excel the orange in beauty, whether as regards flowers, foliage, or fruit.

'That reminds me,' added Mr. Linton, in connection with Harold's remark, 'we must visit Orange Farm, where I can promise you luscious fruits of all kinds. Besides, I long to introduce you to dear old Daddy, who will be so glad to see you.'

'I am anxious to meet him,' said Harold Morpeth; 'everybody seems to sound his praises.'

'He is a relative, I suppose?'

'Oh no; only we adopted each other in times past—and the tie strengthens each year.'

'When Mrs. Linton begins to speak about Daddy she can never leave off. But, now, let us look at the stock-yard, and then home to dinner—for we dine early in these parts.'

'I can shew you some of the longest-stapled wool in the colony,' said the host, after dinner, 'if you will come and see some of my merinos.'

'Won't you join us, Mr. Morpeth?'

'I will, presently; I want to rig your son's boat first'

'Now, Master Frank, the first thing is the mast' Harold had taken the boy's boat to rig, and sat beside the window opening on to a verandah, and Mrs. Linton sat on the other side at work.

Harold and Mrs. Linton sat and chatted together with the frankness belonging to honest, open colonial life. The very air of the Colonies seems to beget frankness, as that of England begets reserve.

The young man learnt that musical parties were constantly being arranged by Daddy, and that a young lady of great musical ability came out constantly to direct these musical soirées.

The conversation was interrupted by Mr. Linton, who brought a light trap to the door, and who called out for Morpeth.

'I'll drive our friends over at once to Daddy's,' said the host, speaking to his wife. 'I will come back for you by-and-by.'

The trap had hardly stopped in front of the house at Orange Farm, when the owner appeared on the raised verandah which ran round it.

'Why, Linton, you are early! But I am very glad to see you. A hearty welcome to your friends too; the more the merrier.'

This was Daddy, whose heartiness of manner and cordial welcome made the young men feel at ease at once.

'I have brought some friends, Daddy, who have just arrived from New Zealand, who have passed through much hardship and danger. We thought a few days out here would do them good.'

'My dear young friends,' said the old man, with another warm grasp of the hand, 'I hope we shall be able to cheer you up. It does an old man good also to live again in the society of young, buoyant lives.'

'Let me say, Mr. Crips,' added Harold, 'I am delighted to make your acquaintance; for I have heard so much about you from Mr. Linton that—'

'I know him, I know him,' replied Mr. Crips; 'he's always trying to excite my vanity, but I tell him I'm too old—too old.'

'But come inside, my friends.'

'Excuse me just now, Daddy; we want to see your gardens first.'

Passing to the rear of the house, through clumps of shrubs, by little artistic nooks and rustic harbours, tastefully designed and covered by creeping plants and orchids, the party came to a well-laid out plantation, which took Harold Morpeth and Scotty by surprise.

'This is charming!' burst from the visitors.

'Is it not?' added Mr. Linton. 'And this is Daddy's own creation and work.'

'Not so fast, my son,' said Mr. Crips; 'you forget my boys; it is more their work than mine.'

The most sunny side, taking up half the plantation, was occupied by rows of fine orange trees; the other half was filled by vigorous and healthy fruit trees, apricots, peaches, and apples in full bearing, and laden with fruit.

One or two plants in a corner, having immense leaves, took Scotty's notice at once.

'They're bananas, Scotty, I can see,' replied Harold to his friend's enquiry; 'but you must go amongst the islands to the north for them; the natives use those leaves as umbrellas, as plates, and to clean their fingers with.'

'Plates!' echoed Scotty.

'Yes; a chief in those islands would have his yam or taro served up on a bit of banana leaf; and, after eating his meal, in which fingers take the place of knives and forks, an attendant would give him a piece of the juicy leafstalk to clean his fingers with.'

Returning home, the party passed a group of young men and lads picking fruit, to whom Mr. Crips gave a

few encouraging words.

'They are my boys' explained Mr. Crips, when still within hearing of the fruit-gatherers.

'Indeed! you have a large family,' said Scotty.

'About a dozen!' replied Mr. Crips, with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

'Daddy is mystifying you,' explained Mr. Linton. 'The fact is, this farm is Daddy's pet idea—and a good one.'

'Let me leave you a moment, my young friends,' said Daddy; 'you will rejoin me at the house.'

'This farm,' continued Mr. Linton, 'was taken by Daddy, with the clear intention of taking a number of outcast boys—sons of outcast fathers—to train them up usefully; that is, to give them fitting occupation and trades, and surround them by fitting companions and kind friends.

He works with them, and teaches them to love work. He says, and says most truly, that idleness begets vice, and vice ruin; and that idleness often comes from want of instruction and discipline. Daddy undertakes to remedy these defects, and turn his lads into useful, honourable members of society.

'So the dear old man works with them, lives with them, and lives for them; and he not only gets them to work hard and well, but to love good, honest work—and love him, which they do most thoroughly. Out of the profits Daddy puts aside a certain sum each year, for each young man who comes up to the mark, to give him a start in life.

'As they all work together, so they live together most happily; but Daddy is the moving, guiding, holy influence that pervades the community. He seems to reach men's souls, and gives to each the powerful attraction of a bright, happy, noble life.'

As the party neared the house they passed several small workshops. In one a lad was trying to put a heel to a shoe. Daddy was shewing him.

'You see now, don't you?' said he.

'I do, Daddy; I'll never let the heel get down like that again.'

'I want them to be all-round men,' said Daddy, joining the party. 'At least, let them start from the German standpoint, and each have a trade; each have the power of life in his hands, the power to gain his own living, and, if need be, help the really indigent.'

Tea and supper came together—as at sea. A long table was spread bountifully as in a baron's hall, Daddy taking the upper end. He stood up and said grace reverently, and then some five-and-twenty persons sat down, with good appetites waiting on each, for the evening meal.

After supper, Scotty and Harold Morpeth felt somewhat isolated. Mr. Linton had gone for his wife, and all the young men were occupied getting ready for a soirée.

'I generally take a quiet stroll in the woods to my look-out,' said Mr. Crips, joining his guests; 'would you like to accompany me?'

'With great pleasure,' was the reply.

After leaving Orange Farm, and skirting a bit of forest of huge gum trees, Mr. Crips led them through a wild tangle of blue-gums and clumps of sweet-smelling wattle. At length the ground rose, and, after some distance, their path led to the top of a small hill.

This was the 'look-out;' and the view from it filled the young men with unbounded delight

'Is it not a beautiful view?' asked Mr. Crips, as each gazed round in silence.

'It is more than beautiful,' replied Morpeth.

'Generally, at the close of each day, I climb slowly to this spot,' said the old man. 'Here I seem to feel the true, refreshing inspiration of Nature. It leads me to God, and I bow and worship Him. Yes, my thoughts go out in unconscious prayer, but they mostly end in very definite aspirations. So God speaks to me, and refreshes me, and I go down again, as I trust, a better man.'

'My young friends, let an old man, whose race is drawing to a close, advise you to get into the inner circle of God's paternal love; sit at His feet to learn wisdom; and then Nature becomes His ante-chamber, where you may worship Him, and go back again to daily life brave, strong, earnest, and patient.'

In silence they watched the fleeting shades of departing sunlight, the shadows on the upper waters of the Parramatta River, the rich tints colouring wood and dell, farm and homestead; then with quiet joy at heart the young men returned home, deeply impressed by the silent influence of Daddy's life, which spoke even more strongly than his words.

Chapter XXVII. Our Hero's Chase, and How he won.

What are you going to surprise us with now?' asked Harold of Mr. Crips's chief—one of Daddy's young men.

'We give an entertainment this evening.'

'With music?'

'Yes; we all play something, or sing. A lady comes with Mr. Morgan on each occasion, and Daddy gives the direction of it to her.'

'Who comes to it?'

'It is open to all. Those who can give, give what they like for our general fund; the rest come free.'

Harold Morpeth, Scotty, and Williams, Mr. Crips's chief, stood chatting at one end of the long room—a warehouse—where the concert was held. As they stood near the door, settlers and their families, a few officers, and farm-labourers—mostly old convicts—came flocking in, chatting freely right and left to their various friends and acquaintances.

'You seem to give the entry free to all classes,' said Harold.

'We do,' was the reply, 'on such evenings. It is Daddy's express wish; we make no distinction.'

'But look at those rough fellows to the right; they hardly look fit for society!'

'Perhaps not. You know we are a mixture of good and bad in this colony. We get a good number of "old lags," unsafe men; but Daddy says we must try and humanize them—put them on their best behaviour.'

Just then a piano of antiquated type was opened at the upper end, and Mrs. Linton sat down to play and sing.

Daddy Crips—everybody called him this, or Daddy, and we do the same—stepped forward, saying, 'I am glad to meet so many friends to-night; some of my friends are all ready to give us a musical treat; unfortunately, our chief—a young lady known to most of you—and Mr. Morgan have not arrived. However, we shall commence. Those who leave whilst singing or playing is going on will please do so as quietly as possible.'

Harold Morpeth on looking round caught the eye of a wild-looking fellow, who appeared to be scanning him closely. Harold thought he had seen him before; he was sure he had.

This man rose quietly, walked close by Harold, and went out. As he passed he whispered: 'Meet me outside!'

'It's Whippy!' exclaimed Harold, as he joined the man, out of earshot.

'It is, sir.' Then the man whispered in Harold's ear something which took immediate effect.

'Let us not lose a moment!' cried Harold; 'I—'

'Hush! No! We are watched. If you make a noise—if you call others—all will be lost. Can you trust yourself with me?'

'Certainly; yet—'

'If I play false, eh?'

'Come along, Whippy, I'm a match for most men—and I should like to give you another chance—come on!'

'Go to the lower corner of the orange plantation. I'll join you there. Those are watching who would kill us at once if they saw us go away together.'

Whippy, a character introduced completely randomly, is brought into the narrative to warn Harold that the mystery singer, who turns out to be Clara, has been abducted by highwaymen. This dialogue from Whippy changes the tone of the episode from warm celebration at the music hall, to a dangerous and action packed pursuit scene. Chapter XXVII *Our Hero's Chase, And How He Won* and the following chapter *How The Bushranger Was 'Stuck-Up'* are fast paced and exciting but are almost nonsensical. Characters, such as Whippy and many others are introduced either to aid Harold or put him in danger, and then they disappear. The time from dusk till dawn is covered in a couple of pages with no genuine sense of anytime having past. This episode is one of the most outrageously melodramatic in the novel, and the writing is extremely sloppy.

Stand by the horses and wait. I'll join you!'

Harold found the horses—powerful ones—at the spot indicated. The plot thickened. 'One is for Whippy, I suppose,' said he, 'and the other for whom? Me?'

Harold listened and waited. He became excited and nervous; each minute now seemed to be an hour. The position soon became unsupportable. Was *he* the victim after all? Whippy was an old convict, he knew, and now an informer—but such could rarely be trusted.

'Let me think out the position,' said he; 'as far as I can make it out. Mr. Morgan and a lady are on the road here. Whippy says the notorious bushranger Foxwell, almost alone, is on the look out for them. He urges me to go with him—against his old chief—to the rescue, when he can escape the spies in the concert room.'

'What is Foxwell's object? Robbery. What else? He is often "sticking-up" people on this road, and he knows Mr. Morgan is a rich man. But while we are waiting here the deed will be done. And, if done, of what use shall I be afterwards, when robbers and victims have disappeared? This fellow, too, may be kept back, being closely watched, as he told me.'

Harold chose the better horse—as far as he could judge—and led him away. He made a *détour*, and, to his great joy, struck the main road a good distance below the house.

Jumping on the horse, he galloped off at once. The horse was fresh and powerful, and soon covered the ground at a great pace.

Something was coming. He drew up and listened. He heard the sound of wheels. 'There they are!' he exclaimed. 'But if so, where are the robbers?' The night was dark, yet clear. As yet he could see nothing.

All at once a tall, light buggy shot out of the gloom upon him. There was only one person in it—and that person a lady.

On the spur of the moment he shouted, 'Mr. Morgan, stop!' The only effect of this was, the lady gave a shriek, and the buggy flew on faster than ever.

'This is odd,' muttered Harold; 'has the horse run away with her, but escaping from foes? At any rate, I must go to her rescue;' then, giving a shout, and digging' his heels against the horse's ribs, away he flew in pursuit.

Harold ranged up alongside the buggy, where sat the lady rigid and determined, but she could not govern her horse. She turned her head aside for a moment, and caught sight of her would-be rescuer. This unnerved her—she gave a faint cry, and dropping the reins, sank down at the bottom of the buggy.

To get alongside the maddened horse, and catch the reins, was a work of great difficulty. But what then? What next? Something must be done—and at once. Harold gave a good tug, in the desperate hope of stopping the horse at once; then another violent tug. The animal snorted, tossed its head up, swerved, and went off at an angle.

Unfortunately it is dangerous for a horse to fly off at an angle, acute or otherwise, when it is a question of keeping straight along the main road. In this case, horse and buggy went straight for a fallen tree. But a bough intervened, and down came the horse with a heavy groan—and smash went the buggy.

In an instant Harold was down, and only a few instants elapsed before he had fished the lady out of the wreck, and had her seated on a log, holding her up—for she was insensible.

The lady had only fainted. She murmured, 'Save me! After us again! Oh, dear—help!'

Then Harold knew, from these half-muttered phrases, the lady had been—perhaps was still—in danger. Chased, too! but by whom? For what reason? Was this the lady coming out to Daddy's with Mr. Morgan? if so, where was he?

His thoughts were interrupted. He heard horses galloping towards them at great speed.

'It's folly to hesitate,' he said to himself. He lifted the lady to the saddle, mounted with much difficulty, and choosing an opening in the forest, pushed in, and, being in darkness, waited and listened.

The clearness of the night enabled the pursuers—as Lithograph of a high-speed, nocturnal pursuit on horseback, involving a buggy with one occupant and a lone rider on horseback they appeared to be—to see the wounded, dying horse and the smashed vehicle. Their rage found vent in words, and in those angry words, mixed with many an oath, Harold found a clue to the mystery which oppressed him.

What puzzled the bushrangers beyond measure was the disappearance of the lady.

Mr. Morgan had been captured. It was not clear how the lady escaped, but she had done so. The point for him to consider was how to escape them, loaded as he was.

'She must be secured!' said a hoarse voice; 'if not, the alarm will be given; and then—'

'What's that? She must be here, somewheres. After her, lads, quick!'

Harold hesitated no longer. Grasping the lady as firmly as he could, he pushed the horse into the forest wherever he could see an opening, at the same time steering his course by the stars when he could see them, so as to double back towards the road again.

He halted for a rest.

'Are you better?' asked Harold. 'Do, please, answer me; for I'm doing my best to save you.' Oh, where am I?' said the lady, faintly.

'Here, in the forest, with one who has vowed to save you. Cheer up, please, and we shall soon join Mr. Morgan again.'

'Thank God!' said the same faint voice. This was followed by tears. 'I shall be better now,' said she; but who are you, may I ask? I thought you were—'

'One of the robbers, eh? Oh, no, I'm a friend of Mr. Morgan's, and just now of yours. You see I am trying to—Ah! there they are again!'

Shouts, menaces, oaths floated through the forest; the pursuers had caught sight of Harold and his charge. A shot or two flew about. The poor girl in Harold's charge clung to him tightly, but was silent.

The day was breaking; and Harold's courage almost failed at the thought of having a band in chase of him—and in full daylight.

He had come to a clearing; and his horse had bounded across it with unflagging speed. He was about to plunge into the woods again, when a welcome voice shouted, 'Hello, mate! What's up? What's the matter?'

'Help! Quick, my good fellow!' cried Harold. Bushrangers after us—Foxwell's gang, I believe—'

'Bill!' shouted the rail-splitter to a mate in the hut close to, 'bring out the rifles, sharp! Take the lady inside,' he continued to Harold, 'and then come and jine us—we shall want help, I guess!'

'Keep off!' shouted the man from behind a pile of wood forming a breastwork; 'keep off! Come another rod, and you're dead men!'

'Ha! ha!' was the reply. 'So you think to stop Foxwell, do ye? Give in, or I'll—'

Two shots were fired, and two robbers were hit.

The robbers—after hurling fearful imprecations at the rail-splitters—rode off.

Exhausted, both mentally and physically, the young lady had fallen asleep. Harold, too, quite overcome, sat in one corner on the floor and slept soundly.

Harold awoke at last with a start; and no wonder. Who could sleep with a man digging a piece of wood into one's ribs? The rail-splitter wanted to call him, and finding a hole in the old shantie just where Harold leaned sleeping, he gave him sundry prods.

'Can you come and keep a look-out and help us?' said the man through the hole. 'Bring your rifle.'

The young lady slept soundly. Her face was turned to the light. Harold turned to see the 'unknown'—to scan her face.

A cry escaped him. This awoke the fair sleeper. He threw himself down on his knees, and looked into the eyes just opening to the light, just looking with a startled gaze into his.

'Clara! Clara!' he cried, seizing her hand, and clinging to it

'Harold! Oh, Harold!' cried she, jumping up and kneeling by his side; 'at last! Thank God—at last!'

Yes; at last I after years of suffering and forgetfulness; clinging to broken vows, to vows which had fed her young heart with false hopes; true, yet deceived, hoping against hope, she had struggled on, and had kept her secret locked up in her own heart. None but Noble knew it, and he was now dead.

And now, Harold, her own Harold, by his daring and bravery had saved her, had saved her at the risk of his own life. And, best of all, that clear, frank look of his—the outlook of a true, brave inner life—told Clara what she wanted to know—that after all his heart was hers; he was true, but chastened, sad, and repentant for the wrong he had thoughtlessly done.

Chapter XXVIII. How the Bushranger was ' Stuck-up.'

It was an alarm. One of the bushrangers suddenly galloped towards the hut, and as suddenly galloped away again.

'You're tired—done up,' said the rail-splitters to Harold Morpeth. 'Double yourself up in a corner and snooze—we'll keep a look out.'

Those stolid, matter-of-fact rail-splitters little dreamt of the life-issues at stake, of the momentous act in the wonderful drama of two young lives, upon which their future weal so largely depended.

'I am utterly unworthy of your love, Clara,' burst out Harold. 'Not content with leaving you without a word of explanation—after our vows had been made—wrapped up in my own selfish ideas of vanity and pride, I ran off and hid myself in New Zealand, where with the drunken and dissolute I squandered my life away!'

Two large eyes looked ineffable pity and tenderness at the young man who so humbly and tenderly pleaded for pardon, yet acknowledging himself unworthy of it.

Harold! I look up frankly into your eyes,' said Clara, 'and what do I see? Truth, honour, and devotion to one for whom you have risked your life.'

What could he say after that? He could only reply to such love and confidence by what equalled them in depth and intensity. And in this he was honest, straightforward, and true.

The two understood each other. And the love that had passed through so many trials and dangers now proclaimed itself bright, clear, and strong. Each had had peculiar trials, and each had found out their peculiar weaknesses. This had led them to search their own hearts, know the truth about themselves, and rouse themselves to be faithful and true in every thought and act of life.

'But, Clara!' ejaculated Harold Morpeth suddenly, as he awoke from his dream of love; 'what about Mr. Morgan? I am forgetting him. Tell me his fate—where is he?'

'Oh, Harold!' cried Clara, starting up with real alarm. 'I so selfish as to forget him! Oh, save him, Harold! save him!'

'Tell me in a few words,' said he, 'how the matter stands.'

'We were driving out to Daddy's place to assist at the concert, when suddenly as we were passing

Home-bush Forest a shot was fired, and three men sprang out to the horse's head. One was left at the horse's head, and the other two dragged Mr. Morgan down, and threatened to kill him if he did not give up his money.

The horse, suddenly alarmed, gave a bound, and knocking over the man at its head darted off like an arrow. It flew along like a mad creature; I holding on to the reins, and expecting every minute to be dashed to pieces.

'You know the rest Oh, to think you were there! riding after me to save me, and I fancying all the while you were—'

'Yes, Clara; but do you know any of the men?'

'No; only the leader was a big fellow, with a peculiar voice—that voice would never deceive me.'

Harold Morpeth called the rail-splitters. 'We ought to communicate with Mr. Linton, somehow,' said he. 'Perhaps Mr. Morgan is "stuck-up," and we hold his life in our hands.'

'What you say is true, sir,' replied the head rail-splitter; 'but just weigh this 'ere; this gang is strong—'

'It is,' said the other man; 'I knows it well, and more 'an most men, for I—'

'Is strong, I say,' continued the first man, 'and they knows if any one informs about 'em at Parramatta, there'll be such a rumpus as 'ill make the country too hot for 'em.' 'In any case,' objected Harold, 'it must be brought home to them; so why should they hang about here any longer?'

'Ay, but you see we've drawn blood. Foxwell is that 'ere vindictive that he'll a'most put his neck in the 'alter to git his revenge, he will! Still, I thinks one on us might slip out and see if the coast is clear.'

'Hello! here's Mitey a-comin!'

'Who is he?' asked Harold.

Mitey answered for himself, and rushed into the hut in great glee. He had been to visit another party of rail-splitters, and had spent part of the day with them.

That there may be no mistake, let us say at once, Mitey was so named from his diminutive proportions—not because he was mighty.

'Seen any "rangers," loafers about, Mitey?'

'Not a bit of a one, Bill.'

'You've come back straight?'

'Straight as a chalked line—when it ain't crooked.'

After some discussion Harold, with Mitey for guide, both well-armed, set out to reconnoitre amongst the scrub thickets which formed clumps here and there amongst the trees, and gave good shelter for their purpose. They saw nobody, and Harold at length gave the order to turn back.

Mitey, however, advanced, and suddenly slipped down on the ground, making signs to Harold to do the same.

'What is it, Mitey?'

'Follow me carefully, and see;' and Mitey grinned.

The two crawled into a thicket, and stopped, and stared.

Two horses were tied to trees. But close under the bush, a man, fierce-looking enough for any bandit, ancient or modern, was lying on the ground, his head propped up on an old coat, and his companion was bending over him, giving him something to drink.

'It's Foxwell!' whispered Mitey.

'The wounded man?' 'No; the other!'

'If I could only git this wretched plug out of my side, old boss,' said the wounded man, 'I'd be at 'em agin.' Then he coughed and groaned as if in great agony.

'Shoot me, boss! Shoot, I say!' burst from him.

'No! no! Jerry; a little patience—perhaps I could cut it out!'

Foxwell bent over him again, his back to the two watching him with beating hearts—close to them.

'Fire at him!' breathed Mitey.

Harold shook his head. 'Will you follow me, Mitey?' he whispered back.

'Ay, master, I'm good for a tussle.'

Harold with a bound rushed at Foxwell. But he was heard. Foxwell jumped up and faced round, to receive a heavy blow on the jaw, which sent him spinning over on his back; and before he had well recovered himself Harold was upon him again.

'Shoot, Jerry! Shoot!' cried Foxwell.

But Jerry's time was past. Besides, Mitey had seized his pistols, and he ran to Harold's assistance.

After all, Harold and Foxwell had a sharp struggle, and unless Harold had been the powerful man he was he would have failed. With Mitey's assistance, Foxwell was well secured, and tied up to a tree, after the fashion in which he had served so many poor victims.

'Now then, let's look at the wounded man,' said Harold.

The poor fellow had made a desperate effort to get up and go to his leader's help. He had drawn a long

dagger, and had staggered to his feet. But the effort had killed him. He had fallen forward on his face—dead! His right arm was extended, and the dagger in the clenched hand stuck in the ground!

Harold and Mitey had just picked up the dead man, and had laid him down, when they were startled by shouts—horsemen seemed to circle them in,—and shots were fired in the air.

Down went the two men flat—to reconnoitre.

Mitey thought his comrade was mad; for he jumped up, and pulling off his cap waved it high, shouting, 'Scotty! Scotty!'

'Falconer? Hurrah! Hurrah!' burst from a party of horsemen, who dashed up to the two beside the dead robber with loud manifestations of joy.

'Come, Falconer,' said Scotty, reining up sharp, 'how on earth did you get here?—doing the bushranger, too, and—Why, here's a poor fellow dead!'

'I ran off to help Mr. Morgan,' explained Harold, after a pause.

'I know you did.'

'Has he been found? Tell me that.'

'No; not when we started, nor the lady either. In fact, we are all mystified. You run off and disappear. Then the informer and I go after you. We reach the road too late. Some natives, tell us a struggle has taken place; that one of the occupants of the buggy has been dragged away, and that the other has started off—'

'Quite true—as regards the lady.'

'Well, we divide our forces. Mr. Linton and others go after Mr. Morgan, and I come after you with another party. We tear along the road; find the buggy smashed up—the lady gone. Aided by other natives, we track you here—with strangers—standing beside a dead body!'

'Do explain something,' he added; 'my head is overcharged with mystery.'

'Know then, first of all,' replied Harold Morpeth, 'Miss Clara Banitza is quite safe.'

'Safe!' echoed the rescuing party.

'Yes; in the rail-splitters' hut yonder; I brought her there in safety, I'm glad to say; and now—'

'But how? How?' cried Scotty; 'do go on.'

Harold was now obliged to give the details of his adventure on the road—the race—the capture—the smash up—and the chase, and deliverance in the forest.

'And this poor fellow, dead?'

'Not so fast, Scotty. Leaving Miss Banitza in the hut, Mitey and myself came out to reconnoitre—we wanted to see if the coast was clear.'

'Well?'

'We came on this man—now dead; and Foxwell.'

'Foxwell!' exclaimed the party.

'Yes; there he is—look!'

Scotty and the rest stared at the bandit in quiet amazement. To think that Foxwell, the terror of the country, should be captured, should be in their power, harmless for ever—Harold was a hero.

'Really, Falconer—well, if you go on at this rate,' exclaimed Scotty, 'I must get a slower partner—it's too much for my weak nerves.'

The mounted party now took every precaution to secure Foxwell and lead him off. Then one of them took down Harold's depositions respecting the dead man; and all of them moved off to the rail-splitters' hut, where Clara in great anxiety waited for Harold's return.

Chapter XXIX. Whippy's 'twitches,' or kindness kills.

Let us go back a step; to the concert, which, in spite of the non-appearance of Mr. Morgan and Miss Clara Banitza, was carried through with fair success. Some of the young men had good voices and sang well. Others recited pieces, such as Horatius at the Bridge, the Spanish Armada, and tender poems from Mrs. Hemans' collection—all done well, and given with real expression.

Scotty at length noticed the continued absence of Harold Morpeth, and went outside to look for him. A bushy shrub stood at one corner of the building; Scotty went behind it and watched the people coming and going, yet unseen himself.

As he stood there, a sharp voice came through the shrub; it riveted his attention.

'Has any one left?'

'Not as I knows; they all like it inside.'

'Do they?' said in a sneering tone. 'What about that big feller?'

'Who?'

'That big sailor chap as is staying with the Lintons. He's slipt off. He'll give—if you play false I'll—'

'What?'

'You know; a bit o' lead will settle your account sharp. Look here! Either find that big feller, and *settle him* yourself; or—'

'How can I?'

'Go. We'll give you two minutes. If he gits off it'll all be up—all along of you!'

'Settle him!' as applied to Harold Morpeth, alarmed Scotty, and stirred him to action, as he saw the fellow move off to 'look-up,' or 'settle' his friend at once.

'Harold's life is in danger!' he murmured, 'and I'll overhaul that rascal at all hazards and find out his mission.' He picked up a thick stick, and hurried after the informer Whippy, who was slipping away to the orange plantation, hoping to find Harold Morpeth all ready for the start.

'Stand!' cried Scotty, coming upon the man suddenly, 'hands down! or I'll fire!' pointing his stick out like a gun—which, in the gloom, answered well.

'All right, sir,' replied Whippy; 'lower your gun; I've something important to tell you.'

The news, added to the fact that Harold Morpeth had gone off alone—to confront a gang—excited Scotty beyond bounds. He leaped on the other horse, pulling the pistols out of the holsters.

'If you really want to save Mr. Morgan, and the Lintons from robbery, go into the house by the front, and give the alarm;' so saying, Scotty rode off to warn the servants at Mr. Linton's, send out scouts, and go to Harold's assistance.

The rescue party convoying Clara Banitza and Harold Morpeth started homewards through the wild, irregular forest, which at that time existed in almost its primitive wildness.

There were native Australians on horseback riding like monkeys;

This is the first and only mention of Aboriginal Australians in the novel. While Maori are discussed regularly, they are never described in such a derogatory manner, even if they are 'bad' Maori who associate with Te Rauparaha. Endnote ten, above, discusses how some Maori are described as *Moa-pauks* which like monkeys is an animalistic adjective. However the animalistic adjective *Moa-pauks* suggests grace, cunning and strength, while monkey advocates foolishness and sub-humanity.

settlers who had jumped on their horses helter-skelter without attention to toilette, whose appearance was as wild and rough as that of the very bushrangers they had ridden to capture or drive off. Behind all came Clara, with Scotty on one side and Harold on the other.

'This beats all the romance I ever heard of,' said Scotty, addressing Miss Banitza.

'How so, Mr. Scott?'

'Going to a concert lands Harold in a plot Getting out of the plot, he finds you pursued by robbers. Then that rescue—it's wonderful. And you knew each other, and—' Scotty hesitated.

'We're old friends, don't you see?' said Harold Morpeth,' and extremely delighted to meet again.'

Scotty looked at Harold and then at Clara; he saw there was some mystery about this friendship, and he was silent.

Foxwell had been bound with cords, according to all the skill of cunning bushmen; he was led by two mounted men, each one holding the end of a cord that was fastened round Foxwell's neck.

The whole party was riding along in the best of spirits, and the forest resounded with the sounds of laughter and merry conversation. Foxwell and his guards had, however, fallen behind—he had made some excuse for a halt.

As Foxwell's guards set forward again, two men appeared from behind a bush as by magic They threw themselves so suddenly on the mounted men that they were dismounted instantly, before they could get at their pistols.

The main party suddenly discovered Foxwell and his guards were missing. Loud coo-eyes filled the air, but to no purpose. Some of the party rode back to ascertain the cause. The poor guards were found gagged, tied together, and nearly insensible.

Foxwell had escaped!

Boisterous shouts, hurrahs, and other noisy demonstrations of joy announced to the Lintons that Scotty's party had been successful. These were answered by Mr. Linton and his retainers while the party was approaching.

As the party rode up to the house there stood Mr. Morgan, pale and somewhat shaky, yet ready and happy to welcome Miss Banitza, who kissed the old man affectionately, and wept for joy.

Clara Banitza led Harold to Mr. Morgan, saying, 'Thank God, a very old, very dear friend came at the right moment—and saved me.'

'You are indeed fortunate,' said Mr. Morgan, addressing Harold Morpeth, 'to have rescued so charming a young lady, to have found so dear a friend. May God bless you!' He saw at a glance what had escaped other eyes.

The whole party, after refreshment, sat resting and chatting; when Mr. Linton brought forward Whippy—as one of Foxwell's gang—to give his information to Mr. Morgan, as magistrate.

'Let some one take down his deposition,' said Mr. Morgan.

'What's your name?' asked the magistrate.

'Joe Brown, sir—but, I've heaps o' names. They used to call me Whippy in New Zealand.'

'Do you know him, Mr. Morpeth? It is said he knows you.'

'Let me go on, sir,' said Whippy. 'I ought to expect no mercy, for I've bin as bad as the rest. I don't ask for it. Only I like you to know as how I put myself in Mr. Falconer's hands to save you.'

'Why, my good man?'

'Because of my boy—it was all along of your kindness to him.'

'To your boy! explain yourself.'

'Mr. Falconer, yonder, giv me the first twitch at heart—he helped me once instead of turning on me. And you, sir, some time ago, you helped me, when I was going to be lashed and put in irons unjustly—that giv me another twitch. Then you and Daddy found me in gaol, and my boy growing up to be a villain like myself. Daddy took him to live with him. And last night the last *twitch*—did it. I saw my boy, a fine big feller, a good honest man, and treated by all of you like a friend.'

'I've done. I'm a villain, but I couldn't stand agin that. I'm yours. I tried to save you, sir; if I succeeded, I'm happy. Do with me what you like now!'

Chapter XXX. Home, Sweet Home.

Some three months later a smart, swift, topsail schooner swept round the outer edge of Barrett's Reef, ran close-hauled through the entrance between the Reef and Pencarrow Head, and stood boldly into the harbour with a smart breeze. Tacking off Ngahauranga, the schooner ran quickly to an anchorage off Port Nic. and dropped anchor.

'What a beautiful spot!' exclaimed a lady standing aft, who, looking through a telescope, swept the picturesque western shore, the heights above it, and the straggling town, which, though poor in itself, was set in a rich framework of wild scenery.

'Let me give you a hearty welcome to Port Nic., Clara,' said her husband, Harold Morpeth—'a place of failure and defeat in the past.'

'But now, Harold?'

'Your presence, Clara, and the bright hope born of faith, gild the scene. I look at it with different eyes. I see only its beauty—and yours. I can never forget, however, what a terrible fall—'

'Listen, Harold: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; ... though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand."'

The two stood a minute in silence, looking thoughtfully at the bright scene before them.

'Look there'—Harold stopped, and begging the glass, turned it towards the upper, higher part of the scene—under the hills.

'What do you see, Harold?'

'Our cottage has been touched by some fairy's wand. It is so changed I hardly knew it again.'

'Can I make it out, do you think?'

'Try, Clara. There, that's the direction.'

Clara looked long and hard; then handing the glass back, she said, with sparkling eyes: 'What a sweet nest! I'm enchanted with it!'

When Mr. Morgan and Clara returned to Sydney after their startling adventure on the road, Harold Morpeth returned with them. Scotty remained at Rose Farm for the wool-dipping. Harold at once, in perfect confidence, explained to Mr. Morgan his relations to Clara in the past—when they exchanged vows—also, his subsequent life, with all its faults, sins, and failings; adding the confession of his sincere, deep repentance.

Mr. Morgan was deeply affected by the recital of so much error, of so much suffering, and of such a painful awakening to a sense of duty and honour. Yet this endeared the young man to him. He induced Harold to stay at Sydney for the final remittance from his lawyer, Mr. Bowster, during which interval he bestowed upon Harold the accumulated wisdom of years of hard toil and trying experience.

During this time Harold and Clara were much together. They were mostly at Mr. Morgan's house. For Mr. Morgan was now Clara's trustee, and looked after the small income which was once in Noble's hands.

It so happened at last that Clara and Harold—knowing themselves, and each knowing the other—were married. Clara was married from Mr. Morgan's house; the merchant gave her away, and furnished a sumptuous wedding breakfast.

The next day he handed over a nice topsail schooner to Harold Morpeth—another Kahawai, for so she was named—on easy terms, that he might bring his capital into full play at once, and start with a good chance of success, without losing time.

'But how can I take you to our wilds—amongst wild men—in New Zealand?' asked Harold, one day, when seeking to obtain Clara's views.

'I'm ready to go with you, dear.'

'No doubt, Clara; but have you thought of hardship, of hard living, of dangerous natives?'

'Harold, dear, I have never wavered an instant in my love to you; and now I want you to know the reality, the depth of it. It will be sweet to work with you, and sweet to face and endure all that may happen—but always by your side.'

Clara was earnest and thorough, and Harold knew this; and knowing Clara's innermost desires he hesitated no more. Thus they joined their lives together as well as their fortunes, and, embarking on board the Kahawai, went off to New Zealand.

Harold Morpeth had not left Nivens and Mrs. Norris in doubt as to his fate. A trader had carried to Port Nic. details of the wonderful escape of the two sailors and Dog's-ear; and the shipwright and the widow had many a lively discussion together as to whether the fourteen-ton Kahawai was safe or not to go to sea with.

'It seems to me like flying in the face of Providence,' said Mrs. Norris, when she first attacked Nivens about the safety of the little craft.

'I don't know nothin' about flyin',' said the shipwright, sharply; 'and as to the face o' Providence, I never seed it—never. But I can tell you what I have seen. I've seen a whaleboat—an open boat, mind—as got blown away from the ship arter a whale, and was more 'an a week at sea, runnin' afore half a gale o' wind; and yet made one of the coker-nut islands in the Pacific'

'What did the men live on?' asked the widow, with a parting shot.

'Live on? Why, young fellers full o' blood and blue veins can live on the smell of a horn button for a week, they can!'

The widow was silent. Nivens' last joke was too much for her.

As Harold and Clara drew near their own little cottage under the hills, both were astonished and delighted. For Nivens had gone to work with a will, and had added two small weather-boarded wings to the central part, over which stood a light, pretty verandah.

Completing his work, Nivens with considerable taste had introduced in front of the wings clumps of laurels and evergreens, and had trained sweet flowering creepers up the front of the verandah, so that Harold, equally with his wife, was astonished and delighted at the altered condition of his home.

'For the first time, after so long, I feel as if I had reached home!' exclaimed Harold Morpeth.

'I'm so glad to hear that,' added Clara. 'Here, dear Harold, let us make home what it should be to each other, and to others—a centre of light, joy, and happiness.'

'We will, with God's blessing. We'll try to take up life even on its higher level, and see not only what good we can get out of it, but what good we can do with it.'

So they came home.

Chapter XXXI. Nivens Finds a Partner.

A Few evenings after Harold Morpeth and his wife had arrived home, as they sat by the woodfire, they reviewed certain passages in their lives, as travellers do who compare notes about the dangers and adventures they have gone through—the perils from which they have opportunely escaped.

'Have you ever thought it was strange to find me out in Australia?' asked Clara, archly.

'The thought passed through my mind once or twice, but I never dwelt upon it—why should I?'

'I had not a friend here when first I came out.'

'No? None?'

'None besides yourself, Harold mine.'

'I give it up—is it a secret?'

'It is; and now you shall know it.'

'Do you see this?' asked Clara, holding up a faded-looking letter. 'This made me cross the water to be on *your* side of the ocean.'

'Do you know it?'

'I shall know when you let me see it, Clara.'

'That letter,' said Harold's wife, 'came to me when I was sorely tried—feeling alone in the world. God knows how I suffered then, for I had lost knowledge of my mother's relations, and after Noble—as you call him—left me I had not a friend in the world. That letter was balm to my wounded heart.'

Harold took the letter—it was his!

'Oh, Clara!' cried he; 'what would I not have given to have known it had reached you! I waited, and waited—and heard nothing.'

'How could you hear, Harold? The letter only reached me a short time before sailing. It was a despairing letter, too—I could not reply to it. However, I made up my mind. I came out with the family of a fresh governor, to teach his daughters music and French.'

'I wrote that,' said he, deeply touched by the memory of the past, 'after I had somewhat come to myself. I had had a terrible fight to gain the mastery over myself; I could scarcely hold the pen to tell you how awfully and shamefully I had fallen—'

'Hush, dear,' added Clara; 'don't look backward now—but forward, onward, and upward!'

'I said to myself, Harold, when I had studied that letter—which has always been with me—it marks the moment when a brave man awoke to see his danger,' who, after a terrible inward struggle, has decided for God—truth—and honour.'

'And for you, Clara.'

'For me too, dear Harold. May God bless us and keep us ever loyal to Him, to the truth, and to each other!'

Nearly a year passed, and the firm of Morpeth and Scott is rapidly pushing its way to the front. Hard work, energy, and perseverance allied to tact will do more than idle, limp people imagine in this world—they give success. While Harold Morpeth sent cargoes of New Zealand produce to Sydney, Scott was ready to receive and dispose of them, and then buy up goods for the return voyage.

Let Mr. Ewen Scott speak for himself, and give what Australian news he has at hand. He says, in a letter to Harold Morpeth:—

'The cargoes you send are so well selected and arrive in such good condition that people look out for the Kahawai, money in hand. Mr. Morgan is so good and so kind, I hardly know how to speak of him. He treats us as if we were sons. He advises me constantly, and each time I see the value of his advice and profit by it.'

'I live with Mr. Jarvey, an old bachelor; but I am constantly at the Morgans to spend the evening. In the society of mother and daughter I find a real home influence. This I prize very highly, after the rough-and-tumble life at New Zealand.'

'Foxwell and his gang, you will be rejoiced to hear, have been captured at last, after infinite pains and much danger.'

'The authorities could never make out how, after each serious affair, in which the ruffian invariably shewed skill as well as daring, he and his gang could escape for weeks or months and leave not a trace behind him.'

'The secret is out. An outlying settler, a man of great determination, had been robbed and ill-treated by this gang. Mounting a horse of tried mettle, and taking natives and dogs, he at last tracked Foxwell and his gang to their lair. They had chosen an isolated spot, well-hidden amongst the spurs of the Blue Mountains. Here they lived in perfect security, surrounded by plenty, and hidden from the world.'

'The increasing demand for good potatoes and other New Zealand produce leads me to think we want a bigger craft for our trade; one of, say, two hundred tons at least. The timber trade is sure to increase and pay well. Here, as you know, we have hard, durable timber; but not the light, easily-worked pines which abound at your very back-door.'

'Dog's-ear has Kai-wara-wara glen, has he not? Could you not get it from him by purchase or lease, and start a saw-mill, worked by water power? If so, I should advise you to buy a flat, strong brigantine here, an American, which is in the market and can be bought cheap. We could run her to the Wanganui river, and load up sawed stuff direct for this port or Melbourne.'

'You remember Whippy, who served you a good turn here; he wants to return to New Zealand. He has asked me to enquire whether you will take him in the warehouse, and whether you could find work for his son. He has turned out an honest fellow, and I should advise it.'

'Mr. and Mrs. Linton are the most enjoyable people I know. They have told me their history. It is as wonderful and startling as that of a friend of mine. You shall hear it when I see you. I have always their kind remembrances to yourself and Mrs. Morpeth.'

We give Mr. Harold Morpeth's reply to this letter, and the more readily, as he refers to the lives and conditions of some of those who figure in these pages; of whom with the reader's permission, we must now take leave. He says:—

This signals the end of the redemption narrative that the protagonist embarks on. Aside from the final two chapters detailing Dog's-Ear narrative, and its connotations regarding Te Rauparaha, all other plot excursions

are concluded in this letter. Speculation for the future is also addressed. Notably this includes Harold's investment in the shipping industry, which is addressed in the introduction.

'You would not recognize the old cottage again. Nivens has entirely altered its appearance. I have also planted so many flowering plants and shrubs that we are embowered in masses of foliage, and festooned with sweet-smelling flowers.

'Nivens has married Mrs. Norris. They live in a cottage he has built at Kai-wara-wara. I have fixed him there at the yard, to build boats and small craft—it pays well.

'You would laugh to see how the serious, sorrowful Mrs. Norris of olden times thaws when a restless fit comes over Nivens—a relic of old times. She hands Nivens his flute, and he gives such a *lilt* that one dances in spite of oneself.

'Visiting them one evening, when Nivens had the fit on, I caught Mrs. Nivens, and we danced so joyously that, at last, Nivens threw down his flute, and cut capers like a schoolboy. "Shiver my timbers, if the old lady ain't thawed at last!" he cried out. "I'll teach her to do a hornpipe; a woman as can do that can do any-thing in this mortal world." Mrs. Nivens can now dance a hornpipe; and Nivens is happy.

'Your suggestion about a saw-mill is a good one. I have just obtained the right to throw up a dam across the glen, and have a saw-mill where we think fit. Dog's-ear said at once, "Takewhat land—what position—you like; and when you cut wood give me enough to build a cottage like the Pakeha; I will end my days near you, Raromi."

'To settle the affair properly, I induced him to have a *Korero*, so that the poor fellows who form the sad remnant of his wasted tribe might get the fair payment of what I meant to offer. "Raromi, my son," said he, "what is your will? I, Dog's-ear, say, Let it be done." I named the price—a fair one—and it was accepted at once.

"Nga-ti-tama, listen," said the old man. "My time is short; let me speak to you for the last time—yes, for the last time. My word is this; you are few, and you want rest and peace. Be it so. When I die, Raromi shall be chief. He is my son; he lives in my heart. To him I leave this *mere pounamu* (beautiful jade club), which has come to me from brave Nga-ti-tama chieftains. Love him, Nga-ti-tama; his word is straight; work for him; trust in him, and you will find a friend when, alas! you have none. I have said it!" The old chief sat down, and tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks—it was really touching.

'I like your idea about buying the American brigantine, but I wish to judge for myself as to her intrinsic value. These American craft are often wholly built with soft wood, and unless we are careful we shall perhaps buy a worthless craft which will be used up in five or six years. Send her here for a trip, on freight, that I may see her. Mr. Morgan will tell you what to do.

'We are in rather an unsettled state just now. A tribe of natives, evidently from a distance, are creeping into the woods near Port Nic. Cattle are being killed and stolen, and two settlers have been found murdered. Are these fellows on a war-party? Dog's-ear has had news, and is on the alert. He declares he will go and find out definitely who it is, and what is the meaning of this invasion.

'The last few days the old chief has watched me come and go with a deep, affectionate regard, as if he were afraid to lose sight of me. "Tell me," said I, at last, "what is in your heart?" "I have had a warning," said he—"and it means death." '

Chapter XXXII. Dog's-ear confronts the war-party.

Rangihaeata had broken faith with Dog's-ear; indeed, scarcely a chief on the Port Nic. side of the Taranaki Range now regarded their allegiance to Te Rauparaha's lieutenant. This, as was most natural, inflamed his anger and turned it to hatred, and he meditated revenge.

This outburst of anger on Rangihaeata's part suited Te Rauparaha's vindictive spirit for the moment. He determined to keep in the background, and launch the horrors of war against the settlers by means of servile and cruel tribesmen brought from a distance.

Pakihure, the conquered chief of the Rangitane, was seduced from his hiding-place at Ohiere, and was led to visit Te Rauparaha at Kapiti. The great chief at Kapiti pretended to weep over the wrongs of the Rangitane. He raised Pakihure's fallen hopes, and gave him the command of a war-party to act against the settlers at Port Nic. The wily savage could by this means strike blows which could not, he believed, be brought home to him.

Dog's-ear's apprehensions were strengthened when one of his men was found clubbed in the upper part of Kai-wara-wara glen, followed by the disappearance of another.

'Speak straight! 'said Dog's-ear to one of a party of scouts.

'It is a *taua* (war-party).'

'But we are not at war!'

'Know you not Pakihure, O chief?'

'Pakihure!' exclaimed the chief, 'leader of the despised Rangitane?'

'Even so; the Rangitane have crossed over, and have gained the peaks and passes of the Tararua Mountains. They have slain Whenua; and they rage with the fierceness of Maru.'

'Against whom, think you?'

'The Pakeha, some say; but we heard that Pakihure speaks big words, and demands *utu* for—'

'The blood of his relative, slain by me in the days gone by,' said Dog's-ear. 'Yes,' he added, to himself, 'I must pay for the wrongs of the past!'

As discussed in endnote three, Fraser has a clear understanding which he transmits to the reader multiple times throughout the novel. Here he reinforces the readers understanding of *utu* indirectly through Dog's-ear.

'Go,' he added to one of his men, 'tell Raromi, my son, the Rangitane are out on a war-party. Say I am going to them; and my going shall be the sign of peace.'

But Raromi questioned the messenger. He found out that Dog's-ear was going to give himself up to almost certain death, that war might be avoided, and the war-party appeased in Maori fashion; i. e. life for life, arising out of an ancient feud.

In a short time, Harold Morpeth and a strong party of well-armed settlers set out for the front. Harold's party was detailed to protect the settlement, but he hurried forward, hoping to catch Dog's-ear and save him from certain death.

He was too late; the chief had departed.

It is early morn. A small party of Maoris are pursuing the narrow road which at length touched the noisy, bubbling Eritonga, and then turned towards the forest, leading amongst the spurs of the Tararua Range on their eastern flank.

Behind this party came other Maoris, evidently keeping their scouts well in view. And far behind all these came Harold Morpeth's party, pushing forward to overtake Dog's-ear.

Dog's-ear and his scouts had entered the forest, where huge trees, covered by huge lianes, and matted together by creepers, often entirely stopped progress.

The old chief gave a signal, and he and his party crouched down, silent and motionless.

A whoop, wild and sharp, rang through the forest; and two Maoris darted away to cover from Dog's-ear's very side, after aiming a fearful blow at one of the prostrate warriors!

The party dashed after them as well as they could, not, apparently, to strike a blow—for not a shot was fired—but simply to follow them up.

Huge fallen trees blocked the way. In many places masses of creepers had so grown up and become interlaced as to be impenetrable, except to axe and cutlass. When a clear spot was reached in which to breathe, the difficulty was how to get out of it—how to go forward again—how find the way; and finding it, keep the right direction.

Dog's-ear called a halt. Panting and fairly exhausted, they had kept the flying Maoris in view, and had reached open ground again.

Keeping well under cover, the chief and his scouts looked out upon the enemy. Before them rose a spur of one of the outliers of the Tararua Range. On this spur stood an incomplete *pah*; the war-party working hard to finish it before being discovered and attacked.

'There is the enemy!' said Dog's-ear—it is a *taua*. Your word to me was true.'

'But why *haere ki patiarero*?' asked one (why run into danger, expressly); 'if we are caught—'

'We shall die!' added Dog's-ear.

'Oh! if our father will—'

'I have not come to fight—I've done too much in the past.'

'But why, then, O chief—'

'I have come to know what the Rangitane mean. They mean war. I see it. Now I know it. You will go back to Raromi and tell him. Tell him to wait two whole days—for me! If I do not come back, to fortify the town—and wait!'

'Here, take my arms—all. Give this *mere pounamu* to Raromi; it is his. To his care I commit my few brave Nga-ti-tama!'

His warriors took the things one by one, and stood there, speechless—heart-broken in their grief.

'Return, brave Nga-ti-tama; the great God, the Atua over all, go with you.'

His warriors did not move.

'Go you not? Shall I command you?'

'We cannot go,' they said, sadly; 'we will stay and die!'

'No,' said Dog's-ear, firmly. 'I have a mission of peace, and alone I go to seek Pakihure. The great God over all is God of peace. I go to make peace between Pakeha and Maori—perhaps to die!'

The aged chief drew himself up, for the lofty ambition of serving the God of peace fired his soul, nerved his heart, and made him look really noble.

His attendant warriors, speechless with sorrow, turned away and disappeared. Dog's-ear was alone!

Chapter XXXIII. The Last of the Nga-Ti-Tama Chiefs.

In an open space in front of one of the angles of the incompleted *pah*, the Maoris of the war-party cowered down beside their kits of boiled potatoes, with which they had fern-root and morsels of dried shark, and began to eat; it was meal-time.

Dog's-ear stepped out from behind the tree which had screened him, and stood before his enemies.

'Rangitane, friends!' he cried out, 'I'm hungry—I'm tired—I'm alive!'

A dozen muskets were pointed at him at once - a silence, however, fell on all.

'E Taringa Kuri claims hospitality of Pakihure,' said he; 'take me to him.'

Some warriors advanced to conduct him. They turned on him—seized him—he was a helpless prisoner as he stood before Pakihure.

'Why come you here?' asked Pakihure, with glaring eyes; 'you're a Pakeha spy; *He Kuri Koe!*' Now, to call the chief 'a dog,' was most insulting.

'I came to make peace.'

'Peace! You, that struck down my relative, Waka-nui—you, that joined our worst enemies—you, that want to bind my hands and give me to the Pakeha!'

Pakihure bounded out into the open, and ran up and down, working himself into a rage, and speaking as he ran:—'We are not Pakeha. We cling to our own country. "Don't divide the crayfish;" we won't have our land divided.' But you! Oh, the false, lying Kakas! They go to the Pakeha; they sell the land, the land of the Maori; and then creep out to us covered by lies to speak false—to deceive us—to take us—to take our lives!

""The road to Hawaike is cut off!"" he roared out; 'you die!'

Said Rangitoto, another chief, with fierce words and gestures:—'Rangitane, have we not been the prey of Waikatos, Ngatittoa, and their allies—of all? Do you not remember the bones of those who fell by hundreds? Who slew Waka-nui? Who slew him, E Tauringa Kuri?' addressing Dog's-ear. 'Oh! the killing! oh! the eating!'

A shudder passed through Dog's-ear. His sins of the past confronted him; now it was the ghost of a chief he had killed, and—eaten!

'Rangitane!' cried Dog's-ear, drawing himself up to his full height, and confronting his enemies unflinchingly. 'You reproach me with the death of Waka-nui! Alas for it! I would die thrice to the undoing of that death—but it cannot be. You, O Pakihure, demand *utu* for his blood. Good; I will die! My heart is heavy to think of the wrong I have done—I have said it! Take my life if you will, but oh, listen, Maoris of this fair land of Aotea. Who made this land, think you, Tangaloa, Maui? No. The great Atua, the God who made all lands, Aotea and Peritani; who made Maori and Pakeha. God made us of one family—we are His! Let, then, our hands join together in peace. Let us throw the club aside and be brethren—Maori and Pakeha. It is the Spirit of Evil who makes us love evil, hatred, and war; which end in ruin, suffering, and death! My last word is this,' said Dog's-ear, holding up his right hand and pointing heavenward, 'the God over all made heaven and earth, the sea, and all living beings; and think you He will let this His fair earth be deluged with human blood, when He made us to love one another? No. Those who smite with the club shall themselves be smitten—and there shall be none to help!'

With a yell of rage the Maoris leaped in the air, and their pent-up passion found vent in a fierce war-dance.

This finished with a wild, fierce, long-drawn cry for revenge.

Pakihure seized a gun and fired!

Dog's-ear fell forward, and his life's-blood welled out over the soil!

But now cries and shouts fill the air on all sides. The Rangitane find themselves nearly surrounded by armed foes. A deafening crash of musketry echoed far and wide, and the Rangitane Maoris bounded into the forest to hide—their *pah* not being completed—as Dog's-ear's whole party, with Harold Morpeth and the armed settlers, burst upon the scene.

A cry of despair—piercing and touching—burst from the Nga-ti-tama, as they rushed forward and lifted up the dying chief. His eye brightened, and the old chief smiled, as Harold Morpeth caught him in his arms.

'Raromi!' he whispered, 'it is good—let there be peace!'

Harold put all his skill in practice to staunch the flow of blood and save his adopted father—but the ball had sped too surely; nothing could be done.

'Pakihure demanded *utu*,' said Dog's-ear, slowly. 'I've paid it. Let them go in peace.'

'You have paid away your life,' said Raromi, 'to save us—to bring us peace. The great God alone can reward you.'

At this moment Pakihure was brought before Dog's-ear, wounded and a prisoner.

'Listen, Maori and Pakeha,' said Dog's-ear, with a last effort; 'and listen, Pakihure. I've shed much blood in the past, and it cries aloud for payment I would give a dozen lives to undo the evil of it. I cannot. I bow to the great God—and die. But Pakihure shall go free! Let him take what he will from my *whare*; it is just. Feed him, clothe him, and send him home in peace. For the great God over all—is a God of peace.'

Dog's-ear fell back in Raromi's arms—dead.

Pakihure returned home in peace, and saw no more the face of Te Rauparaha, the fierce maker of war. There was peace.

Title-page for the Religious Tract Society's publication list, with a lithograph of their main headquarters in London

Lithograph from "Blessing the Boats," showing a mass benediction of open row-boats

Lithographs accompanying a list of titles in the Religious Tract Society's series of 8 shilling books for young people

Lithograph of the Cabinet Room, Downing Street, London, reproduced from the "Leisure Hour" (1888)

An acrobatic moment reproduced from "Five Shilling Stories," by E. Everett Green

A top-hat-clad man pursues a young boy in a lithograph reproduced from "All for Number One."

A lithographed church-congregation scene from "Hindered and Helped"