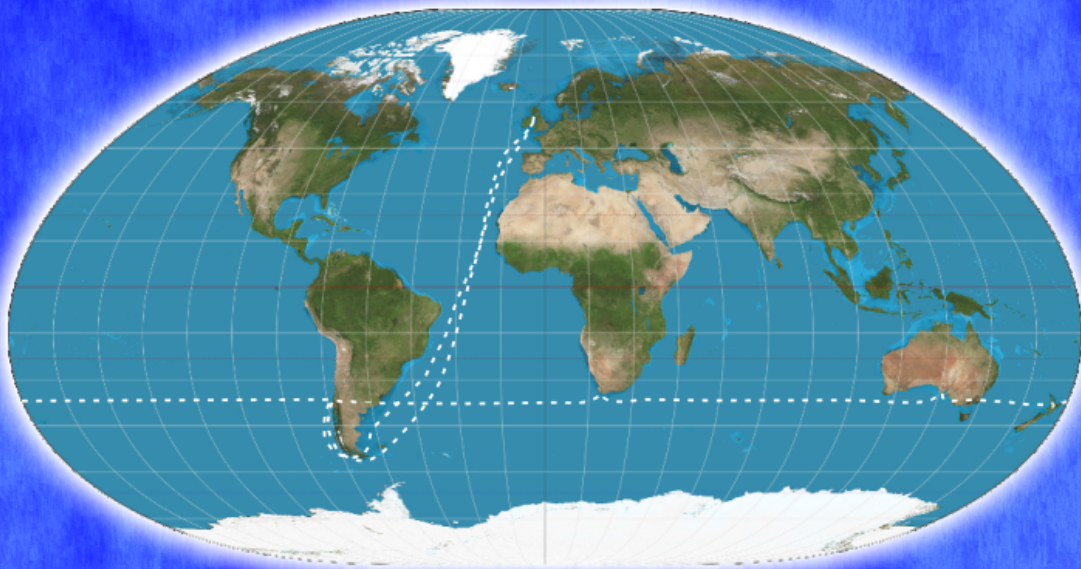


**Jules Verne's  
The Children of  
Captain Grant**



**A Journey Around the World**

**In Search of  
the Castaways**

**Book 3: New Zealand**

LES ÉVÉNEMENTS  
DU  
CAPITAINE GRANT

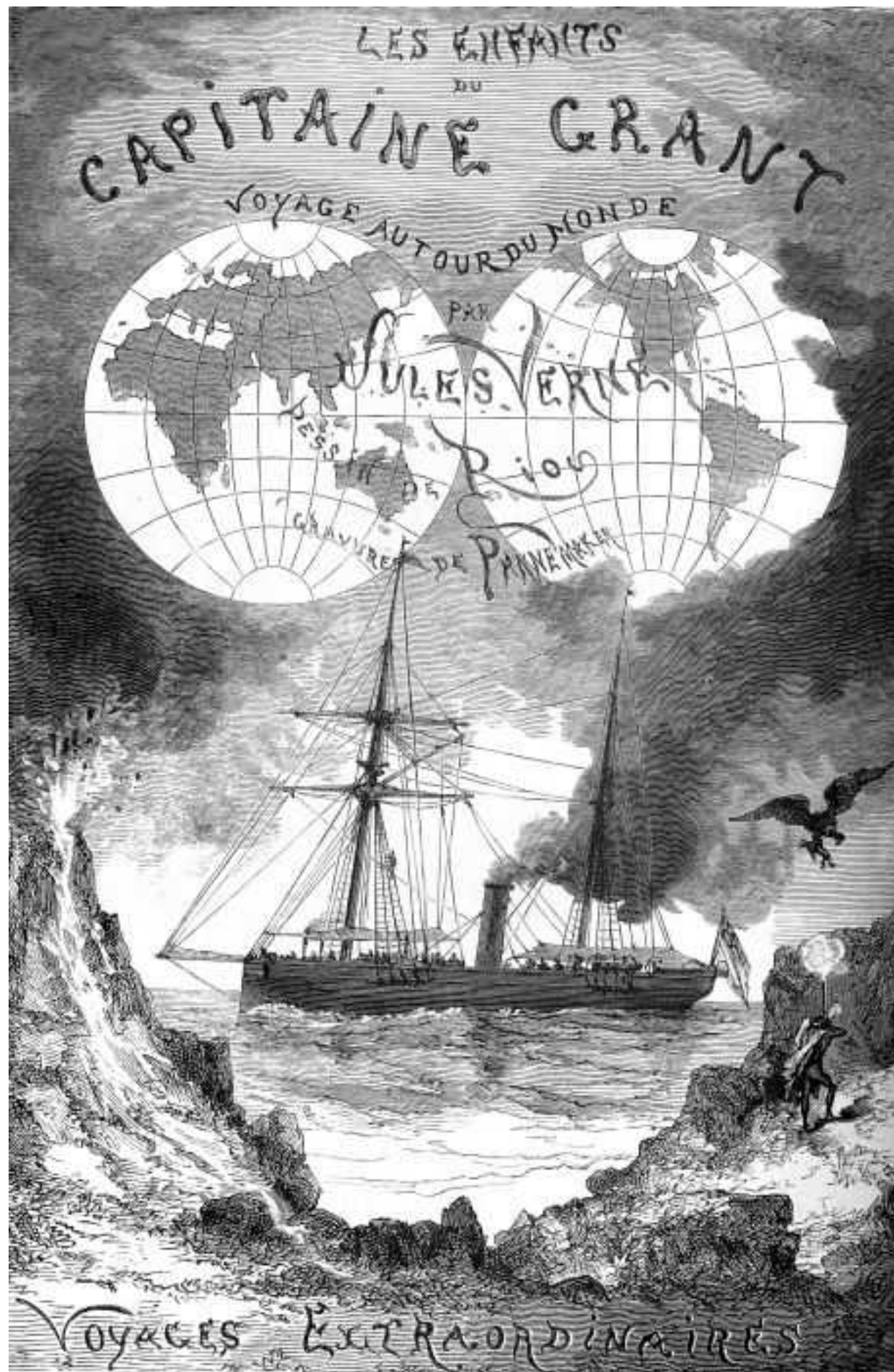
VOYAGE AUTOUR DU MONDE

PAR

JULES VERNE

RIOU

GRAVURE DE PANNIKER



VOYAGES EXTRAORDINAIRES

# The Children of Captain Grant

A Journey Around the World  
In Search of the Castaways

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An Extraordinary Voyage

by  
Jules Verne

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Illustrations by

Riou

Maps by

D. A. Sample

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Book 3: New Zealand

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## Version History

- 1.0**  
March, 2019: Initial public release
- 1.1**  
April, 2022: Minor copy editing. Fixed some typos, rephrased some awkward passages, and fixed a few translation issues.
- 1.1.1**  
July, 2023: Fixed a few more typos pointed out to me by Ken Stephenson.

# Book Three: New Zealand

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## Chapter I

### The *Macquarie*

IF THE SEARCHERS FOR CAPTAIN GRANT EVER FULLY DESPAIRED OF FINDING HIM, SURELY THIS WAS the moment. Where in the world should their next expedition take them? How were they to explore unknown countries? The *Duncan* was no longer in their possession, so they couldn't even return immediately to Scotland. The undertaking of these generous Scots had failed. *Failure!* A sad word that finds no echo in a valiant soul, and yet, under the blows of fate, Glenarvan must have acknowledged his powerlessness to continue his quest of mercy.

Mary Grant had the courage, under the circumstances, not to speak of her father. She restrained her anxieties by thinking of the unfortunate crew that had just perished. The girl faded before the friend, and it was she who consoled Lady Glenarvan, after receiving so many consolations! She was the first to speak of returning to Scotland. To see her so courageous, so resigned, filled John Mangles with admiration. He wanted to give her one last word of hope for Captain Grant, but Mary stopped him with a look.

"No, Mr. John," she said. "Let's think of those others who have devoted themselves to the quest. Lord Glenarvan must return to Europe!"

"You are right, Miss Mary," said John Mangles. "It must be done. It is also necessary to inform the English authorities of the fate of the *Duncan*. But do not give up hope. Rather than abandoning them, I will take up the search, alone. I will find Captain Grant, or I will die trying!"

It was a serious commitment that John Mangles made. Mary accepted it, and she held out her hand toward the young Captain's as if to ratify the treaty. On John Mangles's part it was a dedication of his whole life. From Mary, undying gratitude.

It was decided that they would depart Eden immediately. They resolved to reach Melbourne without delay. The next day, John went to inquire if any ships would be sailing soon. He expected to find frequent communications between Eden and the capital of Victoria.

He was disappointed. Ships were scarce. Three or four ships, anchored in Twofold Bay, made up the entire merchant fleet of the place. None were sailing to Melbourne, Sydney, or Point de Galle in Ceylon. From any of these ports, Glenarvan could expect to find ships taking passengers to Europe. Indeed, the *Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company* has a regular service of steamers between these ports and England.

What was to be done in this situation? Wait for a ship? They could wait a long time, because Twofold Bay is little frequented. How many ships passed offshore and never

come into the port?

After much thought and discussion, Glenarvan nearly decided to go to Sydney by road along the coast, when Paganel made a suggestion that no one expected.

The geographer had visited Twofold Bay, himself. He knew that no ships were sailing for Sydney or Melbourne. But of these three anchored ships, one was preparing to leave for Auckland, the capital of *Te Ika-a-Māui*, the northern island of New Zealand. Paganel proposed to take that ship to Auckland, whence it would be easy to return to Europe by the ships of the *Peninsular Company*.

This proposal was given serious consideration. Paganel, somewhat unusually for him, did not present a long list of arguments in favour of the idea. He confined himself to stating the fact, and adding that the crossing would not last more than five or six days. The distance from Australia to New Zealand is not much more than a thousand miles. [fn1](#)

By a strange coincidence, Auckland was located precisely on the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel which the searchers had been stubbornly following from the coast of Araucanía. The geographer might have fairly used this fact to bolster an argument that they should follow his suggestion. It presented a natural opportunity to visit New Zealand.

Paganel did not argue this advantage, however. After two successive disappointments, he did not want to risk presenting a third interpretation of the document. Besides, what could he argue? The document seemed clear that a *continent* served as Captain Grant's refuge, not an island. And New Zealand was definitely an island. This seemed decisive. Be that as it may, whether for this reason, or another, Paganel did not attach any new idea of exploration to his proposition of going to Auckland. He only remarked that regular communication existed between this point and Great Britain, and that it would be easy to take advantage of it.

John Mangles supported Paganel's proposal. He advised its adoption, since it was impossible to say how long they'd have to wait for a ship at Twofold Bay. But before making any final commitment, he thought it proper to visit the ship indicated by the geographer. He took a boat with Glenarvan, Major MacNabbs, Paganel, and Robert, and in a few strokes of the oars, they docked at the ship anchored not far from the wharf.

It was a 250 tonne brig, named *Macquarie*. She was doing cabotage between the different ports of Australia and New Zealand. The captain — or more rightly, the "master" — received his visitors rather roughly. They saw that they were dealing with an uneducated man. His manners did not distinguish him from the five sailors by his side. A big red face, thick hands, a crushed nose, a flattened eye, lips stained by his pipe, and a brutal look made Will Halley a sad figure. But they had little choice, and for a crossing of a few days they wouldn't be too particular.

"What do you all want?" Will Halley asked these strangers who were standing on the deck of his ship.

"The captain?" said John Mangles.

"That's me," said Halley. "Next?"

"Is the *Macquarie* sailing for Auckland?"

"Yes. Next?"

"What is she carrying?"

"Anything she can buy or sell. Next?"

"When does she sail?"

"Tomorrow. On the noon tide. Next?"

"Would she take passengers?"

"That depends on the passengers, and if they were satisfied with the ship's mess."

"They would bring their own provisions."

"Next?"

"Next?"

"Yes. How many are they?"

"Nine, including two ladies."

"I do not have cabins."

"We will make do with whatever deck space you make available."

"Next?"

"Do you accept?" asked John Mangles, refusing to be put off by the captain's gruff manner.

"We'll see," said the master of the *Macquarie*.

Will Halley took a turn or two around the deck, clomping loudly in his heavy hobnailed boots. He turned back suddenly to John Mangles.

"What will you pay?"

"What are you asking?"

"Fifty pounds."

Glenarvan nodded.

"Alright. Fifty pounds," said John Mangles.

"That's passage only," said Will Halley.

"Only the passage."

"Food's extra."

"Extra."

"Agreed. Next?" Will held out his hand.

"Huh?"



It was a brig, named *Macquarie*

"The deposit?"

"Here's half the price, twenty-five pounds." John Mangles counted out the sum for the master, who pocketed it without saying thank you.

"Be on board before noon, tomorrow," he said. "Whether you're here or not, I'm sailing."

"We will be here."

This said, Glenarvan, the Major, Robert, Paganel, and John Mangles left the deck without Will Halley having even touched the watch cap <sup>fn2</sup> stuck to his red mop.

"What a lout!" said John.

"Well, I'm fine with him," answered Paganel. "He's a real sea dog."

"A real bear!" said the Major.

"And I imagine," said John Mangles, "that this bear must have trafficked human flesh, in his time."

"What does it matter?" asked Glenarvan. "As long as he commands the *Macquarie*, and the *Macquarie* goes to New Zealand. From Twofold Bay to Auckland we will see little of him. After Auckland, we will see less."

Lady Helena and Mary Grant were pleased to learn that the departure was set for the next day. Glenarvan pointed out that the *Macquarie* did not match the *Duncan* for comfort. But after so many trials, they were not women to trifle themselves over something so petty. Mr. Olbinett was requested to take care of the supplies. The poor man, since the loss of the *Duncan*, had often mourned that the unfortunate Mrs. Olbinett had remained on board, and consequently fallen victim with all the crew to the ferocity of the convicts. Despite this, he fulfilled his duties as a steward with his usual zeal, and the "food extra" consisted of selected provisions which were never usually included in the brig's fare. In a few hours his arrangements were complete.

Meanwhile, the Major went to cash some drafts that Glenarvan had on the *Melbourne Union Bank*. He did not want to be devoid of gold, nor of arms and ammunition, so he renewed his arsenal. As for Paganel, he obtained an excellent map of New Zealand, published by Johnston of Edinburgh.

Mulrady was nearly fully recovered. He could barely feel the injury that had put his life in danger. A few hours at sea would complete his cure. He intended to treat himself with the breezes of the Pacific.

Wilson was responsible for the accommodation of the passengers on board the *Macquarie*. Under the strokes of his brush and broom, the deckhouse changed appearance. Will Halley, shrugging his shoulders, let the sailor do as he pleased. Of Glenarvan and his companions, he cared little. He did not even know their names, and did not care. This extra freight was worth fifty pounds to him, that's all. He cared less

about it than the two hundred barrels of tanned leathers that filled his hold. The skins first, then the passengers. He was a trader. As for his qualities as a sailor, he was well practiced in navigating these seas, made very dangerous by coral reefs.

As the day drew to a close, Glenarvan wanted to return to the point on the shore crossed by the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel. He had two reasons to go there.

First, he wished to visit this presumed place of the shipwreck once more. Ayrton certainly had been the quartermaster of the *Britannia*, and the *Britannia* could have really been lost on the Australian coast. On the east coast, if not on the west. The site of the possible wreck should at least be examined, while he had the chance.

And even if there was no trace of the *Britannia*, there might be of the *Duncan*, from when she had fallen into the hands of the convicts. There may have been a fight. They might find traces of a struggle: of some last defence. If the crew had perished in the waves, perhaps the waves had cast up some bodies onto the shore.

Glenarvan, accompanied by his faithful John, performed this search. The master of the *Victoria Hotel* put two horses at their disposal, and they took the north road around Twofold Bay.

It was a sad exploration. Glenarvan and Captain John rode without speaking, but they understood each other. The same thoughts, and the same anxieties, tortured their minds. They looked at the rocks, gnawed by the sea. They did not need to question or answer one another.

John's energy and intelligence ensured that every point of the shoreline was scrupulously explored. The smallest coves were carefully examined. The sloping beaches and sandy plateaus where the Pacific tides, however mediocre, could have thrown a wreck were investigated. But no clue was found that might provoke further searching in these parts.

No trace of a shipwreck was found.

Nor did they find any sign of the *Duncan*. All of this Australian coastline was deserted.

John Mangles did discover obvious traces of an encampment on the edge of the shore: remnants of fires recently lit under isolated myalls. Had a nomadic tribe of natives camped there for a few days? No, because Glenarvan found indisputable proof that the convicts had been on this part of the coast.

It was a grey and yellow tunic: worn, patched, a sinister rag left at the foot of a tree. It bore a registration number from Perth Penitentiary. The convicts were no longer there, but this sleazy castoff betrayed their passage. This livery of crime, after having dressed some wretch, was rotting on this deserted shore.

"See, John!" said Glenarvan. "The convicts have been here! And our poor comrades from *Duncan*..."

"Yes!" said John in a choked voice. "It is certain that they were not landed, that they perished!"

"*Scum!*" exclaimed Glenarvan. "If they ever fall into my hands, I will avenge my crew!"

The pain had hardened Glenarvan's features. For a few minutes he stared intently at the immensity of the waves, perhaps seeking a ship on the distant horizon. Then his eyes softened, he became himself again, and without adding a word or making a gesture he set off at a gallop, back to Eden.

Only one formality remained to be fulfilled: the declaration to the constable of the events which had taken place. It was made that evening to Thomas Banks. This magistrate could scarcely conceal his satisfaction while writing down his minutes. He was delighted by the departure of Ben Joyce and his gang. The whole town shared his contentment. The convicts had left Australia — thanks to a new crime, it is true — but they had left. This important news was immediately telegraphed to the authorities in Melbourne and Sydney.



They set off at a gallop, back to Eden

His declaration completed, Glenarvan returned to the *Victoria Hotel*. The travellers passed their last evening sadly. Their thoughts wandered over this fertile land of misery. They remembered so many hopes so legitimately conceived at Cape Bernouilli, and so cruelly broken at Twofold Bay!

Paganel was in a feverish state of agitation. John Mangles, who had watched him since the Snowy River incident, felt that the geographer both wanted, and did not want, to talk. Many times he had pressed him with questions to which the other had not replied.

That night, accompanying him back to his room, John asked him why he was so nervous.

"John, my friend," said Paganel, "I'm no more nervous than usual."

"Monsieur Paganel," said John, "you have a secret that stifles you!"

“Well, what can I do?” The geographer waved his arms in the air. “It is stronger than me!”

“What is stronger than you?”

“My joy on one side; my despair on the other.”

“You are happy and despair at the same time?”

“Yes, happy and despair to visit New Zealand.”

“Have you found some clue?” asked John Mangles eagerly. “Have you returned to the lost track?”

“No, friend John! *There is no return from New Zealand!* But, nevertheless ... well, you know human nature! We just have to breathe to hope! And my motto is “*spiro, spero,*” [fn3](#) which is worth all the most beautiful currencies in the world!”

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[fn1.](#) About 400 leagues. (1,600 km. — DAS)

[fn2.](#) A sort of oilcloth hat.

[fn3.](#) Latin: As I breath, I hope. — DAS

## Chapter II

### Some Words About the Country They Were to Visit

THE NEXT DAY, JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, *MACQUARIE'S* PASSENGERS WERE SEATED IN THE BRIG'S NARROW deckhouse. Will Halley had not offered his cabin to the ladies. The lack of manners was not regretted, because the den was worthy of the bear.

At half-past twelve, they sailed with the ebb-tide. The anchor chain was pulled taut, and the anchor was laboriously torn from the bottom. There was a moderate southwest breeze. The sails were leisurely unfurled. The five men of the crew moved slowly. Wilson wanted to help them, but Halley begged him to keep quiet and not to interfere with anything that did not concern him. He was used to getting by on his own, and did not ask for help, or advice.

This last was addressed to John Mangles, who had smiled at the awkwardness of the ship's maneuvers. John took this in good stead, but privately reserved the right to intervene if the clumsiness of the crew compromised the safety of the ship.

In time, and with much swearing from the master, the crew got the sails set. The *Macquarie* ran wide on the port tack under her mainsails, topsails, topgallants, and jibs. Later, the studsails and royals were hoisted. But in spite of all the canvas, the ship made very little way. Her rounded bow, broad beam, and her heavy stern made her a very bad sailer: the perfect type of tub.

It was necessary to put up with it. Fortunately, even as poorly as the *Macquarie* sailed, in five days — six at the most — she should reach Auckland harbour.

They lost sight of the coast of Australia and the lighthouse marking the port of Eden at seven o'clock in the evening. The ship laboured in a heavy sea; she rolled in the troughs between the waves. The violent gyrations made the passengers' stay below deck uncomfortable, but they could not stay on deck because of the heavy rain. They were condemned to close confinement.

Everyone was left to their own thoughts. There was little talk. Lady Helena and Mary Grant barely exchanged any words. Glenarvan was restless. He paced back and forth while the Major remained motionless. John Mangles, followed by Robert, occasionally climbed to the deck to watch the sea. As for Paganel, he murmured vague and incoherent words in his corner.

What was the worthy geographer thinking? Of New Zealand, to which destiny led him. He reviewed all of its history; the past of this sinister country replayed itself in his mind's eye.

Was there in all this history a fact, an incident, which could justify anyone calling these islands a "continent"? Could a modern geographer, or sailor, give them that name?

Paganel's thoughts always returned to the interpretation of the document. It was his obsession, an *idée fixe*. After Patagonia, after Australia, his imagination — triggered by a word — was bent on New Zealand. But one point, one, stopped him in his tracks. "'Contin' ... 'contin' ..." he repeated, "but that means *continent!*"

And he thought of all the sailors who had explored these two great islands of the southern seas.

It was on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1642 that the Dutchman Tasman, after discovering Van Diemen's Land, landed on the unknown shores of New Zealand. He followed the coast for a few days, and on the 17<sup>th</sup> his ships entered a large bay, terminated by a narrow strait between the two islands.

The North Island was called *Te Ika-a-Māui* by the natives, which means "Māui's Fish". The South Island is *Te Waipounamu*, meaning "The Waters of Jade". [fn1](#)

Abel Tasman sent his boats ashore, and they returned accompanied by two canoes carrying a noisy crew of natives. These savages were of medium size, brown and yellow skin, with protruding bones, gruff voices, and black hair tied up in a fashion similar to the Japanese, topped with a large white feather.

This first meeting of Europeans and natives seemed to promise long-lasting friendly relations. But the next day, when one of Tasman's boats was surveying an anchorage closer to the land, seven canoes carrying a large number of natives attacked it. The boat capsized and filled with water. The quartermaster who commanded it was struck in the throat with a roughly sharpened pike. He fell into the sea. Of his six companions, four were killed. The other two, and the quartermaster, swam back to the ships and were saved.

Tasman sailed following this incident, confining his vengeance to firing a few musket shots at the natives that probably fell short. He left the bay, which is still called Massacre Bay, [fn2](#) went up the west coast, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January he anchored near the northern tip of *Te Ika-a-Māui*. The violence of the surf, and the hostility of the natives, prevented him from



Seven canoes ... attacked

taking on water. He left these islands to which he gave the name *Staten Landt* — that is to say, Land Of the States — in honour of the States General, the Dutch Parliament.

Indeed, the Dutch navigator imagined that they were connected to the islands of the same name discovered east of Tierra del Fuego, at the southern tip of America. He thought he had found “The Great Southern Continent.”

“But,” Paganel told himself, “what a sailor of the seventeenth century might call a ‘continent,’ a nineteenth-century sailor would not! Such a mistake is inadmissible! No! There is something that escapes me!”

For more than a century, Tasman’s discovery was forgotten, and New Zealand no longer seemed to exist until a French navigator, Surville, became acquainted with it at 35° 37’ of latitude. At first he did not have any complaints about the natives, trading with them for fresh food to treat the crew’s scurvy. Several of Surville’s sailors were treated hospitably by a chief named Ranginui when a storm stranded them ashore at Whatuwhiwhi. All went well until a few days later when Surville accused Ranginui of stealing a yawl which had been cast adrift in the storm. Surville punished the robbery by burning the village, and kidnapping Ranginui, to take back to Europe with him.<sup>fn3</sup> This terrible and unjust revenge was but a prelude to some of the bloody retaliations New Zealand was about to witness.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, 1769, the illustrious Captain Cook appeared on these shores. He anchored in Teoneroa Bay with his ship the *Endeavour*, and sought to rally the natives by good treatment. But to treat people well, you have to start by catching them. Cook did not hesitate to take two or three prisoners and impose his beneficence on them by force. These, loaded with presents, were then returned to the shore. Soon, several natives enticed by their stories, came on board voluntarily and traded with the Europeans. A few days later Cook made his way to Hawke’s Bay, a large gulf on the east coast of the northern island. He found himself in the presence of belligerent, screaming, provocative natives. Their demonstrations went so far that it became necessary to calm them with a canister of grape shot.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the *Endeavour* anchored in Tokomaru Bay, where there lived a peaceful population of two hundred souls. The botanists on board made fruitful explorations in the country, and the natives transported them to the shore with their own canoes. Cook visited two villages defended by palisades, parapets, and double ditches which demonstrated serious knowledge of fortifications. The most important of these forts was situated on a rock which became an island at high tide. This was better than an island itself, for not only did the waters surround it, but they roared through a natural arch, sixty feet high, on which this inaccessible “*pā*” rested.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, Cook, having over five months collected a vast harvest of curious objects, native plants, and ethnographic and ethnological documents, gave his name to the strait which separates the two islands, and left New Zealand. He would return in his later voyages.

In 1773, the great sailor reappeared at Hawke's Bay, and witnessed scenes of cannibalism. Here, we must reproach his companions for provoking them. Officers, having found the mutilated remains of a young savage on the beach, brought them on board, "broiled them," and offered them to the natives who threw themselves on them with voracity. It is a sad whimsy to be the cooks for a meal of cannibals!

Cook visited these lands which he particularly loved again on his third voyage, wishing to complete his hydrographic survey. He left them for the last time on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1777.



On the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, 1769, the illustrious Cook appeared on these shores

In 1791, Vancouver lay for twenty days in Dusky Sound, without any profit for the natural or geographical sciences. D'Entrecasteaux, in 1793, explored twenty-five miles of coast in the northern part of *Te Ika-a-Māui*. The merchant captains, Hausen and Dalrympe, then Baden, Richardson, and Moodi, made brief visits, and Dr. Savage collected interesting details of the customs of the Māori during a five-week stay.

It was in the same year, in 1805, that the nephew of the Chief of Rangihoua, the intelligent Duaterra, embarked on the *Argo* anchored at the Bay of Islands, and commanded by Captain Baden.

Perhaps the adventures of Duaterra will provide an epic subject to some Māori Homer. They were fruitful in disasters, injustices, and ill-treatment. Bad faith, sequestration, blows and wounds are what the poor savage received in exchange for his good services. What an impression he must have formed of people who call themselves "civilized!" He was taken to London. He was made a sailor of the lowest class, the butt of the entire crew. Without Reverend Marsden, he would have died of grief. This missionary took an interest in the young savage in whom he recognized a sound

judgment, a brave character, and marvellous qualities of gentleness, grace, and affability. Marsden had his protege obtain some sacks of wheat and farming implements to take back to his own country. These were stolen. More misfortune and the suffering nearly overwhelmed the poor Duaterra again before he managed to return to his homeland, in 1814. He was just beginning to gather the fruits of so many hardships when he died at the age of twenty-eight, just as he was about to regenerate this bloody Zealand. Civilization was undoubtedly delayed for many years by this irreparable misfortune. **Nothing can replace an intelligent and good man, who combines in his heart the love of good with the love of his country!**

New Zealand was abandoned until Thompson in 1816, Liddiard Nicholas in 1817, and Marsden in 1819 traversed various portions of the two islands, and in 1820 Richard Cruise, captain of the 84<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, stayed for ten months making valuable contributions to science, and learning the customs of the natives.

In 1824, Duperrey, commanding *La Coquille*, anchored in the Bay of Islands for a fortnight, and had nothing but praise for the natives.

After him, in 1827, the British whaler *Mercury* had to defend herself against looting and murder. The same year, Captain Dillon was greeted in the most hospitable way during two visits.

In March 1827, the commander of the *Astrolabe* — the illustrious Dumont D'Urville — spent a few nights with the natives, safely and unarmed. He exchanged presents and songs, slept in their huts, and undertook his survey work without being troubled: which resulted in such beautiful maps for the Navy Ministry.

It went otherwise the following year for the English brig *Hawes*, commanded by John James. After having touched the Bay Of Islands, he went on to the East Cape, and suffered greatly from a perfidious chief named Enararo. Several of his company suffered a terrible death.

Of these contradictory events, of these alternatives of mildness and barbarism, it must be concluded that too often the cruelties of the Māori were only reprisals. Good or bad treatment depended on good or bad captains. There were certainly some unjustified attacks by the natives, but they were more usually provoked by the Europeans. Unfortunately, the punishment fell on those who did not deserve it.

After D'Urville, the ethnography of New Zealand was completed by a daring explorer who circled the world twenty times. A nomad, a Bohemian of science, an Englishman named Earle. He visited the unknown portions of the islands without having personal difficulties with the natives, but he was often a witness to scenes of anthropophagy. Māori devoured each other with disgusting sensuality.

This is also what Captain Laplace found in 1831, during his stay at the Bay of Islands. Already the conflicts were much more formidable, because the savages used firearms

with remarkable precision. The once flourishing and populated lands of *Te Ika-a-Māui* changed into deep solitudes. Entire tribes had disappeared as herds of sheep disappeared: roasted and eaten.

The missionaries have struggled in vain to overcome these bloodthirsty tendencies. As early as 1808, the Church Missionary Society had sent its most able agents — it is the name that suits them — to the main stations of the northern island. But the barbarism of the Māori forced them to suspend the establishment of new missions. It wasn't until 1815 that Messrs Marsden — the protector of Duaterra — Hall, and King landed at the Bay of Islands, and bought two hundred acres of land from the chiefs for the price of twelve iron axes. This became the seat of Anglican society.

The beginnings were difficult, but the natives came to respect the life of the missionaries. They accepted their care and their doctrines. Some wild men softened. A feeling of gratitude awoke in these uncivilized hearts. In 1824, it even came to pass that the Māori protected their *ariki*<sup>fn4</sup> — that is, the Reverends — against savage sailors who insulted and threatened them with ill-treatment.

Thus, with time, the missions flourished, despite the presence of convicts escaped from Port Jackson who demoralized the indigenous population. In 1831, the *Gospel Missionary Newspaper* reported two large settlements, one at Kidikidi, on the banks of a stream that runs to the sea in the Bay of Islands, the other in Paï-Hia, at the edge of the Kawa-Kawa River. The natives converted to Christianity had traced roads under the leadership of the *ariki*, cut tracks through the immense forests, and bridged the torrents. Each missionary would in turn preach the civilizing religion to the remote tribes, raising chapels of rushes or bark, schools for the young natives, and on the roof of these modest constructions unfurled the flag of the mission, carrying the cross of Christ and these words: "*Rongo Pai*", that is to say "The Gospel", in the Māori language.

Unfortunately, the influence of the missionaries did not extend beyond their missions. The whole nomadic part of the population escaped their operation. Cannibalism was destroyed only among Christians, and these new converts should not be subject to too great a temptation. The instinct for blood still pulses in them.

Moreover, a chronic state of war still exists in in these savage countries. Māori are not stupid Australians fleeing the European invasion. They resist, they defend themselves, they hate their invaders, and an incurable hatred drives them at this moment against the English immigrants. The future of these great islands hangs on a throw of the dice. An immediate civilization awaits it, or a deep barbarism for long centuries, according to the chance of arms.

Thus Paganel, his brain boiling with impatience, had replayed in his mind the history of New Zealand. But nothing in this story gave a reason to call this country

consisting of two islands a “continent.” And though a few words of the document had awakened his imagination, these two syllables ‘contin’ stubbornly blocked a new interpretation.

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[fn1.](#) Verne has “la baleine qui produit le jade vert” here, or “The whale that produces green jade.” Another Māori name for the South Island is *Te Waka a Māui* “Māui’s Canoe.” Together the islands are known as *Aotearoa* “land of the long white cloud.” — DAS

The *Hetzel* edition also has a note here “correcting” the name Verne gives the South Island in the text, though Verne’s name for it seems to be correct (allowing for variations in spelling.) I’ve updated all the names in the text to match current accepted spelling. The correction may be the result of there not being single preferred names for the islands, yet. — DAS

[fn2.](#) Tasman named it *Moordenaar’s Bay* “Murderers Bay”. It was the French explorer Jules Dumont d’Urville who changed the name to Massacre Bay. With the discovery of gold in the region, it was renamed Golden Bay in the 1850s. — DAS

[fn3.](#) Verne gives the chief the name of “Nagui-noui”, and says that the yawl was stolen. What actually seems to have happened is that the boat had been cut adrift by the French after it got hung up on some rocks, and then salvaged by Ranginui, who by Māori custom, laid claim to it. — DAS

[fn4.](#) *Ariki* is a Māori word meaning “person of the highest rank and seniority” with no particular religious significance; so giving this title to the missionaries denoted the Māori’s respect for them. — DAS

## Chapter III

### The Massacres of New Zealand

ON THE 31<sup>ST</sup> OF JANUARY, FOUR DAYS AFTER SETTING SAIL, *MACQUARIE* HAD NOT YET CROSSED two-thirds of the narrow sea between Australia and New Zealand. Will Halley did not pay much heed to the handling of his ship; he let her sail herself. He was rarely seen, not that anyone minded. It wasn't even that objectionable that he spent all his time in his cabin, if only for the fact that the lout was drunk every day on gin or brandy. His sailors followed the example set by him, and no ship ever sailed more by the grace of God than the *Macquarie* of Twofold Bay.

This unforgivable carelessness forced John Mangles to keep constant vigilance. Mulrady and Wilson straightened the tiller more than once as some sudden yaw nearly laid the brig on its side. Will Halley often berated the two sailors with strong swear words for their actions. In response, Mulrady and Wilson wanted to to confine the drunkard to the hold for the rest of the crossing, but John Mangles stopped them, and with some difficulty calmed their just indignation.

The situation of the ship worried him, but in order not to disturb Glenarvan, he only spoke of it to Major MacNabbs and Paganel. MacNabbs sided with Mulrady and Wilson.

"If you think it is necessary, John," said MacNabbs, "you must not hesitate to take command, or at least take over the handling of the ship. This drunkard can become master again after we disembark at Aukland, and capsize it, if that is his pleasure."

"No doubt, Mr. MacNabbs," said John, "and I will do it, if it is absolutely necessary. As long as we are at sea, a little supervision is enough. My sailors and I will not leave the deck. But, if Will Halley hasn't sobered up when we approach the coast, I will be very uneasy."

"Cannot you direct our course?" asked Paganel.



Mulrady and Wilson straightened the tiller more than once

"It will be difficult," said John. "Would you believe that there are no charts on board?"

"Really?"

"Really. The *Macquarie* only operates between Eden and Auckland, and Will Halley is so familiar with these waters, that he takes no bearings."

"He imagines, no doubt," said Paganel, "that his ship knows the way, and that she steers herself."

John Mangles laughed. "I do not believe in self-sailing ships, and if Will Halley is drunk when we make landfall, he will put us in extreme danger."

"Let us hope," said Paganel, "that he will have recovered his reason in the neighbourhood of land."

"So, if he hasn't, you could not guide the *Macquarie* to Auckland?" asked MacNabbs.

"Not without a map of this part of the coast. These shores are extremely dangerous. It is a succession of irregular and capricious little fjords, like the coast of Norway. There are numerous reefs, and it takes great experience to avoid them. A ship, however solid, would be lost if its keel struck one of those rocks submerged a few feet under water."

"And in that case," said the Major, "the crew would have no other recourse than to take refuge on the coast?"

"Yes, Mr. MacNabbs, weather permitting."

"A bitter end!" said Paganel. "For the coasts of New Zealand are not hospitable, and the dangers of the interior are worse."

"Are you talking about the Māori, Mr. Paganel?" asked John Mangles.

"Yes, my friend. Their reputation is known throughout the Pacific Ocean. It is not a question here of shy or stupid Australians, but of an intelligent and bloodthirsty race of cannibals, fond of human flesh. Of cannibals from whom no pity is to be expected."

"So," said the Major, "if Captain Grant had been shipwrecked on the coasts of New Zealand, you would not advise to search for him?"

"You might search the coasts for traces of the *Britannia*," said the geographer. "But not the interior. No, that would be useless. Every European who ventures into these disastrous lands falls into the hands of the Māori, and every prisoner in the hands of the Māori is lost. I pushed my friends to cross the Pampas, to cross Australia, but I would never drag them onto the trails of New Zealand. May the hand of Heaven guide us; pray to God that we are never in the power of those ferocious natives!"

Paganel's fears were only too justified. New Zealand has a terrible reputation, and its history is stained with bloody incidents.

The martyr-roll of navigators numbers many victims to the New Zealanders. Abel Tasman's five sailors, killed and devoured, began these bloody annals of cannibalism. After him, Captain Tukney and all his crew of boatmen suffered the same fate. Towards

the eastern part of the Strait of Foveaux, five fishermen of the *Sydney Cove* also found death at the teeth of the natives. We must also mention four men of the schooner *Brothers*, murdered at Molineux Harbour, several soldiers of General Gates, and three deserters of the *Mathilda*, to arrive at the so painfully famous name of Captain Marion du Fresne.

On May 11, 1772, after Cook's first voyage, the French Captain du Fresne came to anchor at the Bay of Islands with his ship the *Mascarin*, accompanied by the *Marquis de Castries*, commanded by Captain Crozet.

The Māori gave an excellent welcome to the newcomers. At first they appeared timid, and it took many presents, kindnesses, and a long period of regular communication to put them at ease.

Their leader, the intelligent Te Kauri, belonged to the Wangaroa tribe, if Dumont D'Urville is to be believed, and he was a relative of the chief treacherously abducted by Surville, two years before the arrival of Captain du Fresne.

In a country where honour requires all Māori to obtain blood satisfaction for suffered outrages, Te Kauri could not forget the insult made to his tribe. He waited patiently for the arrival of a European ship, planned his revenge, and carried it out with a cold-blooded ruthlessness.<sup>[fn1](#)</sup>

After first simulating fear of the French, Te Kauri continued to lull them into a sense of false security. He and his comrades often spent the night aboard the ships. They brought gifts of fish. Their daughters and their wives often accompanied them. They soon learned the names of the officers and invited them to visit their villages. Du Fresne and Crozet, seduced by such advances, traveled all over this coast populated with four thousand inhabitants. The natives ran to meet them unarmed and sought to inspire them with absolute confidence.

Captain du Fresne, anchoring at the Bay of Islands, intended to replace the masts of the *Marquis de Castries*, badly damaged in a recent storm. He explored the interior of the country, and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May he found a magnificent cedar forest two leagues from the shore, and within reach of the bay a league from the ships.

A camp was established there where two-thirds of the crew, equipped with axes and other tools, worked to fell the trees and to build a road that led to the bay. Two other camps were chosen: one on the small island of Moturua, in the middle of the bay, where the sick of the expedition were transported along with the blacksmiths and coopers from the ships; the other on shore, a league and a half from the vessels. The shore camp was in communication with the carpenters' encampment. Vigorous and helpful natives assisted the sailors in their various labours at all of these camps.

Captain du Fresne hadn't overlooked taking some precautions. The savages were never allowed to bring weapons onto the ships, and the boats that went ashore were all

well armed. But du Fresne and many of the most trusting of his officers were fooled by the conduct of the natives and the commander ordered that the boats be disarmed. Captain Crozet tried to persuade du Fresne otherwise, but he did not succeed.

After this, the attention and the devotion of the New Zealanders redoubled. Their chiefs and the French officers lived on a footing of perfect intimacy. Many times Te Kauri brought his son aboard, and let him sleep in the ship's cabin. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of June, during a solemn visit to the shore, du Fresne was recognized as "grand chief" of the whole country, and he was crowned with four white feathers in his hair.

Thirty-three days had passed since the arrival of the ships at the Bay Of Islands. The work on the masts proceeded; the water tanks were filled with fresh water from Moturua. Captain Crozet personally directed the carpenters' camp, and there was every expectation of a successful enterprise.

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, at two o'clock, the commander's boat was readied for a planned fishing trip near Te Kauri's village. Du Fresne embarked with two young officers, Vaudricourt and Lehoux, a volunteer, the captain-at-arms, and twelve sailors. Te Kauri and five other leaders accompanied him. No one could predict the dreadful catastrophe that awaited sixteen out of the seventeen Europeans.

The crowded boat was rowed to shore, and was soon lost to sight from the two ships.

Captain du Fresne did not come back to the ship that evening. Nobody was worried about his absence. It was supposed that he had wanted to visit the masts yard and spend the night there.

The following day, at five o'clock, the *Marquis de Castries* longboat made its usual trip to the island of Moturua for fresh water. She returned on board without incident.

At nine o'clock the sailors of the *Mascarin* saw an almost exhausted man in the water, swimming toward the ships. A canoe went to his aid and brought him back.

It was Turner, one of the men who had gone with Captain du Fresne. He had two spear wounds in his side, and he alone, of the seventeen men who had left the ship the day before, returned.

He was questioned, and soon all the details of this horrible tragedy were known.

The unfortunate du Fresne's boat had docked at seven o'clock in the morning. The savages came cheerfully to meet the visitors. They carried the officers and the sailors who did not want to get wet on their shoulders when they landed. Then the French separated from each other.

Immediately, the savages — armed with spears and clubs — rushed upon them, ten to one, and massacred them. The sailor Turner, struck with two spear-thrusts, was able to escape his enemies and hide in the undergrowth. From there he witnessed horrible scenes. The savages stripped the dead of their clothes, opened their bellies, and chopped them to pieces.

At this moment Turner, without being seen, threw himself into the sea, where he was retrieved by the *Mascarin's* boat.

This event consternated the two crews. A cry for revenge broke out. But before avenging the dead, it was necessary to save the living. There were three camps on the shore, and thousands of angry savages, hungry cannibals, surrounded them.

In the absence of Captain Crozet, who had spent the night at the masts yard, Le Clesmeur, the first officer on board, took emergency measures. The *Mascarin's* boat was dispatched with an officer and a detachment of soldiers. This officer must, above all, help the carpenters. He set off along the coast, saw Captain du Fresne's boat grounded on the shore, and landed.

Captain Crozet — absent from the ship, and knowing nothing of the massacre — saw the detachment appear about two o'clock in the afternoon. He sensed that something was wrong, went to meet them, and learned the truth. To prevent panic he ordered that the others in the camp not be told what had happened.

The savages, assembled in ranks, occupied all the heights. Captain Crozet recovered the main tools, buried the others, set fire to his sheds, and began his retreat with sixty men.

Natives followed him, shouting: "Te Kauri mate Marion!" [fn2](#) They hoped to frighten the sailors by revealing the death of their Captain. This made the sailors so furious that Captain Crozet could barely hold them back. They crossed the two leagues to the shore, and embarked in the boats with the men of the second camp. During all this time, a thousand savages — sitting on the ground — did not move, but when the boats left the shore the stones began to fly. At once, four sailors — good marksmen — successively shot down all the chiefs, to the great astonishment of the natives who did not know the effectiveness of the firearms. Captain Crozet rallied to the *Mascarin*, and he immediately dispatched the boat to Moturua Island. A detachment of soldiers settled on the island to spend the night there, and the sick were returned to the ships.

A second detachment came the next day to reinforce the camp on the island. It was necessary to clear the island of the savages



Four sailors, excellent marksmen

which infested it, and to continue to fill the barrels with water. The village of Moturua had three hundred inhabitants. The French attacked them. Six leaders were killed, the rest of the natives retreated from the French bayonets, and the village was burned. The *Marquis de Castries* could not return to the sea without masts, and Crozet — forced to abandon the trees of the cedar forest — had to make joined masts. The watering work continued.

A month passed. The savages made a few attempts to retake Moturua Island, but did not succeed. When their canoes came within range of the ships, they were cut down with cannon.

The work was finally completed. It remained to be seen if any of the sixteen victims had survived the massacre, and to avenge the others. The boat, carrying a large detachment of officers and soldiers, went to Te Kauri's village. This treacherous and cowardly leader fled as they approached, wearing Commander du Fresne's coat over his shoulders. The huts in the village were carefully searched. They found the skull of a man who had been recently cooked in Te Kauri's hut. The impressions of the cannibals' teeth were still visible on it. A human thigh was skewered on a wooden spit. A shirt with a bloody collar was recognized as belonging to du Fresne, then the clothes and pistols of the young Vaudricourt. They found the boat-arms and more tattered clothes. Further on, in another village, they found cleaned and cooked human entrails.

These irrefutable proofs of murder and cannibalism were collected, and the human remains respectfully buried. Then the villages of Te Kauri and Piki-Ore, his accomplice, were delivered to the flames. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, 1772, the two ships left these fatal shores.

The memory of this catastrophe must be foremost in the mind of every traveller who sets foot on the shores of New Zealand. It is a foolish captain who does not profit from these lessons. New Zealanders are still treacherous cannibals. Cook, in turn, recognized this well during his second voyage of 1773.

In fact, a boat from one of his vessels — the *Adventure*, commanded by Captain Furneaux — having landed on December 17<sup>th</sup> in search of a supply of wild grasses, did not reappear. A midshipman and nine men had manned her. Captain Furneaux, anxious, sent Lieutenant Burney to look for them. When Burney arrived at their landing site he found "A picture of carnage and barbarism, of which it is impossible to speak without horror. The heads, the entrails, the lungs of many of our people, lay scattered on the sand, and, very near there, some dogs were still devouring other debris of this kind."

To end this bloody list, we must add the ship *Brothers*, attacked in 1815 by the New Zealanders, and Captain Thompson and all the crew of the *Boyd*, massacred in 1820. Finally, on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1829, at Whakatane, the leader Enararo looted the English brig

*Hawes* from Sydney. His horde of cannibals slaughtered several sailors, cooked their corpses, and devoured them.

Such was the country of New Zealand to which the *Macquarie* sailed, manned by a stupid crew, under the command of a drunkard.

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[fn1.](#) The basic outline of events about to be described follows pretty closely with the generally accepted account, but there is dispute about Te Kauri's motives. Rather than his behaviour being a cold blooded, calculated deception from the start, some believe that relations between the French and the Māori were soured by series of offences against Māori traditions and beliefs by the French, and a growing feeling that the French were taking too much of the local resources in their provisioning and ship repair work. Eventually, Te Kauri decided that they'd gone too far, and decided to do something about it. — DAS

[fn2.](#) "Te Kauri killed Marion."

## Chapter IV

### The Breakers

THEIR SLOW VOYAGE CONTINUED. ON FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>, SIX DAYS AFTER HER DEPARTURE, THE *Macquarie* still hadn't raised the shores of New Zealand. The wind was fair — from the southwest — but the currents were against them, and the brig hardly made any headway. The hard, stormy sea strained her rigging; her frame creaked, and she rose painfully from the troughs of the waves. Her badly managed shrouds and stays left play in the masts, which shook violently with every roll.

Very fortunately, Will Halley — as a man in no hurry — did not crowd on more sails, because if he had all the rigging would inevitably have come down. John Mangles hoped that this wretched carcass would reach port without any mishap, but he suffered to see his companions so poorly installed aboard this brig.

Neither Lady Helena, nor Mary Grant complained, though continual rain forced them to stay in the deckhouse. There, the lack of air and the rolling of the ship made life miserable. They often came out onto the deck to brave the inclement weather until the unbearable squalls forced them below again. They returned to the small cabin more suited to lodge goods than passengers, and especially not ladies.

Their friends tried to distract them. Paganel passed the time with his stories, but he did not succeed much. Indeed, his stories of past visitors to New Zealand further demoralized them. As much as the geographer's essays on the Pampas or Australia had been interesting, his stories of New Zealand left his audience indifferent and cold. Moreover, they were not approaching this sinister country voluntarily, with hope and enthusiasm, but under the pressure of necessity.

Of all the *Macquarie's* passengers, the most unhappy was Lord Glenarvan. He was rarely seen in the deckhouse. He could not settle down. His nervous, over-excited nature did not accommodate itself to imprisonment between four narrow walls. He remained on deck, day and night, without concern for the torrents of rain or the high seas. Sometimes leaning on the rail, sometimes walking with feverish agitation, his eyes stared incessantly at the sea. He scanned the horizon with his telescope whenever the weather cleared enough to permit it. He seemed to question the silent waves. He would have torn away the mist that veiled the horizon with a gesture, if he could. He could not resign himself, and his face was full of pain. He was an energetic man, hitherto happy and powerful, to whom power and happiness were suddenly wanting.

John Mangles endured the harsh weather by his side. Whenever a break in the weather permitted, Glenarvan scanned the horizon with more obstinate stubbornness.

"Your Honour seeks the land?" asked John.

Glenarvan shook his head, no.

"Nevertheless," said the young Captain, "you must be getting tired of this brig. We should have seen the lights of Auckland thirty-six hours ago."

Glenarvan did not answer. He was still staring, and for a minute his telescope remained fixed on the horizon to the windward side of the ship.

"The land is not on this side," said John Mangles. "Your Honour should look to starboard."

"Why, John?" asked Glenarvan. "It's not the land that I am looking for!"

"What are you looking for, my Lord?"

"My yacht! My *Duncan*!" said Glenarvan angrily. "She must be there, in these parts, skimming these seas, doing the sinister job of a pirate! She is there, I tell you. *There*, John, on this shipping lane between Australia and New Zealand! And I have a feeling that we will meet her!"

"God preserve us from that meeting, my Lord!"

"Why, John?"

"Your Honour forgets our situation! What could we do on this brig, if the *Duncan* gave us the chase? We could not even run away!"

"Flee, John?"

"Yes, my Lord, though it would be in vain! We would be caught, delivered to the mercy of those wretches, and Ben Joyce has shown that he does not back away from any crime. Our lives would be worth nothing! We would defend ourselves to the death, but then what? Think of Lady Glenarvan, my Lord! Think of Mary Grant!"

"Poor women!" murmured Glenarvan. "John, my heart is broken, and sometimes I feel despair invade it. It seems to me that new catastrophes are waiting for us; that Heaven has declared itself against us! I am afraid!"

"You, my Lord?"

"Not for myself, John, but for those I love. For those you love too!"

"Don't worry, my Lord," replied the young Captain. "We must not fear! The *Macquarie* sails badly, but she sails. Will Halley is a dumb ass, but I'm here, and if the



Lord Glenarvan remained on deck, staring incessantly at the sea

approach to the shore seems dangerous to me, I'll bring the ship back off. On that issue there is little or no danger. But God forbid we should find ourselves side by side with the *Duncan*. If Your Honour seeks to sight her, it should only be so we can avoid her!"

John Mangles was right. Meeting the *Duncan* would have been fatal to *Macquarie*. Such a meeting was to be feared in these narrow seas that pirates travelled without risk. That day, at least, the yacht did not appear, and the sixth night since their departure from Twofold Bay came without the worst fears of John Mangles materializing.

But it was a terrible night. The darkness came on suddenly at seven o'clock in the evening. The sky was very threatening. A sailor's instinct overcame Will Halley's stupidity and drunkenness. He left his cabin, rubbing his eyes, and shaking his big red head. He took a deep breath, as another would have swallowed a glass of water to recover, and he examined the masts. The wind was freshening, and turning a quarter to the west, carrying them directly toward the New Zealand coast.

Will Halley loudly called his men, had the topgallants reefed, and set the night's sails. John Mangles silently approved. He had given up talking to this rude sailor, but neither he, nor Glenarvan, left the deck. Two hours later, a strong breeze broke out. Will Halley added another reef to his topsail. The maneuver would have been difficult for five men if the *Macquarie* had not carried a double yard in the American style. It was enough to bring down the upper yard so that the topsail could be reduced to its smallest size.

Two hours passed. The sea was getting higher. The *Macquarie* was shaking to her bilges enough to make one think her keel was scrapping on the rocks. It was not the case, but her heavy hull struggled to rise up the waves. And crashing down into the troughs, the sea swept over her deck. The longboat, hanging from the port davits, disappeared with a wave washing over the deck.

John Mangles did not stop being worried. Any other ship would have played with these waves, but this heavy boat was in danger of sinking. The deck was filling with each dive, and the water wasn't draining quickly enough through the scuppers. This could sink the ship. It would have been wise to break the bulwarks with an axe in order to facilitate the draining of the deck, but Will Halley refused to take this precaution.

A greater danger threatened the *Macquarie*, and it was too late to avoid it. About half-past eleven John Mangles and Wilson, standing on the leeward side, were struck by an unusual sound. Their seafaring instinct awoke. John grabbed the sailor's hand.

"The surf!" he said

"Yes," said Wilson. "The waves are breaking on a bank."

"Not more than two cables away?" [fn1](#)

"At most! We're near the shore!"

John leaned over the bulwarks, looked at the dark waves and exclaimed "The lead! Wilson! The lead!"

The master, posted at the front, did not seem to suspect his position. Wilson seized the lead line coiled in its pail, and rushed into the foresail stays. He threw the lead; the rope ran out between his fingers. At the third knot, the lead stopped.

"*Three fathoms!*" shouted Wilson.

"Captain!" said John, running to Will Halley. "We're on breakers!"

He didn't wait to see Will Halley shrug in response. He rushed to the rudder, to put the helm hard over, while Wilson, releasing the lead, hauled on the sheets of the main topsail to luff the ship. John pushed the in-comprehending man who was on the helm away from it with a sharp blow.

"Into the wind! Let loose! Let loose!" cried the young Captain, maneuvering to turn away from the reefs.

For half a minute, the brig's starboard side ran parallel to the shore, and despite the darkness of the night, John saw a roaring line whitening four fathoms from the ship.

Will Halley, becoming aware of this imminent danger, lost his head. His barely sober sailors could not understand his orders. His incoherent words — his contradictory orders — showed that the stupid drunkard had lost all self-control. He was surprised by his proximity to the land which lay eight miles to leeward, when he had thought it was thirty or forty. The currents had thrown him off his usual course, and caught this miserable routinist off guard.

John Mangles' quick maneuver had pushed *Macquarie* away from the breakers, but John did not know his position. Maybe he was in a tight channel between reefs. The wind was full in the west, and with every pitch they might run aground.

The sound of the surf redoubled off the starboard bow. They had to luff again. John put the tiller hard over. The breakers multiplied under the brig's bow. They had to turn into the wind to get back out to sea. Could they do it in a poorly balanced ship under reduced sails? It was uncertain, but it had to be tried.

"*Hard over!*" shouted John Mangles to Wilson.

The *Macquarie* was approaching the new line of reefs. Soon, the sea foamed over the submerged rocks.

It was a moment of inexpressible anguish. The foam brightened the waves with phosphorescence. The sea was screaming, as if she possessed the voice of the ancient sirens brought to life from pagan mythology. Wilson and Mulrady added their weight to the tiller. They pushed it to its stops.

Suddenly, they felt a shock. The *Macquarie* had struck a rock. The bobstay<sup>fn2</sup> broke, compromising the stability of the foremast. Could they complete the tack without further damage?

No, for the wind suddenly calmed, and the ship fell back to the leeward. Its turn was stopped. A high wave lifted her up, carried her further onto the reefs, and she fell back with extreme violence. The foremast came down with all its rigging. The brig shuddered twice and then remained motionless, listing thirty-five degrees to starboard.

The porthole windows shattered. The passengers rushed outside, but the waves swept the deck from one end to the other, and they could not remain there without danger. John Mangles, knowing the ship was firmly embedded in the sand, begged them to go back into the deckhouse.

"The truth, John?" asked Glenarvan calmly.

"The truth, my Lord," said John Mangles, "is that we will not sink. As for being demolished by the sea, that's another question, but we have time to take counsel."

"Is it midnight?"

"Yes, my Lord, and we must wait for the day."

"Can we not put to sea in the boat?"

"Not in these waves, in the dark. It is impossible! And besides, where would we land?"

"Alright, John, we'll wait until daylight."

Halley was running about the deck of his ship like a madman. His sailors, who had recovered somewhat from their stupor, smashed open a barrel of brandy and began to drink. John foresaw that their drunkenness could soon bring terrible scenes. He could not count on the master to hold them back. That wretch tore his hair and wrung his hands. He thought only of his cargo, which was not insured.

"I am ruined! I am lost!" he cried, running from one side of the deck to the other.

John Mangles scarcely thought of consoling him. He ordered his companions to arm themselves, and stand ready to repulse the sailors, who were gorging themselves with brandy, and uttering terrible blasphemies.

"The first of these wretches who approaches the cabin," said the Major calmly, "I will shoot like a dog."



The foremast came down with all its rigging

The sailors no doubt saw that the passengers were determined to hold them in check, for after a few attempts at plunder, they disappeared. John Mangles no longer worried about the drunkards, and waited impatiently for the day.

The ship was absolutely motionless. The sea slowly calmed. The wind was falling. The hull could resist for a few more hours. At sunrise, John would examine the shore. If it had an easy landing, the dinghy, now the only boat on board, could be used to transport the crew and passengers. It would take at least three trips, because it had room for only four people. As for the longboat, it had been carried away by the sea.

While thinking about the dangers of his situation, John Mangles leaned on the deckhouse, listening to the sounds of the surf. He sought to pierce the deep darkness. He wondered how far they were from the land: both desired, and feared. Breakers often extend several leagues from a coast. Could the frail little dinghy withstand a long crossing?

While John thought on — hoping for a little light in the dark sky — the ladies, confident in his word, rested in their berths. The immobility of the brig assured them of a few hours of tranquility. Glenarvan, John, and their companions no longer heard the cries of the dead drunk crew who also seemed to be recovering with a quick sleep. By one o'clock in the morning a profound silence reigned aboard this brig, itself asleep on its bed of sand.

Around four o'clock, the first gleaming appeared in the east. The clouds shone slightly under the pale glow of dawn. John went back onto the deck. A curtain of mist hung on the horizon. Some indistinct contours floated above the morning fog. A slight swell still agitated the sea around them, but the waves of the open sea were lost amidst thick, motionless clouds.

John waited. The light grew gradually; the horizon became red. The curtain slowly lifted from the vast backdrop. Black reefs jugged out of the water. Then, a shoreline appeared as a strip of foam. A luminous point shone like a lighthouse as the tip of a peak was lit by the still invisible disc of the rising sun. The land was there, less than nine miles off.

“Land!” called John Mangles.

His companions, awakened by his voice, rushed to the deck of the brig, and silently watched the coast which was revealing itself on the horizon. Hospitable or fatal, it must become their place of refuge.

“Where is Will Halley?” asked Glenarvan.

“I do not know, my Lord,” answered John Mangles.

“And his sailors?”

“Missing, like him.”

“And like him, drunk, no doubt,” said MacNabbs.

“Look for them!” said Glenarvan. “We can not abandon them on this ship.”

Mulrady and Wilson went down to the crew quarters in the forecastle, and were back within two minutes. They were empty. They searched the rest of the brig, from the steerage, to the hold. They found neither Will Halley, nor his sailors.

“What! *Nobody?*” asked Glenarvan.

“Have they fallen into the sea?” asked Paganel.

“Anything’s possible,” said John Mangles, very concerned about this disappearance. He headed toward the stern. “Let’s get to the boat.”

Wilson and Mulrady followed to help him with the boat. But the dinghy was gone.

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[fn1.](#) One cable is 100 fathoms, so two cables would be about 400 yards/metres. — DAS

[fn2.](#) A stay underneath the bowsprit, to counteract the upward tension on the bowsprit from the jibs and forestay. — DAS

## Chapter V

### Improvised Sailors

WILL HALLEY AND HIS CREW, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE NIGHT AND THE PASSENGERS' SLEEP, had fled with the brig's only boat. No one doubted it. This master, whose duty obliged him to remain the last on board, had left first.

"The rascals have fled," says John Mangles. "Well, all the better, my Lord. They have spared us some annoyances!"

"I agree," said Glenarvan. "Besides, there is still a Captain on board, John, and your companions are brave, if not skilful, sailors. Give us your orders. We are ready to obey you."

Major MacNabbs, Paganel, Robert, Wilson, Mulrady, and even Olbinett, applauded Glenarvan's words, and — standing on deck — put themselves at John Mangles' disposal.

"What should be done?" asked Glenarvan.

The young Captain looked out over the sea, examined the broken masts of the brig and, after a few moments of reflection, said "We have two options, my Lord, to get us out of this predicament: to raise the ship and get back to sea, or to gain the shore on a raft that will be easy enough to build."

"If the ship can be raised, let's raise it," said Glenarvan. "That is the best option, isn't it?"

"Yes, Your Honour, for once on land, what would become of us without means of transport?"

"Let's avoid the coast," said Paganel. "We must be wary of New Zealand."

"Especially since we've drifted off course," said John. "Halley's carelessness has brought us south, it's obvious. I will make my sighting at noon, and if, as I presume, we are below Auckland, I will try to take the *Macquarie* north, along the coast."

"But what of the damage to the brig?" asked Lady Helena.

"I do not think it is serious, Madame," said John Mangles. "We can set up a makeshift mast to replace the foremast. We'll sail — slowly, it's true — but we'll go where we want to go. If, unfortunately, the hull of the brig is ruptured, or if it can not be floated free, it will be necessary to resign ourselves to gaining the coast and to resume the way to Auckland on the shore."

"Let's see the state of the ship," said the Major. "It matters most."

Glenarvan, John, and Mulrady opened the main hatch and went down into the hold. About two hundred barrels of tanned skins were very badly stowed there. They could

be moved without much difficulty by means of hoists attached to the main yard, directly above the hatch. John had some of the barrels thrown overboard to lighten the ship.

After three hours of hard work the bilges of the brig could be examined. Two seams had opened in the planking on the port side at the level of the water line. The *Macquarie* was listing to starboard, its port side elevated, and the defective seams were in the air so that water could not penetrate. Wilson quickly caulked the gaps in the planks, and carefully nailed a sheet of copper over them to restore the seal.

While making their inspection they found only two feet of water in the bilge. The pumps would easily drain that water and lighten the ship.

John concluded that the hull had suffered little damage in the grounding. It was likely that some of the false keel would remain embedded in the sand, but he could do without it.

After examining the interior of the ship, Wilson dove into the sea to determine her position on the shoal.

The *Macquarie* had grounded on a steep sandbank, pointing in a northwesterly direction. The lower end of her bow, and about two-thirds of her keel were deeply embedded. The stern of the ship floated in up to five fathoms of water. The rudder was not embedded, and operated freely. John thought it was unnecessary to lighten her a great deal. A real advantage, because they would be able to sail at the first opportunity.

The tides are not very strong in the Pacific; however, John Mangles was counting on the arrival of the flood to raise the *Macquarie*. The brig had grounded about an hour before high tide. From the moment when the ebb tide was felt, her starboard list had become more and more marked. At six o'clock in the morning, at low tide, it had reached its maximum inclination. It seemed pointless to prop the ship up on crutches. It was thus possible to keep the yards and other spars that John intended to use to build a makeshift foremast on board.

It remained to make their preparations to free the *Macquarie*. It was long and painful work. It was obviously impossible to be ready for the noon high tide. They would only



The *Macquarie* was listing to starboard

see how the brig would behave, partly emptied, under the action of that tide, and they would make the push at the next tide.

“To work!” commanded John Mangles.

His improvised sailors were at his orders.

John first ordered the sails furled. The Major, Robert, and Paganel, led by Wilson, went up the main mast. The main topsail, stretched under the force of the wind, would have interfered with the floating of the ship. It was necessary to secure it, which was done as quickly as possible. Then, after taxing work — severe on hands that were not accustomed to it — the main topgallant was lowered. Young Robert, agile and bold as a cat, was a great deal of help during this difficult operation.

It was then a question of placing an anchor, or perhaps two, in line with the keel at the rear of the ship. The anchor’s traction would be required to haul the *Macquarie* off the bar at high tide. This chore would be easy if they had a boat. Just carry out an anchor, and drop it at the predetermined point. But with every boat gone it was necessary to improvise.

Glenarvan was enough of a sailor to understand the necessity of this undertaking. An anchor had to be set to extract a ship grounded by low water.

“But what do we do without a boat?” he asked John.

“We will use the remains of the foremast and empty barrels,” said the young Captain. “The task will be difficult, but not impossible, because the *Macquarie*’s anchors are small. Once set, I hope that they won’t slip.”

“Very well. Let’s not waste any time, John.”

Everyone, sailors and passengers, was called to the deck. They all took part in the work. The rigging that still held the foremast was cut away with an axe. The small mast had broken in its fall so the crow’s nest could be easily removed. John Mangles intended to use these spars to build the platform of a raft, supported with empty barrels, and capable of carrying the anchors. A scull was fitted, which allowed the raft to be steered. The ebb tide itself would help make it drift out behind the brig. Then, when the anchors were lowered, it would be easy to get back on board by hauling on the rope that stretched back to the ship’s deck.

This work was half finished when the sun approached the meridian. John Mangles allowed Glenarvan to continue with the task, and turned his attention to finding their position. This was very important to determine. Fortunately, John found a very dirty sextant, with a almanac from the Greenwich Observatory, in Will Halley’s cabin. It was good enough to take the sighting. He cleaned it up and brought it to the deck.

This instrument, by a series of moving mirrors, superimposes the sun’s image on the horizon at the moment when it is noon, that is to say when the day star reaches the highest point of its course. To operate the sextant you must aim its telescope at a true

horizon, where the sky meets the water. In this place, however, a point of land to the north interposed itself between the observer and the horizon making a direct observation impossible.

When the true horizon can't be sighted, it is replaced by an artificial horizon. This is usually a flat bowl filled with mercury, above which one operates. The mercury presents itself as a perfectly horizontal mirror. John had no mercury on board, but he overcame the difficulty by using a pail filled with liquid tar, the surface of which reflected the image of the sun quite well.

He already knew his longitude, being on the west coast of New Zealand. This was fortunate, because without a chronometer he could not have calculated it. The latitude alone was lacking and he was able to obtain it.

He used the sextant to measure the meridian height of the sun above the horizon. This was  $68^{\circ} 30'$ . The distance from the sun to the zenith was therefore  $21^{\circ} 30'$ , since these two numbers added together give  $90^{\circ}$ . On that day, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the declination of the sun was  $16^{\circ} 30'$ , according to the almanac. Adding this to the zenith distance of  $21^{\circ} 30'$ , gave a latitude of  $38^{\circ}$ .

The position of *Macquarie* was thus determined to be  $174^{\circ} 45'$  of longitude, and  $38^{\circ}$  of latitude, allowing for some insignificant errors produced by the imperfection of the instruments, which could be ignored.

Using the Johnston map bought by Paganel in Eden, John Mangles saw that the grounding had taken place at the opening of Aotea Bay, above Kawhia Point, on the shores of the province of Auckland. The city of Auckland being situated on the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel, the *Macquarie* had been diverted one degree to the south. They should therefore go north one degree to reach the capital of New Zealand.

"So," said Glenarvan, "a journey of eighty miles. <sup>fn1</sup> It's nothing."

"What is nothing on the sea will be long and difficult on shore," said Paganel.

"So," said John Mangles, "we do all that is humanly possible to float off the *Macquarie*."

Their position established, the work was resumed. High tide came at a quarter past twelve. John could not take advantage of it, since his anchors were not yet set, but he watched the *Macquarie* with some anxiety. Would it float under the action of the flow? The question was going to be decided in five minutes.

They waited. They heard some crunches. The hull shuddered, but they didn't rise. John had good hopes for the next tide, but the brig did not move yet.

Work continued. At two o'clock the raft was ready. The smaller anchor was loaded onto it. John and Wilson boarded the raft after mooring a rope to the stern of the ship. The current carried them half a cable out from the brig, and they lowered the anchor in ten fathoms of water.

The position was good and the raft was hauled back to the ship.

There remained the larger davit anchor. It was loaded onto the raft with difficulty. The raft was played out again, and soon this second anchor was secured behind the first, fifteen fathoms deep. John and Wilson hauled themselves back to the *Macquarie*.

The anchor cable and hawser were fixed to the windlass, and they waited for the next high tide, which would be at one o'clock in the morning. It was then six o'clock in the evening.

John Mangles complimented his sailors, and told Paganel that, with courage and good conduct, he might one day become a quartermaster.

Mr. Olbinett, after helping with the various tasks, returned to the kitchen. He prepared a timely and comforting meal. The crew had worked up hearty appetites that were fully



They lowered the anchor in ten fathoms of water

satisfied, and everyone felt ready for more work.

After dinner, John Mangles made the final preparations to ensure the success of the operation. Nothing should be neglected when it comes to freeing a ship. Often the attempt fails for the lack of a little more lightening, and the trapped keel does not leave its sand bed.

John Mangles had thrown a large portion of the cargo into the sea in order to lighten the brig; but the rest of the barrels, the heavy spars, the spare yards, and a few tons of pig iron which formed the ballast were carried to the stern to lighten the bow. Wilson and Mulrady also rolled a number of barrels which they had filled with water to the stern, in order to raise the nose of the brig.

These last tasks were completed by midnight. The crew was exhausted: a regrettable circumstance at a time when they would need all their strength to turn the windlass, which led John Mangles to revise his plan.

The breeze had calmed. The wind was scarcely able to raise a few ripples on the surface of the water. John, looking at the horizon, noticed that the wind was swinging around from the southwest to the northwest. It was unmistakable to his sailor's eye,

from the disposition and colour of the bands of cloud. Wilson and Mulrady shared their captain's opinion.

John Mangles told Glenarvan of his observations, and proposed that they postpone the floating.

"And here's why," he said. "First, we are all very tired, and we'll need all our strength to free the ship. Then, once free, how do we guide it to deep water through these dangerous reefs in the dark? Better to do it in daylight. Another reason to wait is that the wind is shifting to a more favourable quarter and I want to be able to take advantage of it. I want the wind to blow us off while the sea lifts us. Tomorrow, if I am not mistaken, the breeze will blow from the northwest. We can raise the sails on the main mast, and they will help to free the brig."

These arguments were convincing. Glenarvan and Paganel — the most impatient to be free — agreed, and the operation was postponed until the next day. The night went well. A watch was set, especially to keep an eye on the anchors.

The day came. John Mangles' weather prediction was accurate. A fresh breeze blew from the north-northwest. It gave them an important aid. The crew was assembled. Robert, Wilson, and Mulrady went to the top of the mainmast; the Major, Glenarvan, and Paganel were on the deck, preparing the sails to be deployed at the proper moment. The yard of the main topsail was hoisted to the block — the main sail and the main topsail left furled.

It was nine o'clock in the morning. High tide was still four hours away. They were not idle. John had them build a makeshift mast at the front of the brig to replace the foremast. This would allow him to maneuver away from these dangerous shoals as soon as the ship was afloat. The work proceeded with renewed vigour, and before midday the foresail was firmly secured to its mast. Lady Helena and Mary Grant made themselves very useful rigging a spare sail to the topgallant's yard. They were happy to work for their common salvation. The rigging was completed. If the *Macquarie* left something to be desired from the point of view of elegance, at least she could sail so long as she didn't venture too far from the coast.

The tide rose. The surface of the sea rose in small, choppy waves. The heads of reefs disappeared little by little, like marine animals ducking under the water. The hour was approaching to attempt the grand operation. A feverish impatience kept everyone on edge. Nobody spoke. Everyone looked to John, anticipating his orders. John Mangles, leaning over the quarter deck, watched the tide. He glanced anxiously at the braided cable and hawser stretching out to the anchors. At one o'clock, the sea reached its highest point. It was steady for this short moment between its rise, and beginning to fall again. It was necessary act without delay. The main sail and the main topsail were dropped and combed the mast under the force of the wind.

*"To the windlass!"* John shouted.

It was a windlass with twin cranks, like a fire pump. Glenarvan, Mulrady and Robert on one side, Paganel, the Major and Olbinett on the other, leaned on the handles that turned the mechanism. At the same time, John and Wilson, engaging the breaker bars, added their efforts to those of their companions.

*"Hardy! Hardy!"* cried the young Captain. *"And all together!"*

The cable and the hawser were stretched taut under the powerful action of the windlass. The anchors held firm and did not slip. It was necessary to succeed promptly. The high water only lasts a few minutes, and it would soon fall. They redoubled their efforts. The wind gave a violent gust, and pressed the sails against the mast. A few tremors were felt in the hull. The brig seemed ready to rise. Perhaps one more arm would be enough to pull her off the sandbar.

*"Helena! Mary!"* Glenarvan shouted.

The two young women joined their efforts to those of their companions. A last click of the ratchet was heard.

But that was all. The brig did not move. The chance was lost. The tide was already beginning to ebb, and it was evident that even with the help of the wind and the sea, this small crew could not free the ship.

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[fn1.](#) Verne has twenty-five miles here, but the straight line distance from Aotea to Auckland is eighty miles. (130 kilometres) Verne does use a more accurate distance in later chapters. The longitude he gives is also off by about 3° 30', so I've adjusted it. — DAS

## Chapter VI

### Where Cannibalism Is Discussed, Theoretically

THE FIRST MEANS OF SALVATION ATTEMPTED BY JOHN MANGLES HAD FAILED. IT WAS NECESSARY to resort to the second without delay. It was obvious that the *Macquarie* could not be raised, and no less obvious that the only action to be taken was to abandon the ship. Waiting on board for unknown relief would have been reckless madness. The *Macquarie* would be torn to pieces before the providential arrival of a ship at the scene of the grounding. The next storm, or even a strong surf raised by offshore winds, would roll her on the sands, break her, and scatter and disperse the debris. John wanted to be on land before this inevitable destruction.

He therefore proposed to build a raft large enough to carry the passengers, and a sufficient quantity of supplies to the New Zealand shore.

No one argued with his decision. The work was begun, and they had made good progress when darkness forced them to stop work.

About eight o'clock in the evening, after supper, while Lady Helena and Mary Grant rested in their berths in the deckhouse, Paganel and his friends were discussing grave matters as they paced the deck of the ship. Robert did not want to leave them. This brave child listened attentively, ready to render any service, ready to devote himself to any perilous enterprise.

Paganel asked John Mangles if the raft could follow the coast to Auckland, instead of landing its passengers ashore. John replied that such a voyage was impossible with such an unwieldy vessel.

"And what we can not attempt on a raft," said Paganel, "could it have been done with the brig's dinghy?"

"Yes, eventually," said John Mangles. "But we'd have to sail by day and anchor by night."

"So, those wretches who have abandoned us..."



The work was begun

"Oh, *them*," said John Mangles. "They were drunk, and in the darkness I fear that they have paid with their lives for their cowardly abandonment."

"Too bad for them," said Paganel, "and too bad for us, for the boat would have been very useful."

"What do you want, Paganel?" said Glenarvan. "The raft will take us to the shore."

"That is precisely what I would have liked to avoid," said the geographer.

"*What!* A journey of ninety miles at the most after what we have done in the Pampas, and across Australia. Can it frighten men who have been through such hardships?"

"My friends," said Paganel, "I do not question your courage, or the valour of our companions. Ninety miles would be nothing in any other country but New Zealand. You will not suspect me of pusillanimity. I was the first to encourage you to cross America, and Australia. But here, I repeat, anything is better than venturing into this treacherous country."

"Anything is better than exposing yourself to certain death on a stranded ship," said John Mangles.

"What do we have to fear so much in New Zealand?" asked Glenarvan.

"The Māori," said Paganel.

"The Māori!" said Glenarvan. "Can we not avoid them, following the coast? Moreover, an attack of a few miserable beings can not worry ten Europeans well armed and determined to defend themselves."

"They are not miserable," said Paganel, shaking his head. "The Māori are terrible tribes who fight against English rule — against their invaders — who often defeat them, and who always eat them!"

"*Cannibals!*" cried Robert. "Cannibals!" Then they heard him murmuring "My sister! Lady Helena!"

"Do not be afraid, my child," said Glenarvan, to reassure the boy. "Our friend Paganel exaggerates!"

"I'm not exaggerating anything!" said Paganel. "Robert has shown that he is a man, and I treat him as a man by not hiding the truth. New Zealanders are the most cruel, if not the most greedy, of cannibals. They devour everything that comes their way. For them, war is a hunt for that tasty game called man, and it must be admitted that it is a more logical reason to make war. Europeans kill their enemies and bury them. The savages kill their enemies and eat them, and, as my compatriot Toussenel said so well 'It is not so evil to roast an enemy when he is dead, as it is to kill him when he does not want to die.'"

"Paganel," said the Major, "there is much to discuss, but this is not the time. Whether it is logical or not to be eaten, we do not want to be eaten. But how has Christianity not yet destroyed these anthropophagous habits?"

“Do you believe, then, that all New Zealanders are Christians?” said Paganel. “It is only a small minority, and the missionaries are still too often victims of these brutes. Last year, Reverend Walkner was martyred with horrible cruelty.<sup>fn1</sup> The Māori hanged him. Their wives snatched out his eyes. They drank his blood; they ate his brains. And this murder took place in 1865, in Opotiki, a few leagues from Auckland, right under the eyes of the English authorities. My friends, it takes centuries to change the nature of a race of men. What the Māori have been, they will be for a long time yet. Their whole history is made of blood. How many crews have they slaughtered and devoured, from the sailors of Tasman to the sailors of the *Hawes*? And it is not the white man’s flesh that has whetted their appetites. Long before the arrival of the Europeans, the Māori satisfied their appetites at the cost of



The martyrdom of Reverend Walkner

murder. Many travellers who have lived among them have attended cannibal feasts where the guests were driven by the desire to eat a delicacy, like the flesh of a woman or a child!”

“Bah!” said the Major. “Aren’t these accounts just traveller’s tales? We like to come back from dangerous countries telling of narrow escapes from the stomachs of cannibals!”

“I’m not exaggerating,” said Paganel. “Very reliable witnesses have spoken: the missionaries Kendall, and Marsden; Captains Dillon, D’Urville, Laplace, and others. And I believe their stories; I must believe it. Māori are cruel by nature. On the deaths of their leaders, they immolate human victims. They claim that these sacrifices appease the anger of the deceased who could strike the living, and at the same time offer him servants for the next life! But as they eat these posthumous servants, after having massacred them, one is justified in believing that the stomach motivates them more than superstition.”

“However,” said John Mangles. “I imagine that superstition plays a role in the scenes of cannibalism. Therefore, as religion changes, manners will change too.”

“John, my good friend,” said Paganel. “You raise the significant question of the origin of anthropophagy. Is it religion, or is it hunger that has driven men to devour

each other? This is just idle speculation, right now. Why does cannibalism exist? The question is not yet resolved, but it exists. This is an important fact, about which we have only too much reason to be concerned."

Paganel was correct. Anthropophagy has been chronic in New Zealand, as in Fiji and the Torres Strait. Superstition obviously influences these odious customs, but there are cannibals because there are times when game is rare and hunger is great. The savages began by eating human flesh to satisfy the requirements of a rarely satiated appetite. Then, the priests regulated and sanctified these monstrous habits. The meal became a ceremony. That is all.

In the eyes of Māori, nothing is more natural than eating each other. Missionaries often asked them about cannibalism. They asked them why they devoured their brothers. To which the chiefs replied that fish eat fish, that dogs eat men, that men eat dogs, and that dogs eat each other. In their very theogony, legend relates that a god ate another god. With such precedents, how can one resist the pleasure of eating one's neighbour?

Moreover, the Māori claim that by devouring a dead enemy one consumes their spirit. Thus one inherits the other's soul, their strength, and their worth, which are particularly enclosed in the brain. This accounts for the brain being a choice dish, reserved for the most honoured guest.

However, Paganel argued — not without reason — that sensuality, especially hunger, excited the zealots to anthropophagy, and not only the savages of Oceania, but the savages of Europe.

"Yes," he added, "Cannibalism has long reigned among the ancestors of the most civilized peoples, and do not take this personally, especially among the Scots."

"Really?" asked MacNabbs.

"Yes, Major," said Paganel. "When you read some passages by Saint Jerome on the Attacotti of Scotland, you will see what to think of your ancestors! And without going back to pre-historical time, during the reign of Elizabeth — at the very time when Shakespeare was dreaming of his Shylock — was not the Scottish bandit Sawney Bean executed for the crime of cannibalism? And what was his reason for eating human flesh? Religion? No. Hunger."

"Hunger?" asked John Mangles.

"Hunger," replied Paganel, "but above all, the necessity for the carnivore to renew its flesh and blood by the nitrogen contained in animal flesh. The lungs are satisfied with a provision of tuberous and starchy plants. But if you want to be strong and active you must absorb those malleable foods that repair the muscles. As long as the Māori are not members of the society of the legumists, they will eat meat, and for meat, human flesh."

"Why not the meat of animals?" asked Glenarvan.

“Because they have no animals,” said Paganel, “and you must know it, not to excuse, but to explain their habits of cannibalism. Quadrupeds, even birds, are rare in this inhospitable country. So the Māori have always fed on human flesh. There are even ‘seasons to eat men,’ as in civilized countries, seasons for hunting. Then there are the great battues, that is the great wars, and entire tribes are served on the table of the victors.”

“Thus,” says Glenarvan, “according to you, Paganel, cannibalism will not disappear until the day when sheep, oxen, and pigs swarm in the meadows of New Zealand.”

“Of course, my dear Lord, and it will take years for the Māori to get rid of their preference for Māori flesh, for the sons will long enjoy what their fathers loved. According to them, this flesh tastes like pork, but with more aroma. As for white flesh, they are less fond of it, because the whites mix salt with their food, which gives them a peculiar flavour, little liked by the gourmets.”

“They are discerning!” said the Major. “But whether white or black flesh, do they eat it raw or cooked?”

“What does it matter to you, Mr. MacNabbs?” asked Robert.

“Now then, my boy,” replied the Major, seriously, “If I ever end up in the teeth of a cannibal, I prefer to be cooked!”

“Why?”

“To be sure of not being devoured alive!”

“Good, Major!” said Paganel. “But suppose that they cooked you alive?”

“The fact is,” said the Major, “that I would not give a half crown for the choice.”

“In any case, MacNabbs, and if it is agreeable to you,” said Paganel, “the New Zealanders only eat flesh when it is cooked or smoked. They are well informed people on matters of their cuisine. But for me, the idea of being eaten is particularly unpleasant! Finish your existence in the stomach of a savage? *Ugh!*”

“The conclusion of all this,” said John Mangles, “is that we must not fall into their hands. Let us also hope that one day Christianity will have abolished these monstrous customs.”

“Yes, we must hope so,” said Paganel. “But, believe me, a savage who has tasted human flesh will hardly give it up. Judge for yourself by these two stories.”

“Let’s hear the stories, Paganel,” said Glenarvan.

“The first is reported in the chronicles of the Jesuit society in Brazil. A Portuguese missionary once met a very sick Brazilian woman. She had only a few days to live. The Jesuit taught her the truths of Christianity, which the dying woman accepted without discussion. Then, after the food of the soul, he thought to give her the food of the body, and offered his penitent some European delicacies. ‘Alas!’ answered the old woman, ‘My stomach can not support any kind of food. There is only one thing I would like to

taste; but, unfortunately, no one here could procure it for me.’ — ‘What is that?’ asked the Jesuit. — ‘Ah! My son! It’s the hand of a little boy! It seems to me that I could nibble on the little bones with pleasure!’”

“Oh, but does it taste good?” asked Robert.

“My second story will answer you, my boy,” said Paganel. “One day, a missionary reproached a cannibal for this horrible custom, contrary to the divine laws against eating human flesh. ‘And besides, it must taste awful!’ he added. — ‘Ah, Father!’ replied the savage, casting a covetous glance at the missionary, ‘Say that God forbids it, but do not say it’s awful! If only you would try it!’”

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[fn1. Reverend Carl Sylvius Völkner](#) was captured by the Māori, and executed as an English spy (which he arguably was.) — DAS

## Chapter VII

### Where They Land in the Country They Should Have Avoided

THE FACTS REPORTED BY PAGANEL WERE INDISPUTABLE. THE CRUELTY OF THE MĀORI COULD NOT be doubted, so there was danger in landing there. But had the danger been a hundred times greater, it was necessary to face it. John Mangles felt that they should leave the ship destined for imminent destruction without delay. There could be no hesitation between the two dangers, the one certain, the other only probable.

It could not reasonably be expected that they would be rescued by a ship. The *Macquarie* was not on the shipping lanes used to land in New Zealand. They go to Auckland in the north, or New Plymouth in the south, but the stranding had taken place precisely between these two points, on the deserted part of the shores of *Te Ika-a-Māui*. It was a bad coast, dangerous, badly haunted. Ships have no other problem than to avoid it, and if the wind carries them here, to leave again as quickly as possible.

“When will we leave?” asked Glenarvan.

“Tomorrow morning at ten o’clock,” said John Mangles. “The tide will be rising, and it will carry us to the shore.”

The construction of the raft was completed the next morning, February 5<sup>th</sup>, at eight o’clock. John had given all his care to the construction of it. The raft built from the remains of the foremast which had been used to place the anchors was not large enough to carry all the passengers and provisions. They needed a sturdy, steerable vehicle, capable of navigating over nine miles of sea. The main mast alone could provide the materials needed for its construction.

Wilson and Mulrady set to work. The rigging deadeyes were cut away, and the main mast was felled — chopped down with an axe at its base. It fell over the starboard railing which shattered under its impact. The *Macquarie* was then stripped like a hulk.

The lower yards, with the yards from the topsails and topgallants, were sawn and split to make up the main frame of the raft. They were combined with the pieces of the foremast, and all these spars were firmly bound together. John was careful to fill in gaps between the spars with half a dozen empty barrels, to float the raft higher in the water.

On this strong foundation, Wilson laid a latticework floor made of grating. Any waves that broke over the raft would thus drain away, and the passengers could keep dry. Moreover, water barrels, solidly joined, formed a kind of circular bulwark which protected the deck against large waves.

That morning, seeing the favourable wind, John placed the small topgallant’s yard as a mast in the centre of the raft. It was held by stays and equipped with a makeshift sail.

A large oar with a wide blade was attached at the rear, making it possible to steer the rig if the wind gave it sufficient speed.

Such a raft, under the best conditions, could resist the force of the waves. But could it be steered, or brought to the coast at all, if the wind turned? That was the question. They began the loading at nine o'clock.

First they stowed sufficient provisions to last as far as Auckland, so it wouldn't be necessary to rely on the productions of this ungrateful land.

Olbinett's remaining stores, purchased for the crossing of the *Macquarie*, provided a few preserved meats, but little remained of them. They had to rely on the provisions from the brig: mediocre quality sea biscuits, and two barrels of salted fish. The steward was ashamed of it.

These provisions were enclosed in hermetically sealed cases, impervious and impenetrable to sea water, then lowered to the raft and lashed to the foot of the makeshift mast. The weapons and ammunition were put in a safe and dry place. Fortunately, the travellers were well armed with rifles and revolvers.

The small anchor was also loaded in case they were unable to reach the shore on the first tide, and they had to anchor offshore.

At ten o'clock the tide began to make itself felt. The breeze was blowing weakly from the northwest. A slight swell rippled the surface of the sea.

"Are we ready?" asked John Mangles.

"Everything is ready, Captain," answered Wilson.

"*All aboard!*" John shouted.

Lady Helena and Mary Grant descended a coarse rope ladder, and settled at the foot of the mast on the crates of provisions, their companions near them. Wilson took the helm. John placed himself on the sail tackle, and Mulrady cut the mooring that held the raft to the side of the brig.

The sail was deployed, and the raft began to move toward the shore under the double action of the tide and the wind.

The coast was nine miles away — a mediocre distance that a boat with good oars could cover in three hours. But with the raft, it would take longer. If the wind held they might reach the land in a single tide. But if the breeze calmed the ebb tide would prevail, and it would be necessary to anchor to wait for the next tide. That was John Mangles' chief concern, and it filled him with apprehension.

Still, he hoped to succeed. The wind freshened. The tidal flow having commenced at ten o'clock, they must reach the shore by three o'clock, or they would have to anchor to avoid being carried out to sea on the ebb.

The beginning of the crossing went well. Little by little, the black heads of the reefs and the yellow carpets of the sandbanks disappeared under the rising tide and the

waves. Great attention and skill were necessary to avoid these submerged shoals, and to direct a rig that was slow to respond to its rudder.

At noon they were still five miles from the coast. A clear sky allowed them to distinguish the main landmarks. In the northeast stood a mountain over three thousand feet high. It stood out on the horizon in a strange way, and its silhouette mimicked the grimacing profile of a monkey's head, facing the sky. It was Mount Pirongia, precisely located on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, according to their map.

At half-past twelve Paganel pointed out that all the rocks had disappeared under the rising tide.

"Except one," said Lady Helena.

"Where, Madame?" asked Paganel.

"There." Lady Helena pointed to a black dot a mile ahead.

"Indeed," said Paganel. "Let's mark its position, we don't want to strike it, after it is submerged."

"It is precisely in line with the northern ridge of the mountain," said John Mangles. "Wilson, make sure to give it a wide birth."

"Yes, Captain," said the sailor, leaning his full weight on the steering oar at the stern.

In half an hour they had gained half a mile. But, strangely enough, the black spot was still showing above the waves.

John was watching it attentively. He borrowed Paganel's telescope to see it better.

"It is not a reef," he said, after a moment's examination. "It's something floating. It goes up and down with the swell."

"Is it a piece of *Macquarie's* masts?" asked Lady Helena.

"No," said Glenarvan. "No debris could have drifted so far from the ship."

"Wait!" exclaimed John Mangles, "I recognize it. *It's the boat!*"

"The brig's dinghy?" asked Glenarvan.

"Yes, my Lord. The brig's dinghy, capsized!"

"Those poor men!" exclaimed Lady Helena. "They perished!"

"Yes, Madame," said John Mangles. "They must have perished, for in the midst of these breakers, on a stormy sea, on that black night, they were running to certain death."

"May Heaven have pity on them!" murmured Mary Grant.

For a few moments the passengers remained silent. They looked at the frail boat they were approaching. It had evidently capsized four miles from the shore, and of those who had gone in her, no doubt no one had escaped.

"But this boat may be useful," said Glenarvan.

"Indeed," said John Mangles. "Steer for it, Wilson."

The raft changed direction, but the breeze fell gradually, and the boat was not reached before two o'clock.

Mulrady, placed at the front, fended off the impact, and the capsized dinghy was brought alongside.

“Empty?” asked John Mangles.

“Yes, Captain,” said the sailor. “The boat is empty, and its seams have been opened. It won’t be any use to us.”

“No use at all?” asked MacNabbs.

“None,” said John Mangles. “It’s only good for firewood.”

“I regret it,” said Paganel. “For that dinghy could have taken us to Auckland.”

“We must resign ourselves, Mr. Paganel,” said John Mangles. “Moreover, on a rough sea, I still prefer our raft to that fragile boat. It took only a small blow to tear it to pieces! So, my Lord, we have nothing left to do here.”

“When you’re ready, John,” said Glenarvan.

“Make way, Wilson,” said the young Captain. “Straight for the coast.”

The tide continued to rise for about an hour. They crossed a distance of two more miles. But the breeze fell almost entirely and tended to swing around away from the shore. The raft remained motionless. Soon it began to drift toward the open sea under the pressure of the ebb. John could not hesitate for a moment.

“Drop the anchor!” he ordered.

Mulrady had been expecting the order, and was ready. He dropped the anchor in five fathoms of water. The raft retreated two fathoms before the hawser pulled taut. They furled their makeshift sail, and settled down for a long wait.

Indeed, the tide was not to turn again before nine o’clock in the evening, and since John Mangles did not care to sail during the night, he planned to stay anchored there until five o’clock the next morning. The land was in sight just three miles off.

The waves, raised by a strong swell, seemed to be moving constantly toward the shore. Glenarvan, when he learned that the whole night would be spent on board the raft, asked John why he was not taking advantage of the waves to carry them closer to land.

“Your Honour is deceived by an optical illusion,” said the young Captain. “Although the swell seems to carry the water landward, the water doesn’t move at all. It’s a balancing of liquid molecules, nothing more. Throw a piece of wood in the middle of



The capsized dinghy was brought alongside

these waves, and you will see that it will remain stationary, except for the motion from the ebb tide. We must remain patient.”

“And dinner?” asked the Major.

Olbinett drew a few pieces of dry meat and a dozen biscuits from a box of provisions. The steward blushed to offer his masters such a small menu, but it was accepted with a good grace, even by the ladies, who had not much appetite owing to the violent motions of the raft.

This motion, produced by the jerking of the raft on its cable in the swells, was very tiring for all. The raft was incessantly tossed on the small and capricious waves as violently as if it was striking an underwater rock. It was sometimes hard to believe that they weren't aground. The hawser was stretched taut, and every half an hour John pulled in a fathom to ease it. Without this precaution, it would inevitably have broken, and the raft, cast adrift, would have been lost.

John's apprehensions was easily understood. His cable could break, or his anchor slip, and in either case, they would be in trouble.

The night was approaching. Already, the disc of the sun, blood red, and flattened by refraction, was disappearing behind the horizon. The last lines of water shone in the west and glittered like sheets of silver. To that side, everything was sky and water, except for one clearly marked point: the hulk of the *Macquarie* motionless on its shoal.

The short twilight delayed the onset of darkness by a few minutes, and soon the shore, which bounded the horizons of the east and the north, melted into the night.

The shipwrecked party were left in an anxious situation on this narrow raft, lost in the shadows of night. Some fell into disturbed slumber and bad dreams; the others could not find an hour of sleep. At daybreak, everyone was drained by the fatigues of the night.

With the rising tide, the wind resumed from the open sea. It was six o'clock in the morning. Time was pressing. John had arranged everything to get a quick start. He ordered that the anchor be weighed. But the anchor



The night was approaching

flukes, under the shaking of the cable, had deeply embedded in the sand. Without a windlass, and even with the tackle Wilson rigged, it was impossible to pull it off.

Half an hour passed in futile attempts. John — impatient to sail — had the line cut, abandoning his anchor and taking away any opportunity to moor in an emergency, or if this tide was not enough to reach the coast. But he did not want to wait any longer, and an axe delivered the raft to the breeze — helped by a current of two knots.

The sail was spread. They drifted slowly toward the shore which was fading into greyish masses against a background of sky illuminated by the rising sun. The reefs were deftly avoided and rounded. But, under the uncertain breeze from the open sea, the raft did not seem to approach the shore. How difficult was it to land on this dangerous shore?

At nine o'clock, the coast was less than a mile away. The breakers bristled on a steep shore. It was necessary to discover a practicable landing there. The wind gradually weakened and fell completely. The sail flapped uselessly against the mast. John had it furled. The tide alone carried the raft to the land, but they could no longer steer it, and enormous bands of seaweed slowed their progress.

At ten o'clock the raft was almost stationary, three cables from the shore. With no anchor, were they going to be pushed back by the ebb? John, his hands clenched, his heart devoured with anxiety, cast a fierce glance at this unapproachable land.

Fortunately — fortunately this time — they felt a shock. The raft stopped. It had run aground on a sandy bottom, twenty-five fathoms from the coast.

Glenarvan, Robert, Wilson, and Mulrady threw themselves into the water. The raft was moored to some neighbouring rocks. The ladies, carried from arm to arm, reached the shore without having wetted a fold of their dresses, and soon all, with arms and provisions, had at last set foot on these formidable shores of New Zealand.



The ladies, carried from arm to arm

## Chapter VIII

### The Present of the Country They Were In

**G**LENARVAN WOULD HAVE LIKED TO BEGIN FOLLOWING THE COAST TO AUCKLAND WITHOUT losing an hour, but the sky had filled with heavy clouds as the morning advanced, and at eleven o'clock — after they had unloaded the raft — the clouds burst in violent rain. Instead of setting off, they had to seek shelter.

Luckily, Wilson discovered a sea cave in the basaltic rocks of the shore. The travellers took refuge there with their arms and provisions. There was a whole crop of dried kelp that had been washed up by the waves. It made a natural bedding. A few pieces of wood were piled up at the entrance of the cave, then lit, and everyone dried themselves as well as possible.

John hoped that the duration of this torrential rain would be in inverse proportion to its violence. This was not to be. The hours passed without bringing a change in the state of the sky. The wind freshened toward noon and increased to a squall. This contretemps would have tried the most patient of men, but what could they do? It would have been folly to brave such a storm without any vehicle. Besides, it should only take a few days to reach Auckland, and a delay of twelve hours would not be detrimental to the expedition — if they didn't encounter any natives.

During this forced stop, the conversation turned to the history of the war to which New Zealand was now the theatre. To understand and appreciate the gravity of the circumstances in which the castaways of the *Macquarie* were thrown, it was necessary to know the history of this struggle which roiled the island of *Te Ika-a-Māui*.

Since the arrival of Abel Tasman in Cook Strait on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1642, the Māori, often visited by European ships, had remained free in their independent islands. No European power thought of seizing this archipelago which commands the seas of the Pacific. Only the missionaries, established at various points, brought the benefits of Christian civilization to these new countries. Some of them, and especially the Anglicans, were preparing the Māori chiefs to bend under the yoke of England. The latter were skillfully manipulated into signing a letter addressed to Queen Victoria to demand her protection. But the most clear-sighted foresaw the foolishness of this step, and one of them, after applying the image of his tattoo on the letter, uttered these prophetic words: "We have lost our country; henceforth it is no longer ours. Soon the stranger will come to seize it and we will be his slaves."

On January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1840, the corvette *Herald* arrived at the Bay of Islands, in the north of *Te Ika-a-Māui*. Captain Hobson landed at the village of Kororareka. The inhabitants

were invited to meet in a general assembly in the Protestant church. There the titles given to Captain Hobson by the Queen of England were read.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of February,<sup>fn1</sup> the principal Māori chiefs were summoned to an English residence at the village of Paihia. Captain Hobson sought their submission, saying that the Queen had sent troops and ships to protect them, that their rights were guaranteed, that their freedom remained intact. They kept ownership of their land, but henceforth they would only be allowed to sell it to the British Government.<sup>fn2</sup>

The majority of the chiefs, finding the protection too expensive, refused to acquiesce. But the promises and the presents had more power over their wild natures than the great words of Captain Hobson, and many of them did sign the treaty. From this year, 1840, until

the day the *Duncan* left the Firth of Clyde, what happened? Nothing was unknown to Jacques Paganel, and he was ready to instruct his companions about all of it.

“Madame,” he answered Lady Helena’s questions, “I will repeat what I have already said, that the New Zealanders are a brave people who, having yielded for a moment, resist surrendering every additional foot to the English invaders. The Māori tribes are organized like the ancient clans of Scotland. There are many great families under one chief, who is very jealous of his prerogatives. The men of this race are proud and brave, some tall, with smooth hair, similar to the Maltese, or Jews of Baghdad, others smaller, stocky, like mulattoes, but all are robust, haughty and warlike. They had a famous chef named Hihi, a veritable Vercingetorix,<sup>fn3</sup> so you will not be surprised if the war with the English is chronic in the territory of *Te Ika-a-Māui*, where William Thompson<sup>fn4</sup> leads the famous tribes of Waikato in defence of their lands.”

“But aren’t the English masters of the principal ports of New Zealand?” asked John Mangles.

“No doubt, my dear John,” replied Paganel. “From 1840 to 1862, after Captain Hobson — who later became Governor of the island — took possession, nine colonies were founded in the most advantageous positions. From there, nine provinces were established, four in the North Island: Auckland, Taranaki, Wellington, and Hawke’s Bay;



Conversation in the grotto

five in the South Island: Nelson, Marlborough, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland, with a general population of 180,346, as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1864. Important cities and commercial enterprises have risen all over. When we arrive at Auckland you will admire without reservation the state of affairs in this southern Corinth dominating its narrow isthmus, cast as a bridge to the Pacific Ocean, and which already has twelve thousand inhabitants. To the west, New Plymouth; to the east, Ahuriri; and to the south, Wellington are already flourishing and busy cities. On the island of *Te Waipounamu*, you would be spoiled for choice between Nelson, this Montpellier of the Antipodes, the garden of New Zealand; Picton, on the Cook Strait; Christchurch; Invercargill; and Dunedin in the opulent province of Otago, where gold-diggers come from all over the world. And note that these are not assemblages of a few huts, an agglomeration of a few wild families, but real cities, with ports, cathedrals, banks, docks, botanical gardens, museums of natural history, acclimatization societies, newspapers, hospitals, charitable institutions, philosophical institutes, Freemasons' lodges, clubs, choral societies, theatres and palaces of universal exposition, neither more nor less than in London or Paris! And if my memory is faithful this past year — and perhaps still, at the moment when I speak to you — the industrial products of the whole globe are being exhibited in a country of cannibals!"

"What! Despite the war with the natives?" asked Lady Helena.

"The English, Madame, are little concerned about the war!" said Paganel. "They fight and they exhibit at the same time. It does not disturb them. They even build railways under the rifles of Māori. In the province of Auckland, the Drury Railway and the Mere Mere Railway cut through lands occupied by the rebels. I would wager that the workers are shooting from the tops of the locomotives."

"But where is this endless war?" asked John Mangles.

"Six months have passed since we left Europe," said Paganel, "I can not know what has happened since our departure, except for a few facts which I have read in the papers of Maryborough and Seymour during our crossing of Australia. But at that time there was still a lot of fighting on the island of *Te Ika-a-Māui*."

"When did this war commence?" asked Mary Grant.

"You mean 'recommence,' my dear Miss," said Paganel. "The first insurrection took place in 1845. The current war began toward the end of 1863, but the Māori were preparing to shake off the yoke of English rule long before then. The Māori King Movement had an active campaign to elect a Māori leader. They wanted to make old Potatau their king, and his village between the rivers Waikato and Waipa the capital of their new kingdom. Potatau was an old man, more astute than bold, but he had an energetic and intelligent Prime Minister, a descendant of the tribe of those Ngatihahuas who lived in the Auckland isthmus before the foreign occupation. This minister, William

Thompson, became the soul of the War of Independence. He skilfully organized Māori troops. Under his inspiration a Taranaki chief united the scattered tribes in common cause; another Waikato chief formed the Land League Association, a real league for the public good, designed to prevent the natives from selling their land to the English Government. Rallies took place, as in the civilized countries, which are preludes to revolution. British newspapers began to pick up these alarming symptoms, and the Government was gravely concerned about the Land League's actions. In short, spirits were high, the dam ready to burst. All that was missing was the spark, or rather the collision of two interests to produce it."

"And this spark?" asked Glenarvan.

"It took place in 1860," said Paganel, "in the province of Taranaki, on the south-west coast of *Te Ika-a-Māui*. A native owned six hundred acres of land in the vicinity of New Plymouth. He sold them to the English Government. But when surveyors came to measure the purchased land Chief Kingi protested, and in the month of March he erected a *pā*, defended by high palisades, on the disputed land. A few days later, Colonel Gold removed this camp at the head of his troops, and those were the opening shots of the national war."

"Are the Māori numerous?" asked John Mangles.

"The Māori population has been greatly reduced in this past century," said the geographer. "In 1769, Cook estimated it at 400,000. In 1845, the census of the native protectorate lowered it to 109,000. The civilizing massacres, diseases, and fire water have further decimated it, but there are still 90,000 natives in the two islands, 30,000 of whom are warriors who will keep the European troops in check for a long time."

"Has the revolt succeeded so far?" asked Lady Helena.

"Yes, Madame, and the English themselves have often admired the courage of the New Zealanders. They engage in partisan warfare, fielding skirmishing parties, attacking small detachments, and plundering the fields of the colonists. This was not the sort of campaign, beating the bush for small bands of Māori, that General Cameron wanted to wage. In 1863, after a long and deadly struggle, the Māori occupied a large fortified position on the upper Waikato at the end of a chain of steep hills, and protected by three lines of defence. Prophets called for the entire Māori population to come to the defence of their land and promised the extermination of *Pākehā*, that is white people. Three thousand men were assembled for the fight under the command of General Cameron, who no longer gave any quarter to the Māori since the barbarous murder of Captain Sprent. Bloody battles took place. Some lasted twelve hours without the Māori yielding to the European canons. It was the fierce tribe of Waikatos, under the command of William Thompson, who formed the nucleus of the independent army. This native general at first commanded 2,500 warriors, and his forces grew to 8,000 when subjects of

Shongi and Heki, two formidable leaders, came to his aid. Even the women, in this holy war, took part in the cruelest hardships.

“But the right person does not always have the right weapons. After deadly fighting, General Cameron managed to subdue the Waikato region, but it was an empty and depopulated district, because the Māori escaped him on all sides. There were admirable exploits of war. Four hundred Māori, besieged in the Orakan fortress without food or water by a thousand English troops under the command of Brigadier General Carey, refused to surrender. Then one day, at noon, they made their escape through the decimated 40<sup>th</sup> regiment, and fled into the marshes.”

“But has this bloody war been ended by the submission of the Waikato district?” asked John Mangles.

“No, my friend,” said Paganel. “The English have resolved to march on the province of Taranaki and to besiege Mataitawa, the fortress of William Thompson. But they will not seize it without considerable losses. At the moment of leaving Paris, I had learned that the Governor and the General had just accepted the submission of the Taranga tribes, and that they left them three quarters of their lands. It was also said that the principal leader of the rebellion, William Thompson, was considering surrender; but the Australian newspapers did not confirm this news; on the contrary. It is therefore probable that at this very moment the resistance is being organized with new vigour.”

“And according to your opinion, Paganel,” said Glenarvan, “this struggle would be in the provinces of Taranaki and Auckland?”

“I think so.”

“That very province where the shipwreck of the *Macquarie* has taken place?”

“Precisely. We landed a few miles above Kawhia Harbour, where the Māori National Flag must still fly.”

“Then we’d be wise to go north,” said Glenarvan.

“Very wise, indeed,” said Paganel. “New Zealanders are enraged against Europeans, especially against the English. So let’s avoid falling into their hands.”

“Perhaps we will meet some detachment of European troops, if we’re lucky?” said Lady Helena.

“Perhaps, Madame,” said the geographer, “but I do not expect to. Isolated detachments do not readily beat the country, where the slightest bush, the frailest shrub might hide a skilful skirmisher. I do not count on us receiving an escort of soldiers from the 40<sup>th</sup> regiment. But there are some missions established on the west coast that we will follow, and we can move in stages from one to another until we reach Auckland. We might also try following the route which Dr. von Hochstetter followed while tracing the course of the Waikato.”

“Was he an explorer, Monsieur Paganel?” asked Robert Grant.

“Yes, my boy, a member of the scientific commission aboard the Austrian frigate *La Novara* during her circumnavigation voyage in 1858.”

“Monsieur Paganel,” continued Robert, whose eyes glittered at the thought of great geographical expeditions. “Does New Zealand have famous explorers like Burke and Stuart in Australia?”

“Some, my child, such as Dr. Hooker, Professor Brizard, naturalists Dieffenbach and Julius Haast; but, though many of them have paid for their adventurous passion, they are less famous than Australian or African travellers.”

“And you know their stories?” asked the young Grant.

“*Parbleu*, my boy! I see you want to know as much as I do, so I’ll tell you.”

“Thank you, Monsieur Paganel. I am listening to you.”

“And we too, are listening to you,” said Lady Helena. “This is not the first time that bad weather has forced us to learn. Tell us all, Monsieur Paganel.”

“As you wish, Madame,” replied the geographer, “but my story will not be long. It is not a matter of those bold explorers who were fighting hand-to-hand with the Australian Minotaur, here. New Zealand is too small a country to defend itself against human investigations. So my heroes have not been explorers, strictly speaking, but simple tourists — victims of the most prosaic accidents.”

“And their names?” asked Mary Grant.

“The surveyor Witcombe, and Charlton Howitt, the same man who found the remains of Burke,<sup>fn5</sup> of that memorable expedition that I told you about during our stop on the banks of the Wimmera. Witcombe and Howitt each commanded two explorations on the island of *Te Waipounamu*. Both of them left Christchurch in the early months of 1863 to discover different passes through the northern mountains of the province of Canterbury.

“Howitt, crossing the chain on the northern limit of the province, established his headquarters on Brunner Lake. Witcombe, on the other hand, found a pass in the Rakaia Valley which led to the east of Mount Tyndall. Witcombe had a travelling companion, Jacob Louper, who published his tale of travel and disaster in the *Lyttleton Times*.

“As far as I remember, on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1863, the two explorers were at the foot of a glacier where the Rakaia River has its source. They climbed to the summit of the mountain, and engaged in a search for a new pass. The next day, Witcombe and Louper — exhausted with fatigue and cold — camped in heavy snow at four thousand feet above sea level. For seven days they wandered in the mountains, at the bottoms of valleys whose sheer walls delivered no way out. Often without fire, sometimes without food: their sugar changed into syrup, their biscuit reduced to a damp paste. Their clothes and their blankets dripping with rain, devoured by insects, they made three miles on good days, and on bad days scarcely gained two hundred yards. Finally, on the

29<sup>th</sup> of April, they found a Māori hut, and a few handfuls of potatoes in its garden. This was the last meal the two friends shared together.

“In the evening they reached the shore of the sea near the mouth of Taramakau. They had to cross to its right bank, in order to go north toward the Gray river. The Taramakau was deep and wide. Louper, after an hour’s search, found two small damaged boats which they repaired as best they could and fixed to each other. The two explorers embarked toward evening, but in the middle of the current, the canoes filled with water. Witcombe swam back to the left bank. Jacob Louper, who could not swim, remained clinging to the boats. This was what saved him, but not without many hardships. The unfortunate man was pushed toward the breakers. A first wave plunged him to the bottom of the sea. A second brought him back to the surface. He was struck against the rocks. The darkest night had come. The rain was falling in torrents. Louper, his body bloody and swollen with sea water, was



Jacob Louper remained clinging to the boat

buffeted by the waves for several hours. At length the canoe struck the mainland, and the castaway, deprived of his senses, was thrown back on the shore.

“The next day, at dawn, he dragged himself to a spring, and discovered that the current had brought him back to within a mile of where he had started in his attempt to cross the river. He got up, followed the coast, and soon found the unfortunate Witcombe, his body half buried, face down in the mud. He was dead. With just his hands Louper dug a pit in the middle of the sands and buried the body of his companion. Two days later, he was dying of hunger when he was found by some friendly Māori — there are some — and on May 4<sup>th</sup> he reached Charlton Howitt’s camp at Lake Brunner. Six weeks later, Howitt was going to perish himself, like the ill-fated Witcombe.”

“It seems that these catastrophes are tied together,” said John Mangles. “That a fatal chain unites the explorers, and that they all perish when a centre link breaks.”

“You are right, friend John,” said Paganel, “and I have often made this remark. By what law of solidarity was Howitt led to succumb in almost the same circumstances? It can not be said. Charlton Howitt had been hired by Mr. Wyde, the head of Government,

to survey a horse-friendly road from the Hurunui plains to the mouth of Taramakau. He left on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1863, accompanied by five men. He carried out his mission with incomparable intelligence, and a road forty miles long was pierced to an unfordable point of Taramakau. Howitt then returned to Christchurch and, in spite of the approaching winter, he asked to continue his work. Mr. Wyde consented. Howitt went back to supply his camp for the bad season. It was at this time that he met Jacob Louper. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, Howitt and two of his men, Robert Little and Henri Mullis, left the camp. They crossed Lake Brunner. They have never been seen since. Their swamped canoe was found stranded on the shore. A search for them went on for nine weeks, but to no avail, and it is evident that those wretches, who could not swim, drowned in the waters of the lake.”

“But why shouldn’t they be safe and sound among some Māori tribe?” asked Lady Helena. “Isn’t there at least some hope that they have lived?”

“Alas! No, Madame,” said Paganel. “A year after the catastrophe, in August of 1864, they had not reappeared.” He went on in a low murmur “And when one has been missing for a year in New Zealand, one is irrevocably lost!”

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fn1. The Hetzel edition has the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi take place on January 5<sup>th</sup>, which is contradicted both by history, and the date given in the previous paragraph. The interpretation of this treaty has been, and continues to be, a major bone of contention between the Māori, and the European settlers of New Zealand as the treaty was bilingual with copies written in both English and Māori, and the two versions don’t always say the same thing. — DAS

fn2. Verne has the Māori giving up all their property rights, which wasn’t the case (in either the English or Māori versions) though the interpretation of the clause on just who the Māori could sell to would become a major sticking point later. — DAS

fn3. Vercingetorix was a Gallic king who united the Gauls in a revolt against Roman rule in the first century BC. — DAS

fn4. Wiremu Tamihana, anglicized as “William Thompson”, was more the diplomat and publicist of the Māori King Movement than it’s military leader. Throughout the conflict he continued to attempt to come to a negotiated settlement with the English. The military leader was Rewi Maniapoto. — DAS

fn5. Paganel is mistaken here. Charlton Howitt was the brother of Alfred Howitt, who found the remains of the Burke and Wills expedition. — DAS

## Chapter IX

### Thirty Miles to the North

ON THE 7<sup>TH</sup> OF FEBRUARY, AT SIX O’CLOCK IN THE MORNING, GLENARVAN GAVE THE SIGNAL TO set out. The rain had stopped during the night. The sky, overcast with thin greyish clouds, stopped the rays of the sun three miles above the ground. The moderate temperature made it possible to face the trials of a journey by day.

Paganel had measured the distance between Kawhia Point and Auckland on the map as eighty miles. It would be an eight-day trip, at ten miles a day. But instead of following the winding shores of the sea, it seemed to him a better idea to head for the village of Ngaruawahia, at the confluence of the Waikato and Waipa rivers, thirty miles away. The Overland Mail Track — more a trail than a road, but passable to carriages — passed through it on its route from Napier, on Hawke’s Bay, to Auckland. From there it would be easy to reach Drury and rest in an excellent hotel that the geologist Dr. von Hochstetter particularly recommended.

The travellers, each carrying a share of their provisions, began to follow the shore of Aotea Bay. As a precaution, they stayed close together, and they watched the undulating plains to the east with their loaded rifles at the ready. Paganel, with his excellent map in hand, took professional pleasure in noting the accuracy of its every detail.

During part of the day the little troop walked over sand composed of fragments of bivalve shells and cuttlebone mixed with magnetite and hematite iron oxides. A magnet held close to the ground would instantly be covered with brilliant crystals.

On the shore, caressed by the rising tide, were a few marine animals that made no effort to flee. The seals, with their rounded heads, broad, curving foreheads, and expressive eyes, presented a sweet and even affectionate appearance. It was easily understood why fables romanticized these curious inhabitants of the waves, making them out to be enchanting sirens — though their true voices were an inharmonious growl. These animals, numerous on the coasts of New Zealand, are the object of an active trade. They are hunted for their oil and fur.

Between them were three or four blue-grey elephant seals, twenty-five or thirty feet long. These huge amphibians, lazily stretched out on thick beds of giant kelp, raised their flexible trunks and grimly waggled the rough bristles of their long and twisted moustaches: curly corkscrews like the beard of a dandy. Robert was amusing himself by contemplating this interesting world, when he exclaimed “Hey! Those seals are eating pebbles!”

And indeed, many of these animals were greedily swallowing the stones from the shore.

"*Parbleu!* You're right!" said Paganel. "It can not be denied that these animals graze the pebbles of the shore."

"A strange food," said Robert, "and difficult to digest!"

"It's not for food, my boy, but for feeding itself, that these amphibians are swallowing stones. It is a way to increase their specific gravity to easily dive to the bottom of the sea. Once back on the land, they will regurgitate these stones without further ceremony. You will soon see these seals dive under the waves."

Soon, indeed, half a dozen sufficiently weighted seals dragged themselves down the shore and disappeared into the water. But Glenarvan could not waste precious time waiting for their return to watch the unloading operation and, to Paganel's great regret, the interrupted march was resumed.

At ten o'clock, they stopped for lunch at the foot of large basalt rocks, arranged like Celtic dolmens on the edge of the sea. An oyster bed provided a large quantity of these molluscs. These oysters were small and unpleasant tasting, but following Paganel's advice, Olbinett cooked them on hot coals, and thus prepared they were eaten by the dozens and dozens for the duration of the meal.

After finishing their lunch, they continued to follow the bay shore. On its jagged rocks, at the tips of the sharp peaks at the tops of its cliffs, a whole world of sea birds — frigates, boobies, gulls, and large immobile albatrosses — had taken refuge. Ten miles had been crossed without difficulty or fatigue by four o'clock in the afternoon. The ladies asked to continue their walk until evening. At this point it was necessary to divert their path away from the sea, around the foot of some mountains which appeared to the north, in order to reach the Waipa valley.

From a distance the ground looked like an immense meadow that stretched as far as the eye could see, and promised an easy walk, but when the travellers arrived at the edge of these green fields, they were very disillusioned. The pasture gave way to a thicket of bushes with small white flowers intertwined with the tall and innumerable ferns that the lands of New Zealand are particularly fond of. It was necessary to cut a path through these woody stems, which was hard work. However, they had passed



Seals, with their rounded heads

around the first ridges of the Hakarimata Ranges by eight o'clock in the evening, and they stopped to camp for the night.

After a trek of fourteen miles, it was permissible to think of rest. Besides, there was neither a wagon nor a tent, so it was at the foot of the magnificent Norfolk pines that everyone prepared to sleep. They had plenty of blankets from which to improvise their beds.

Glenarvan took rigorous precautions for the night. They took turns keeping watch until daybreak, in well armed pairs. No fire was lit. Such glowing barriers are useful against wild beasts, but New Zealand has no tigers, lions, or bears — no ferocious animals of any sort. The New Zealanders, make up for the lack. A fire would only serve to attract such two-legged jaguars.

The night passed well, except for a few sand fleas, *ngamu* in the native language, the sting of which was very disagreeable, and an audacious family of rats that nibbled on their provision sacks.

The next day, February 8<sup>th</sup>, Paganel awoke feeling more confident and almost reconciled with the country. The Māori, whom he particularly feared, had not appeared, and these ferocious cannibals had not even threatened him in his dreams. He expressed his satisfaction to Glenarvan.

"I think that this little walk will be completed without difficulty," he said. "Tonight we will have reached the confluence of the Waipa and the Waikato, and from there, meeting the natives is to be little feared on the road to Auckland."

"How far do we have to go, to reach the confluence?" asked Glenarvan.

"Fifteen miles. About the same as we did yesterday."

"But we will be very delayed if these endless forests continue to obstruct our way."

"On the contrary," said Paganel. "We will soon reach the Waipa, and there shouldn't be any obstacle to us following its banks."

"Let's go, then," said Glenarvan, who saw that everyone was ready to set out.

The forest further delayed their progress during the first hours of the day. Neither carriage nor horses could have passed where the travellers passed. They did not regret not having their Australian wagon. Until the day when motorized roads are built through its forests, it will only be practical for pedestrians to travel in New Zealand. The ferns, whose species are innumerable, compete with the same obstinacy as the Māori in defence of their native soil.

The little troop experienced a thousand difficulties in crossing the plains from which the Hakarimata Ranges arise, but they reached the banks of the Waipa before noon, and from there had no troubles following the river northward.

It was a charming valley, crossed with many small creeks of fresh, pure water which ran happily under the shrubs. According to the botanist Hooker, two thousand new species of plants have been discovered in New Zealand, of which five hundred were first described by him. The flowers are rare, of subdued colouring, and annual plants are scarce, but there are plenty of *Filicophyta*, grasses, and *Apiaceae*.

Some tall trees rose here and there out of the undergrowth of dark greenery: *Metrosideros* with scarlet flowers, Norfolk pines, *Thujas* with vertically compressed twigs, and the *rimu*, which resembled the sad European cypress trees. All these trunks were surrounded by many varieties of ferns. Birds fluttered and chatted between the branches of the tall trees, on the tops of the shrubs: cockatoos; green *kākāriki*, with a red band under its throat; the *taupo*, adorned with a fine pair of black whiskers; and the *kaka*, a parrot as large as a duck, with bright red plumage on the undersides of its wings, which naturalists have dubbed the *Nestor meridionalis*.

The Major and Robert were able, without leaving the group, to shoot some snipe and partridge, which were resting under the low forest of the plains. Olbinett, in order to save time, took care of plucking them while he walked.

Paganel, for his part, was less sensitive to the nutritional qualities of the game. He would have liked to catch some particular species of bird in New Zealand. The curiosity of the naturalist overcame the appetite of the traveller. His memory, if it did not deceive him, reminded him of the strange ways of the *tui* of the natives, sometimes called a "mockingbird" for its ceaseless cackling, and sometimes "parson bird" because it has a white collar at the neck of its black cassock-like plumage.

"This bird," Paganel told the Major, "becomes so fat during the winter that he becomes ill. He can not fly anymore. Then, he tears his chest with pecks, in order to get rid of his fat and make himself lighter. Does not this seem strange to you, MacNabbs?"

"So strange," said the Major, "that I do not believe a word of it!"

Paganel, to his great regret, could not find a single example of these birds to show the incredulous Major the bloody scarifications of their breasts. [fn1](#)

But he was happier with a strange animal, which — under the pursuit of man, cat, and dog — fled to the uninhabited country and is quickly disappearing from the fauna of New Zealand. Robert, searching like a ferret, discovered a pair of wingless and tailless hens in a nest formed of intertwined roots. They had four toes on their feet, a long woodcock beak and white hairy feathers all over their bodies. Strange animals which seemed to mark a transition from oviparous to mammalian animals.

It was the New Zealand *kiwi*, *Apteryx australis* to naturalists, which feeds indiscriminately on larvae, insects, worms, and seeds. This bird is unique to the country. It has barely been introduced into the zoos of Europe. Its half-drawn form, and its comic movement have always attracted the attention of travellers, and during the great

exploration in Oceania of the *Astrolabe* and the *Zealous*, Dumont D'Urville was mainly charged by the *Academy of Sciences* to bring back a specimen of these singular birds. But despite the rewards promised to the natives, he could not procure a single living kiwi.

Paganel, happy with such a good fortune, tied together his two hens and carried them off bravely with the intention of paying homage to the *Jardin des Plantes* of Paris. In his mind's eye, the confident geographer already pictured the seductive inscription "Given by M. Jacques Paganel," on the most beautiful cage of the establishment!

The little troop descended the course of the Waipa without difficulty. The country was deserted, there was no trace of natives, and no paths indicating the presence of man in these plains. The waters of the river flowed between high bushes or glided down gentle slopes. Their eyes wandered over the small mountains

that bordered the valley in the east. With their strange shapes, their profiles drowned in a deceptive mist, they looked like gigantic animals, worthy of antediluvian times. They could have been a whole herd of enormous cetaceans, caught by a sudden petrification. Their tormented masses emanated an essentially volcanic character. New Zealand is the recent product of a plutonian work. Its emergence from the waters is constantly ongoing. Some places have risen by a fathom in the past twenty years. Fire still runs through her bowels, shakes her, convulses her, and escapes through the mouths of many geysers and the craters of volcanoes.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, they had happily covered nine miles. According to Paganel's map, they were within five miles of the confluence of the Waipa and the Waikato where they would meet the road to Auckland. They could camp there for the night. Two or three days would be enough to cover the remaining fifty miles which separated them from the capital. If Glenarvan met the postal carriage which provides a bi-monthly service between Auckland and Hawke's Bay, it could be done in as little as eight hours.

"So," said Glenarvan, "we will still be forced to camp next night?"

"Yes," said Paganel, "but for the last time, I hope."



The New Zealand kiwi

“Good, because this is very hard for Lady Helena and Mary Grant.”

“And they endure it without complaint,” said John Mangles. “But if I’m not mistaken, Mr. Paganel, you mentioned a village at the meeting of the two rivers?”

“Yes,” said the geographer. “Here it is marked on Johnston’s map. It is Ngaruawahia, about two miles below the confluence.”

“Well, could not we stay there for the night? Lady Helena and Miss Grant would not hesitate to go two miles more to find a suitable hotel.”

“Hotel?” cried Paganel. “A hotel in a Māori village? You won’t even find an inn or a cabaret! This village is only a group of native huts, and far from seeking asylum there, I think we would be well advised to avoid it.”

“Always your fears, Paganel!” said Glenarvan.

“My dear Lord, it is better to distrust than trust the Māori. I do not know their relationship with the English: if the insurrection is suppressed, or victorious, or if we will land in the middle of the war. But modesty aside, people of our quality would be a good catch, and I do not wish to experience the hospitality of the Māori. So I think it’s wise to avoid the village of Ngaruawahia, to turn away from it, to flee any meeting with the natives. Once in Drury it will be different, and there our valiant companions can recover at their ease from the trials of the journey.”

The opinion of the geographer prevailed. Lady Helena preferred to spend one last night in the open air rather than expose her companions to danger. Neither she, nor Mary Grant asked to stop, and they continued to follow the banks of the river.

Two hours later, the first shadows of evening began to descend from the mountains. Before disappearing under the horizon in the west, the sun had darted some late rays through a sudden gap in the clouds. The distant summits to the east were reddened by the last fires of the day, like a parting salute to the weary travellers.

Glenarvan and his people hurried on. They knew the brevity of the twilight in this already elevated latitude, and how quickly the darkness of night came on. They wanted to reach the junction of the two rivers before deep darkness. But a thick fog rose from the ground, and made seeing their way very difficult.

Fortunately, hearing replaced sight which the darkness had rendered useless. Soon a more accentuated murmur of the waters indicated the meeting of the two rivers in the same bed. At eight o’clock the little troop arrived at the point where the waters of the Waipa merged into the Waikato with a roaring turbulence of waves.

“The Waikato is here,” said Paganel, “and the Auckland road goes up along its right bank.”

“We will see it tomorrow,” said the Major. “Let’s camp here. It seems to me that those dark shadows over there are a small thicket of trees which might as well have been put there expressly to shelter us. Supper and sleep.”

“Supper,” said Paganel. “But biscuits and dry meat, without lighting a fire. We have arrived here incognito. Let us try to remain so! Fortunately, this fog makes us invisible.”

They reached the thicket of trees, and everyone conformed to the wishes of the geographer. They ate their cold supper quietly, and soon a deep sleep fell upon the travellers, tired by a march of fifteen miles.

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[fn1.](#) And if he had, the Major’s scepticism of this story about the *tui* would have been confirmed. — DAS

## Chapter X

### The National River

THE NEXT DAY, AT DAWN, A DENSE MIST CREPT HEAVILY ON THE WATERS OF THE RIVER. SOME OF the vapour which saturated the air had condensed over the cool water, and covered the surface with a thick fog. But the rays of the sun soon pierced these banks of mist, and they melted away under the gaze of the radiant star. The riversides emerged from the haze, and the course of the Waikato appeared in all its morning beauty.

A finely elongated tongue of land, bristling with shrubs, came to an end in a point at the meeting of the two currents. The more chaotic waters of the Waipa drove a quarter of a mile into the waters of the Waikato before they became confused; but that river, powerful and calm, soon checked the angry waters, and dragged them peacefully along its course to the Pacific Ocean.

When the vapours rose, a boat appeared going up the current of the Waikato. It was a canoe, seventy feet long, five broad, three deep, the front raised like a Venetian gondola, and it was carved entirely from a single trunk of a *kahikatea* fir. A bed of dry fern covered the bottom. Eight paddlers at the front made it fly on the surface of the water, while a man, seated at the stern, directed it by means of a steering oar.

This man was a tall native, about forty-five years old, with broad chest, and muscular arms and legs. His bulging forehead, furrowed with thick creases, violent expression, and sinister countenance, gave him a formidable appearance.

He was a high ranking Māori leader. This could be seen in the thin, tight tattooing that streaked his body and face. Two black spirals swept out like wings from his aquiline nose to encircle his yellow eyes, and meet on his forehead, where they disappeared into his magnificent hair. He had bright teeth, and his chin disappeared under a pattern of elegant scrolls that continued down to his sturdy chest.



It was a canoe, seventy feet long

The tattoo, the *moko* of the New Zealanders, is a mark of high distinction. Only a man who has participated valiantly in battle was worthy of these honorary sigils. Slaves, and people of the lower classes, can not claim them. Famous leaders identify themselves by the finesse, precision, and nature of their designs which often cover their entire bodies with images of animals. Some undergo the very painful operation of receiving *moko* up to five times. The more illustrious you are, the more you are “illustrated” in New Zealand.

Dumont D’Urville gave interesting details of this custom. He pointed out that the *moko* was like the coats of arms that some families are so proud of in Europe, but he noted an important difference between these two signs of distinction. The coats of arms of Europeans often only attested to the individual merit of the person who first obtained them without saying anything about the merit of his children, while the individual *moko* of the Māori genuinely testify that the bearer had shown extraordinary personal courage in order to have the right to wear them.

In addition the tattooing of the Māori, independent of the consideration which the bearer enjoys, has an incontestable utility. It toughens the skin, which allows it to withstand the weather of the seasons, and incessant mosquito bites.

As for the leader who directed this boat, there was no doubt about his distinction. The sharp albatross bone, which is used by Māori tattooers, had furrowed his face five times in close and deep lines. His *moko* was in its fifth edition, and it showed in his haughty look.

He was wearing a loincloth, still bloody from recent battles, and draped in a large cloak of *Phormium* trimmed with dog pelts. Green jade dangled from his elongated earlobes, and his neck was encompassed with necklaces from which dangled *pounamu*, the highly treasured sacred stones of the Māori. At his side lay an English rifle, and a *patiti* — a kind of tomahawk — emerald coloured and eighteen inches long.

Beside him, nine warriors of lesser rank remained perfectly immobile, wrapped in their *Phormium* mantles. All were armed, with a fierce bearing, and some still suffered from recent wounds. Three wild-looking dogs were lying at their feet. The eight paddlers at the front seemed to be servants or slaves to the leader. They paddled vigorously. The boat was moving against the slow current of Waikato at a considerable speed.

In the centre of this long boat, with their feet tied, but their hands free, ten European prisoners were packed tightly together.

They were Lord Glenarvan and Lady Helena, Mary and Robert Grant, Paganel, the Major, John Mangles, the steward, and the two sailors.

The evening before, all the little troop — deceived by the thick fog — had gone to camp in the midst of a numerous party of natives. Toward the middle of the night, the

travellers, caught in their sleep, were taken prisoner and taken aboard the canoe. They had not been mistreated so far, but they had tried in vain to resist. Their arms and ammunition were in the hands of the savages, and they would have been shot with their own guns.

It was not long before they learned, by overhearing some English words used by the natives, that the latter, driven back by British troops, beaten and decimated, were returning to the of Upper Waikato district. The Māori chief — after a stubborn resistance, his main warriors killed by soldiers of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment — returned to make a new appeal to the tribes of the river to go to the aid of the indomitable William Thompson, who was still struggling against the conquerors. This chief was named Kai-Kúmu,<sup>fn1</sup> a sinister name in the native language, which means “he who eats the arms of his enemy.” He was brave and daring, but his cruelty equaled his valour. They could expect no mercy from him. His name was well known to the English soldiers, and the governor of New Zealand had placed a price on his head.

This terrible blow had struck Lord Glenarvan just as he was about to reach the desired Auckland Harbour and repatriate to Europe. But by looking at his cold, calm face, one could not have guessed the depth of his anxiety. This was because Glenarvan always rose to meet any challenge that misfortune dealt him. He felt that he must be strong, to set an example for his wife and his companions. He, as the husband and leader, was ready to die first for the common salvation if circumstances should require it. Deeply religious, he never lost his faith in God’s justice, nor his belief in the sanctity of his undertaking. In the midst of the perils accumulated on this journey he did not regret the generous impulse which had carried him into the country of these savages.

His companions were worthy of him; they shared his noble thoughts, and to see their tranquil and proud countenances you would not have thought they had been led into a supreme catastrophe. Besides, by mutual agreement and on the advice of Glenarvan, they had resolved to affect a superb indifference to the natives. It was the only way to impress their wild natures. Savages in general, and particularly the Māori, have a certain sense of dignity from which they never depart. They respect coolness and courage. Glenarvan knew that by remaining calm and composed, he spared himself and his companions from unnecessary mistreatment.

Since leaving the camp, the natives — not very talkative, like all savages — had scarcely spoken to each other. But from the few words exchanged, Glenarvan recognized that the English language was familiar to them. He decided to question the Māori chief as to the fate reserved for them.

He addressed Kai-Kúmu calmly, his voice free of fear. “Where are you taking us, chief?”

Kai-Kúmu looked at him coldly without answering him.

“What do you plan to do with us?” continued Glenarvan.

Kai-Kúmu’s eyes flashed briefly, and in a deep voice he replied “To exchange you, if your people want you; to kill you, if they refuse.”

Glenarvan did not ask for more, but hope returned to his heart. No doubt some of the Māori leaders had fallen into the hands of the English, and the natives wanted to try to recover them through a prisoner exchange. There was a chance of salvation; the situation was not hopeless.

The canoe was moving rapidly up the river. Paganel, whose mercurial nature easily swung from one extreme to the other, had recovered all his hope. He told himself that if the Māori saved them the trouble of walking to the English outposts, that it was so much the better. So, resigned to his fate, he followed the course of the Waikato across the plains and valleys of the province on his map. Lady Helena and Mary Grant, hiding their terror, conversed in low voices with Glenarvan, and the most skilful physiognomist would not have read the anguish of their hearts on their faces.

The Waikato is the national river of New Zealand. The Māori are proud and jealous of it, like the Germans of the Rhine, and the Slavs of the Danube. In its two hundred mile course it watered the most beautiful regions of the northern island, from the province of Wellington to the province of Auckland. It gave its name to all those riverside tribes who, indomitable and untamed, rose *en masse* against the invaders.

The waters of this river are still almost untouched by any stranger. They opened only in front of the bows of the islander canoes. Hardly any audacious tourists had ventured between these sacred shores. Access to the headwaters of the Waikato seems to be forbidden to the European laymen.

Paganel knew the veneration of the natives for this great New Zealand artery. He knew that English and German naturalists had scarcely explored it beyond its junction with the Waipa. How far would Kai-Kúmu’s pleasure take his captives? He would not have guessed it if the word “Taupo,” frequently repeated between the chief and his warriors, had not arrested his attention.

He looked at his map and saw that the name of “Taupo” applied to a lake famous in geographical records, located in the mountainous heart of the island to the south of the province of Auckland. The Waikato passes through this lake. From the Waipa confluence to the lake, the river’s course was about one hundred and twenty miles. [fn2](#)

Paganel, addressing John Mangles in French so as not to be understood by the savages, asked him to estimate the speed of the boat. John told him it was about three miles an hour.

“Then,” said the geographer, “if we stop at night, our journey to the lake will take nearly four days.”

“But where are the English outposts located?” asked Glenarvan.

“It is difficult to say,” said Paganel. “But, the war has to have moved into the province of Taranaki, and, in all probability, the troops are massed on that side of the lake, behind the mountains which have been the focus of the insurrection.”

“God grant it!” said Lady Helena.

Glenarvan glanced sadly at his young wife, at Mary Grant, exposed to the mercy of these savage natives and carried away to a wild country far from any human intervention. But he saw himself observed by Kai-Kúmu, and, out of prudence, not wishing to let him guess that one of the captives was his wife, he turned his thoughts inward and observed the banks of the river with perfect indifference.

The boat had passed in front of the old residence of King Potatau without stopping, half a mile above the confluence. No other boat was plying the waters of the river. Some huts, widely spaced on the banks, testified by their disrepair to the horrors of the recent war. The riparian countryside seemed abandoned; the banks of the river were deserted. Some representatives of the family of waterfowl alone animated this sad loneliness. Sometimes a pied stilt — a wading bird with black wings, a white belly, and a red beak — fled on his long legs. Sometimes herons of three species: the grey *matuku*; a kind of stupid-looking bittern; and the magnificent *kotuku* with white plumage, yellow bill, and black feet peacefully watched the native boat pass. Where the sloping banks showed enough depth to the water, the kingfishers, the *kōtare* in Māori, watched for the small eels that wriggle by the millions in the rivers of New Zealand. Where the bushes were overhanging the river, proud hoopoes, rallecs, and sultana hens had their morning baths under the first rays of the sun. All the winged world enjoyed in peace the leisure created by the absence of men, expelled or decimated by the war.

During this first part of its course the Waikato flowed through wide, vast plains. But upstream the hills, then the mountains, were going to narrow the valley through which its bed had been dug. Ten miles above the Waipa, Paganel’s map indicated the village of Kirikiriroa on the west bank, which was indeed there. Kai-Kúmu did not stop. He had the prisoners given their own food, which had been taken in the looting of the camp. His warriors, his slaves, and he were satisfied with the native food, edible ferns, the *Pteridium esculentum* to botanists, baked roots, and *kapanas*, potatoes, which grew abundantly in the two islands. No animal matter appeared in their meals, and the dried meat of the captives did not seem to inspire them with any desire.

At three o’clock, a few mountains rose on the east bank which looked like a demolished curtain wall: the Pokaroa Ranges. Ruined *pās*, ancient entrenchments erected by Māori engineers in impregnable positions were perched on rocky ridges. They looked like giant eagles’ nests.

The sun was about to set below the horizon when the canoe landed on a bank covered with pumice stones which the Waikato draws down its course from the volcanic

mountains. A few trees grew there which appeared to be suitable for sheltering a camp. Kai-Kúmu disembarked his prisoners, and the men had their hands tied. The women remained free. All were placed at the centre of the encampment, surrounded by fires which made an unbroken circle of light around them.

Before Kai-Kúmu had told his captives that he intended to exchange them, Glenarvan and John Mangles had discussed ways to regain their freedom. While no possibilities had presented themselves in the canoe, they had hoped to find an opportunity in the night, once they landed and made camp.

But since Glenarvan had talked with the Māori chief, it seemed wise to abstain. It was the most prudent course to wait. A prisoner exchange offered a chance at salvation that did not involve an armed conflict, or a flight through these unknown lands. Many events might arise which would delay or prevent such a negotiation, but for now it was best to wait for that outcome. Indeed, what could ten unarmed men do against thirty well-armed savages? Glenarvan, moreover, supposed that Kai-Kúmu's tribe had lost some chief of high value which he particularly wished to get back, and he was not mistaken.

The next day the boat ascended the course of the river with new speed. At ten o'clock they stopped for a moment at the confluence of the Pokaiwhenua, a small river which meandered over the plains of the east bank.

A canoe, manned by ten natives, joined Kai-Kúmu's boat. The warriors barely exchanged the arrival greeting, "*aire mai ra*," which means "well met," before the two canoes continued together. The newcomers had recently fought against English troops. It was seen in their ragged clothes, their bloody arms, the wounds still bleeding under their rags. They were dark, and taciturn. With the natural indifference of all savage peoples, they paid no attention to the Europeans.

At noon, the summit of Maungatautari appeared in the west. The Waikato Valley was beginning to narrow. The river, tightly constrained, became powerful rapids. But the strength of the natives, doubled and regularized by a song which punctuated the beating of their paddles, pushed the boat over the foaming waters. The rapids were overcome, and the Waikato resumed its slow course, only varied from mile to mile by the winding of its banks.

Toward evening, Kai-Kúmu landed at the foot of mountains whose first buttresses fell steeply to the narrow banks. There, about twenty natives disembarked from their canoes to make arrangements for the night. Fires were set blazing under the trees. A chief, equal to Kai-Kúmu, advanced with measured steps, and, pressing his nose against Kai-Kúmu's, gave him the cordial greeting of the *hongī*. The prisoners were placed in the centre of the camp and guarded with extreme vigilance.

This long voyage up the Waikato was resumed the next morning. Other boats joined them, coming from the small tributaries of the river. About sixty warriors were now assembled, fugitives from the latest battles of the insurrection, returning to the mountains. Many suffered from greater or lesser wounds from English bullets. Sometimes a song rose from the line of canoes. A native sang the patriotic ode of the mysterious *Pihe*

*“Pápa ra te wáti tídi  
I dúnga nei”*

the national anthem that inspires the Māori in their war of independence.<sup>fn3</sup> The voice of the singer, full and sonorous, echoed off the mountains, and after each verse, the natives would strike their chests, which resounded like a drum, and joined the bellicose verse in chorus. Then, with renewed strength from the paddlers, the canoes made way against the current and flew over the surface of the waters.

A curious phenomenon marked this day of navigation on the river. About four o'clock, the canoe, without hesitation or delaying its course, guided by the firm hand of the chief, threw itself through a narrow valley. The swirling current raged against numerous islets which made this section of the river especially dangerous. But to capsize here was particularly undesirable, because the shore offered no refuge. Anyone who stepped on the boiling mud of the banks would surely have died.

The river flowed between hot springs, which have always been known as a curiosity to tourists. Iron oxide coloured the ooze of the banks bright red where a solid foothold of tufa had not built up. The atmosphere was saturated with a penetrating sulphurous odour. The natives did not appear affected, but the captives were seriously inconvenienced by the miasmas issuing from the fissures in the ground, and the bubbles which burst under pressure from internal gases. But if it was unpleasant to smell these emanations, the eye could only admire this imposing spectacle.

The boats ventured into the depths of a cloud of white vapour. Its dazzling spirals rose over the river. On its banks, about a hundred geysers — some throwing clouds of vapour, others pouring out columns of liquid — varied their displays like the jets and cascades of a fountain designed by the hand of man. It seemed as if some conductor was directing the intermittent play of these springs for his pleasure. Water and vapour, merged in the air, were excited by the rays of the sun.

In this place, the Waikato was flowing on a moving bed which was constantly boiling under the action of underground fire. Not far from Lake Rotorua — to the east — roared the hot springs and steaming waterfalls of Lake Rotomahana and Mount Tarawera which have been seen by some bold travellers. This region is pierced with geysers, craters, and solfataras. They provide another outlet for the overflow of gases that could

not find an outlet in the insufficient valves of Mounts Tongariro and Wakaari, the only active volcanoes of New Zealand. [fn4](#)

The native canoes sailed under this vault of vapour for two miles, enveloped in the warm spirals which rolled on the surface of the waters. Then the sulphurous smoke dissipated, and pure air, drawn by the rapidity of the current, came to refresh the panting breasts. They had passed beyond the hot springs.

Before the end of the day, the Hipapatua and Tamatea rapids were ascended under the vigorous paddling of the savages. In the evening, Kai-Kúmu camped a hundred miles from the confluence of Waipa and Waikato. From here their course up the Waikato would first turn to the east, before swinging back to the south where the outflow from Lake Taupo fell into it.



The river flowed between hot springs

The next day, Jacques Paganel, consulting the map, identified Mount Tauhara on the east bank, which rises over three thousand feet above sea level.

At noon, the whole procession of boats came to a widening of the river, and paddled into Lake Taupo. The natives saluted a flap of cloth which fluttered in the wind at the top of a hut. It was the Māori flag.

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[fn1.](#) The Hetzel edition spells his name “Kai-Koumou.” I have changed the spelling of all Māori words and phrases to conform to the spelling given in *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language of New Zealand*.<sup>a</sup> — DAS

a. Kendall, Thomas; Lee, Samuel. *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language of New Zealand*. London: Church Missionary Society, 1820

[fn2.](#) 50 leagues, 200 kilometres. — DAS

[fn3.](#) The line quoted from the song translates as “The thunder above, bursts forth.”<sup>b</sup>, [pg 110](#).

The pihe is a Māori funeral ode, often sung to mourn the losses from a battle, not a national anthem. The idea that this particular pihe is an anthem seems to have originated with Dumont d’Urville, from his study of the Māori in 1827.<sup>c</sup> — DAS

b. Williams, William. *A Dictionary of the New Zealand Language and a Concise Grammar; to Which Is Added a Selection of Colloquial Sentences*. London: Williams and Norgate, 1852.

c. McLean, Mervyn. *Māori Music*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996, [pg 71](#).

[fn4.](#) New Zealand has many active volcanoes. Indeed, one of the largest eruptions in recorded New Zealand history took place at Mount Tarawera, in 1886. — DAS

## Chapter XI

### Lake Taupo

**A**N UNFATHOMABLE CHASM TWENTY-FIVE MILES long, and twenty wide, was formed long before historical times by a collapse of caverns in the middle of the trachytic lavas of the centre of the island. The waters from the surrounding peaks slowly filled this enormous cavity to become a lake, an abyss that no sounding line has yet to plumb. [fn1](#)

Such is the strange Lake Taupo, 1,170 feet above sea level, and surrounded by a cirque of mountains 2,400 feet high. To the west, the shore is dominated by sheer rock cliffs; to the north are some distant tree covered peaks; to the east, a wide beach crossed by a road decorated with pumice stones which shine under a lattice of bushes; to the south, volcanic cones rise behind a foreground of forests. In the heart of all this majesty lies a vast expanse of water whose storms rival the hurricanes of the oceans.

All this region boils like an immense cauldron suspended on subterranean flames. The ground quivers under the caresses of the central fires. Steam issues from the ground in many places. The crust of the Earth splits in violent cracks like dough that has risen too much, and no doubt this plateau would be ruined in an incandescent furnace if, twelve miles further, the imprisoned vapours could not find an exit through the craters of Tongariro.

From its north rim, this volcano appeared filled with smoke and flame above small lava domes. Mount Tongariro was part of a complicated system of volcanoes. Behind it, isolated in the midst of a plain, Mount Ruapahu rose nine thousand feet in the air, its peak lost amid of the clouds. No mortal has set foot on its inaccessible cone; no human eye has ever probed the depths of its crater, [fn2](#) while, three times in twenty years, Messrs. Bidwill and Dyson — and more recently Dr. von Hochstetter — have measured the more accessible peaks of Tongariro.

These volcanoes have their legends, and in any other circumstances Paganel would not have failed to tell them to his companions. He would have told them of the argument that happened one day between Tongariro and Taranaki, then his neighbour



At noon, the boats reached Lake Taupo

and friend, over the matter of a woman. Tongariro — who has a hot head, like all volcanoes — went so far as to hit Taranaki. Taranaki, beaten and humiliated, fled through the valley of the Whanganui, dropped two pieces of mountain on the way, and reached the shores of the sea, where he rises solemnly under the name of Mount Egmont.

But Paganel was hardly in a position to tell, nor were his friends in a mood to listen to him. They silently watched the northeastern shore of Lake Taupo where this most disappointing fate had just led them. Reverend Grace's mission to Pūkawa, on the western shores of the lake, no longer existed. The minister had been driven far from the heart of the insurrection by the war. The prisoners were alone, abandoned, at the mercy of Māori greedy for reprisals, and in this wild portion of the island where Christianity has never penetrated.

Kai-Kúmu, leaving the waters of the Waikato, crossed the little cove which serves as a funnel to the river, doubled a sharp promontory, and landed on the eastern shore of the lake at the foot of the first ripples of Maunganamu, an 1,800 foot, extinct volcano. There, fields of *Phormium*, what the natives call *harakeke*, the precious flax of New Zealand, were spread out. Nothing is wasted of this useful plant. Its flower provides a kind of excellent nectar; its stem produces a gummy substance which replaces wax or starch; its leaves, more useful still, lend themselves to many transformations: fresh, it serves as paper; desiccated, it makes an excellent tinder; cut, it is made into ropes, cables and nets; divided into filaments and combed, it becomes a blanket or mantle, mat or loincloth; and dyed red or black, it dresses the most elegant Māori.

This precious *Phormium* is found everywhere in the two islands, from the shores of the sea to the banks of the rivers and lakes. Here its wild bushes covered entire fields; its reddish brown, agave-like flower stalks rose out of an inextricable clutter of its long leaves which formed a trophy of sharp blades. Graceful birds, nectar eaters, common in the *Phormium* fields, flew in numerous flocks and delighted in the honeyed juice of the flowers.

Troops of black plumed ducks, dappled with grey and green, bobbed in the waters of the lake. This species was easily domesticated.

A quarter of a mile away, on an escarpment of the mountain, appeared a *pā*, a Māori fortress placed in an impregnable position. The prisoners were unloaded one by one, their feet and hands freed, and led toward it by the warriors. The path to the fortification crossed *Phormium* fields, and a grove of beautiful trees: *kahikatea*, evergreens with red berries; *Cordyline australis*, the *ti* of the natives, and commonly called the cabbage tree by the Europeans; and *huious* which provides black dye for fabrics. Large doves with a metallic sheen, ashen *kōkako*, and a world of starlings with reddish wattles flew away at the approach of the natives.

After a long detour, Glenarvan, Lady Helena, Mary Grant, and their companions arrived inside the *pā*.

This fortress was defended by an outer palisade, fifteen feet high; a second line of stakes, then a wicker fence pierced with loopholes, enclosing an inner space — the plateau of the *pā* — in which Māori buildings and about forty huts were arranged symmetrically.

On arriving there, the captives were horribly impressed by the sight of the heads that adorned the posts of the inner enclosure. Lady Helena and Mary Grant averted their eyes with more disgust than horror. These heads had belonged to fallen enemy leaders whose bodies had served as food for the victors.

The geographer recognized them as such from their empty eye sockets. The eyes of a defeated chief are eaten. The head is then prepared by removing its brain and stripping away the skin. The nose is held in shape by small strips of wood, the nostrils stuffed with *Phormium*, the mouth and the eyelids sewn closed, and the head is smoked in an oven for thirty hours. Thus prepared, it is preserved indefinitely without alteration or wrinkle, to make a trophy of victory.

Often the Māori keep the heads of their own chiefs, but in this case, the eyes stay in their sockets and look out at the spectators. The New Zealanders display these relics with pride; they offer them up for the admiration of young warriors, and pay them a tribute of veneration with solemn ceremonies.

But, in Kai-Kúmu's *pā*, the enemy's heads alone adorned this horrible museum, and no doubt more than one English head with empty sockets had been added to the collection of the Māori chief.

Kai-Kúmu's house rose between several huts of lesser importance at the bottom of the *pā*, in front of a large open field which some Europeans called "the field of battle." This house was built of poles caulked with intertwining branches, and internally lined with mats of *Phormium*. Twenty feet long, fifteen feet wide, and ten feet high, Kai-Kúmu's house was a dwelling of three thousand cubic feet. It does not take more to house a Māori leader.



Lord Glenarvan and his companions arrived inside the *pā*

A single opening gave access to the house; a swinging flap made of thick vegetable fibre served as a door. Above, the roof extended in eaves away from the walls. Some carved figures at the end of the rafters adorned the house, and the *whatitoka*, or doorway, offered a curious confusion of foliage, symbolic figures, monsters, and foliated scrolls created by the chisel of native decorators for the visitors' admiration.

Inside the house, the dirt floor was raised half a foot above the ground. A few reed shelves, and dry fern mattresses covered with a mat woven with the long, flexible leaves of *Typha*, served as beds. In the middle, a stone hole formed the hearth, and in the roof, a second hole served as a chimney. The smoke, when it was thick enough, finally decided to take advantage of this escape, but not without placing a varnish of the most beautiful black on the walls of the house.

Next to the hut stood the storehouses which contained the chief's provisions: his harvest of *Phormium*, potatoes, *taros*, and edible ferns; and the ovens in which the various foods were cooked in contact with heated stones. Further on, in small enclosures, were pigs and goats, rare descendants of the useful animals imported by Captain Cook. Dogs ran here and there, begging for their meagre food. They were poorly kept for beasts that daily serve as food for the Māori.

Glenarvan and his companions had taken in this scene at a glance. They waited near an empty house for the pleasure of the chief, while being exposed to the insults of a band of old women. This band of harpies surrounded them, threatened them with their fists, howled, and shouted. A few words of English escaping from their rude lips made it clear that they were demanding immediate vengeance.

In the midst of these shouts and threats, Lady Helena, seemingly tranquil, affected a calm that could not be in her heart. This brave woman contained herself with heroic efforts to allow Lord Glenarvan to keep his own composure. Poor Mary Grant felt faint, and John Mangles supported her — ready to die defending her. Their companions variously endured this deluge of invective: with indifference, like the Major, or with growing irritation, like Paganel.

Glenarvan, wishing to relieve Lady Helena from the assault of these old shrews, walked straight to Kai-Kúmu, and pointing to the hideous group said "Send them away."

The Māori chief stared at his prisoner without answering him; then, with a gesture, he silenced the screaming horde. Glenarvan bowed, as a sign of thanks, and slowly returned to his place among his people.

A hundred New Zealanders were gathered in the *pā* at this time: old men, adults, and youngsters. Some were quiet, but dispirited, waiting for Kai-Kúmu's orders; the others engaged in the most violent sorrow — they were crying for their parents or friends fallen in the latest battles.

Kai-Kúmu alone, of all the chiefs who had answered the call of William Thompson, returned to the districts of the lake, and was the first to tell his tribe of the defeat of the national insurrection — beaten in the lowlands of Waikato. Of the two hundred warriors who, under his command, ran to the defence of the land, a hundred and fifty were missing on their return. Even if some were prisoners of the invaders, how many — lost on the field of battle — were never to return to the land of their ancestors?

This explained the deep desolation that struck the tribe at the arrival of Kai-Kúmu. This was the first news to arrive of the latest defeat.

In savages, sorrow always manifests itself in physical demonstrations. Relatives and friends of dead warriors, especially women, tore their faces and shoulders with sharp shells. The blood gushed and mingled with their tears. The deep incisions marked their great despair. The poor Māori women, bloody and maddened, were horrible to see.

Their despair was increased even more for another reason — very serious in the eyes of the natives. Not only was the parent or the friend they were mourning no longer alive, but his bones couldn't be placed in the family's tomb. The disposition of these remains is regarded in the Māori religion as indispensable to their destinies in the afterlife. Not the perishable flesh, but the bones, which are carefully collected, cleaned, scraped, polished, even varnished, and finally deposited in the *Údu pá*, or "the house of glory." These tombs are decorated with wooden statues that reproduce with perfect fidelity the tattoos of the deceased. But today the tombs would remain empty, the religious ceremonies would not be fulfilled, and the bones spared from the teeth of wild dogs would whiten without burial on the field of battle.

Their sorrow redoubled. The threats of the women against the Europeans overcame the imprecations of the men. More insults burst forth, the gestures became more violent. This outcry might be followed by acts of brutality.

Kai-Kúmu — fearing to be overwhelmed by the fanatics of his tribe — had his captives taken to a sacred place at the rear of the *pā*, on a steep plateau. This hut backed against a massif that towered a hundred feet above the rest of the *pā*, which fell away in steep slopes to the sides. In this *Ware Atua*, a consecrated house, the priests or the *arijis* taught the Māori of a god in three persons, the father, the son, and the bird or the spirit. The large well-built house contained the holy food chosen for *Māui-Rangi-Ranginui* to eat through the mouths of their priests. [fn3](#)

There the captives, momentarily sheltered against the native fury, lay on *Phormium* mats. Lady Helena, her strength exhausted, her moral energy vanquished, sank into her husband's arms. Glenarvan, pressing her to his chest, repeated "Courage, my dear Helena. Heaven will not desert us!" to her.

They were barely shut in when Robert climbed on Wilson's shoulders, and managed to slide his head through a gap between the roof and the wall, where rosaries of amulets

hung. From there, he could see across the *pā* to Kai-Kúmu's hut.

"They are gathered around the chief," he said in a low voice. "They wave their arms ... they scream ... Kai-Kúmu wants to speak ..."

The child was silent for a few minutes, then he went on.

"Kai-Kúmu speaks ... the savages are calming down ... they are listening to him ..."

"Of course," said the Major. "This chief has a personal interest in protecting us. He wants to exchange his prisoners for the leaders of his tribe! But will his warriors consent?"

"Yes! ... They listen to him ..." said Robert. "They scatter ... some return to their huts ... the others leave the fortress ..."

"Is that so?" asked the Major.

"Yes, Mr. MacNabbs," said Robert. "Kai-Kúmu alone remains, with the warriors of his boat. Ah! One of them comes to our hut."

"Come down, Robert," said Glenarvan.

At this moment Lady Helena, who had risen, seized her husband's arm. "Edward," she said firmly, "neither Mary Grant nor I must fall alive into the hands of these savages!"

And, with these words spoken, she handed Glenarvan a loaded revolver.

"A *weapon!*" exclaimed Glenarvan, a flash of lightning in his eyes.

"Yes! The Māori did not search their women prisoners! But this weapon is for us, Edward, not for them!"

"Glenarvan," said MacNabbs quickly, "hide that revolver! It's not yet time."

The revolver disappeared under the Lord's clothes. The mat that closed the entrance to the hut was raised. A native appeared.

He motioned the prisoners to follow him. Glenarvan and his people crossed the *pā* in a tight group, and stopped in front of Kai-Kúmu.

The principal warriors of his tribe were gathered around their chief. Among them was the Māori whose boat joined Kai-Kúmu's at the confluence of the Pokaiwhenua and the Waikato. He was a man of forty, vigorous, fierce, and cruel. He was named *Kára-Tête*, that is to say, "the irascible" in the Māori language. Kai-Kúmu treated him with some respect, and, by the fineness of his tattoos, it could be seen that *Kára-Tête* was high in



Robert climbed on Wilson's shoulders

the tribes. A careful observer would have also guessed that there was a rivalry between these two leaders. The Major observed that the influence of Kára-Téte annoyed Kai-Kúmu. They both commanded important tribes of Waikatos with equal authority, but during their conversation, Kai-Kúmu's mouth smiled, but his eyes betrayed a deep enmity.

Kai-Kúmu questioned Glenarvan. "You are English?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the Lord without hesitation, for that nationality would render an exchange easier.

"And your companions?" asked Kai-Kúmu.

"My companions are English, like me. We are travellers, shipwrecked. But, if you want to know, we did not take part in the war."

"It does not matter!" said Kára-Téte roughly. "All English are our enemies. You have invaded our island! You have burned our villages!"

"They were wrong!" said Glenarvan in a grave voice. "I say this because I believe it, and not because I am in your power."

"Listen," said Kai-Kúmu, "the *Tohunga*, the high priest of *Nui Atua*<sup>fn4</sup>, fell into the hands of your brothers; he is a prisoner of the *Pākehā*<sup>fn5</sup>. Our god commands us to redeem his life. I would have liked to tear your heart out; I would have wanted your head and the heads of your companions to be eternally suspended on the posts of this palisade! But *Nui Atua* spoke."

In speaking thus, Kai-Kúmu, hitherto master of himself, trembled with anger, and his countenance was imbued with ferocious exaltation.

Then, after a few moments, he went on coldly "Do you think the English will exchange our *Tohunga* for you?"

Glenarvan hesitated to answer, and watched the Māori chief carefully.

"I do not know," he said, after a moment's silence.

"Speak," said Kai-Kúmu. "Is your life worth the life of our *Tohunga*?"

"No," replied Glenarvan. "I am neither a leader nor a priest among mine!"

Paganel, stunned by this answer, looked at Glenarvan with profound astonishment.

Kai-Kúmu also seemed surprised. "So, you do not know?" he said.

"I do not know," repeated Glenarvan.

"Your people will not accept you in exchange for our *Tohunga*?"

"Only me? No," repeated Glenarvan. "All of us, maybe."

"The Māori," said Kai-Kúmu, "trade prisoners head for head."

"Offer these women first in exchange for your priest," said Glenarvan, pointing to Lady Helena and Mary Grant.

Lady Helena wanted to run to her husband. The Major held her back.

“These two ladies,” said Glenarvan, bowing with respectful grace to Lady Helena and Mary Grant, “rank high in their country.”

The warrior looked coldly at his prisoner. A perverse smile passed on his lips; but he repressed it almost immediately, and replied in a voice which he scarcely contained. “Do you hope to deceive Kai-Kúmu by false words, cursed European? Do you think that Kai-Kúmu’s eyes cannot read your hearts?”

And, pointing to Lady Helena “Here is your wife!” he said.

“No! *Mine!*” exclaimed Kára-Téte. Then, pushing back the prisoners, his hand came down on Lady Helena’s shoulder, who turned pale under this touch.

“*Edward!*” cried the distraught woman.

Glenarvan, without uttering a single word, raised his arm. A shot rang out. Kára-Téte fell dead.

At this detonation, a flood of natives came out of the huts. The *pā* filled in an instant. One hundred arms were raised against Glenarvan and the revolver was torn from his hand.

Kai-Kúmu gave Glenarvan a strange look; then, with one hand raised over Glenarvan, and the other toward the onrushing crowd he called out “*Tapu! Tapu!*”<sup>fn6</sup> in a dominating voice.

At this word, the crowd stopped before Glenarvan and his companions, momentarily protected by a supernatural power.

A few moments later, they were escorted back to the *Ware Atua*, which served as their prison. But Robert Grant and Jacques Paganel were no longer with them.



“*Tapu! Tapu!*” called out Kai-Kúmu

<sup>fn1.</sup> The entire Lake Taupo region is the caldera of a super-volcano, and while the lake may have been unplumbed in Verne’s time, it isn’t really all that deep, with an average depth of 110 metres, and a maximum depth of 186 metres. — DAS

<sup>fn2.</sup> This “inaccessible cone” was first climbed by Europeans in 1879. Now there are ski resorts on its slopes, and it doubled for Mount Doom in Peter Jackson’s *Lord of the Rings* films. — DAS

<sup>fn3.</sup> Verne seems to be trying too hard to draw parallels between Māori and Christian mythology here, with this parallel between some Māori gods and the Christian Trinity. In Māori mythology Māui is a hero/trickster demigod, who — among other things —

pulled the Island of *Te Ika-a-Māui* (Māui's fish) out of the sea when fishing one day. Rangi and Ranginui are alternate names of the sky father creator god. (Meaning "sky" and "great sky" respectively.) — DAS

[fn4.](#) Name of the Māori god.

Not really. The Māori have several gods, but "Nui Atua" doesn't seem to be one of them. Literally it means "great god." Since the introduction of Christianity, "Atua" has come to mean the Christian God. — DAS

[fn5.](#) Europeans.

[fn6.](#) Verne had Kai-Kúmu saying "Tabou" here, but as that is a loan word into French from the Polynesian/Māori "Tapu." I kept Kai-Kúmu speaking Māori. — DAS

## Chapter XII

### The Funeral of a Māori Chief

**K**AI-KÚMU, FOLLOWING A RATHER COMMON PRACTICE IN NEW ZEALAND, WAS THE *ARIKI* AS well as the chief of the tribe. He was clothed with the dignity of a priest, and as such he could extend the superstitious protection of the *tapu* over persons or objects. [fn1](#)

The *tapu*, common to Polynesian peoples, has the immediate effect of prohibiting any use of, or relationship with, the object or person under the *tapu*. According to the Māori religion, anyone who lays a sacrilegious hand on what has been declared *tapu* could be punished with death by an angry god. And if the god is slow to avenge their own insult, the priests can step in to do it for them.

The *tapu* may be applied by a chief for political reasons, or it may come about from the ordinary events of everyday life. In many circumstances a native is *tapu* for a few days when he cuts his hair, when he has just received a tattoo, when he builds a canoe, when he builds a house, when he has a life-threatening illness, and when he is dead. If over consumption threatens to depopulate a river of its fish, or to ruin the future production of a field of sweet potatoes, these objects are struck with a *tapu* protection for economic reasons. If a leader wants to remove unwelcome guests from his house, he *tapus* them; to monopolize trade with a foreign ship for himself, he declares it *tapu*; to quarantine a European trader he is discontent with, he *tapus*. Its prohibition then resembles the old “veto” of kings.

When an object is *tapu*, no one may touch it with impunity. When a native is subject to this prohibition, he may be forbidden from touching certain foods for a period of time. If he is rich, he may be relieved of this severe diet by having his slaves feed him the foods he must not touch with his hands. If he is poor, he is reduced to picking up his food with his mouth, and the *tapu* reduces him to the status of an animal.

This singular custom directs and controls the smallest actions of the Māori. It is an incessant intervention of the divine in daily life. It has the force of law, and it can be said that the entire indisputable and undisputed indigenous code can be summed up in the frequent application of the *tapu*.

It was an arbitrary *tapu* which saved the captives imprisoned in the *Ware Atua* from the fury of the tribe. Some of the natives, Kai-Kúmu’s friends and partisans, had suddenly stopped at the voice of their chief and had protected the prisoners.

Glenarvan was not under any illusion as to what was going to happen to him. His death alone could pay for the killing of a chief, and death among savage peoples only comes at the end of a long ordeal. Glenarvan expected that he would have to atone for

the legitimate indignation which had motivated his action, but he hoped that Kai-Kúmu's anger would only strike him.

The night passed anxiously for Glenarvan and his companions. Who could picture their agony or measure their suffering? Poor Robert, and the brave Paganel had not reappeared. What was their fate? Were they the first victims sacrificed to the vengeance of the natives? All hope had disappeared, even from the heart of MacNabbs, who did not despair easily. John Mangles felt himself going crazy at the misery and despair of Mary Grant, separated from her brother. Glenarvan was thinking of the terrible request from Lady Helena, who in order to escape torture or slavery, wanted to die at his hand! Would he have the courage to carry out such a horrible act?

"And Mary, do I have the right to kill her?" thought John, his heart breaking.

Escape was obviously impossible. Ten warriors, armed to the teeth, watched at the door of the *Ware Atua*.

The morning of February 13<sup>th</sup> arrived. No communication had taken place between the natives and the prisoners forbidden by the *tapu*. The hut contained some food which the poor inmates barely touched. Misery deadened the pangs of hunger. The day passed without bringing any change, or hope. Doubtless the hour of the dead man's funeral and the hour of torture were to ring together.

However, if Glenarvan believed that Kai-Kúmu had given up all his ideas of a prisoner exchange, the Major still held a glimmer of hope. "Who knows," he said, reminding Glenarvan of the strange expression that had crossed Kai-Kúmu's face on the death of Kára-Téte. "Maybe Kai-Kúmu really does feel obliged to you?"

But, despite MacNabbs' observation, Glenarvan did not want to hope anymore. Another day passed without any preparations for torture being revealed. There was a reason for this delay.

The Māori believe that the soul lives on in the body of the deceased for three days following death, so the corpse remains unburied for seventy-two hours. This custom of delayed burial was rigorously observed. The *pā* remained deserted until February 15<sup>th</sup>. John Mangles, hoisted on Wilson's shoulders, often observed the outer fortifications. No natives could be seen there. The only ones he saw were the sentinels, relieving each other on guard at the door of the *Ware Atua*.

But on the third day the huts opened. The savages, men, women, and children, several hundred Māori in all, gathered in the *pā*, silent and calm.

Kai-Kúmu came out of his hut, and surrounded by the principal chiefs of his tribe, he took his place on a mound raised a few feet in the centre of the fortification. The crowd of natives formed a semicircle a few yards back. The whole assembly kept an absolute silence.

At a sign from Kai-Kúmu, a warrior made his way to the *Ware Atua*.

"Remember," Lady Helena said to her husband.

Glenarvan hugged his wife to his heart. At this moment, Mary Grant approached John Mangles.

"Lord and Lady Glenarvan," she said, "will think that if a woman can die from her husband's hand to escape a shameful existence, a fiancée can die from her fiancé's hand as well, to escape in her turn. John, you can tell me, in this final moment, have I not long been your betrothed in the secret of your heart? Can I count on you, dear John, like Lady Helena counts on Lord Glenarvan?"

"*Mary!*" cried the distraught young Captain. "Oh! Dear Mary—"

He could not finish. The mat was raised, and the captives were dragged toward Kai-Kúmu. The two women were resigned to their fate. The men concealed their anxieties in a superhuman calm.

They arrived in front of the Māori chief. He did not delay passing his judgement.

"You killed Kára-Téte?" he asked Glenarvan.

"I killed him," replied the Lord.

"Tomorrow, you will die at sunrise."

"Only me?" asked Glenarvan, whose heart beat violently.

"*Ah!* If only the life of our *Tohonga* was not more precious than yours!" exclaimed Kai-Kúmu, whose eyes expressed a fierce regret.

There was agitation among the natives. Glenarvan glanced quickly around. The crowd parted, and a warrior appeared, dripping with sweat, panting with fatigue.

Kai-Kúmu, as soon as he saw him, spoke to him in English, with the evident intention of being understood by the captives. "You come from the camp of the *Pākehās*?"

"Yes," said the Māori.

"You saw the prisoner, our *Tohonga*?"

"I saw him."

"He is alive?"

"He is dead! The English shot him!"

It was all over for Glenarvan and his companions.

"*All!*" cried Kai-Kúmu. "You will all die tomorrow at dawn!"

Thus, these poor souls would all suffer a common fate. Lady Helena and Mary Grant looked up at the sky with sublime thanks.

The captives were not taken back to the *Ware Atua*. They were to attend Kára-Téte's funeral and the bloody ceremonies that would accompany it. A troop of natives led them a few steps to the foot of a huge *koudi* pine tree. Their guards remained, keeping watch

over them. The rest of the Māori tribe, absorbed in their official grief, seemed to have forgotten them.

Three days had passed since the death of Kára-Téte. The soul of the deceased warrior had finally abandoned his mortal remains. The ceremony began.

The body was brought to a small knoll in the middle of the *pā*. He was dressed in lavish garments and wrapped in a beautiful mat of *Phormium*. His head, decorated with feathers, wore a crown of green leaves. His face, arms, and chest had been rubbed with oil, and showed no sign of decay.

The family and friends arrived at the foot of the hillock, and as one, as if some conductor was beating the measure of the funeral song, an immense concert of tears, moans, and sobs rose in the air. They were crying for the deceased with a plaintive, doleful rhythm. His kinsmen beat their heads; his kinswomen tore at their faces with their nails. They were more prodigal with their blood, than with tears.

These pitiful women conscientiously performed this savage duty, but these demonstrations were not enough to appease the soul of the deceased, whose wrath would undoubtedly have struck the survivors of his tribe. His warriors, unable to return him to life, wanted him to have no regrets of earthly existence in the other world. Kára-Téte's wife was not to abandon her husband in the grave. The poor woman would have refused to survive him. This was her duty, in accord with their custom, and examples of such sacrifices are common in the history of New Zealand.

The woman appeared. She was still young. Her disordered hair floated around her shoulders. Her sobs and cries rose to the sky: incoherent words, regrets, broken phrases in which she celebrated the virtues of the dead, interrupted by moans. She lay at the foot of the knoll, beating the ground with her head in a supreme paroxysm of sorrow.

Kai-Kúmu approached her. Suddenly the unfortunate victim rose; but a violent blow of the *mere*, a formidable club, whirling in the chief's hand, threw her to the ground. She fell as if thunderstruck.

A terrible cry arose. A hundred men threatened the captives, terrified by this horrible spectacle, but no one moved because the funeral ceremony was not finished.

Kára-Téte's wife had joined her husband in death. The two bodies remained lying close to each other. But for eternal life, it was not enough for the deceased to just have his faithful wife. Who would serve them in the presence of *Nui Atua*, if their slaves did not follow them from this world to the next?

Six wretches were brought before the corpses of their masters. They were servants whom the pitiless laws of war had reduced to slavery. During the chief's life, they had suffered the harshest privations, suffered a thousand mistreatments, scarcely fed, constantly used as beasts of burden, and now, according to Māori belief they were going to continue their slavery for all eternity.

These unfortunate people were resigned to their fate. They were not surprised by this long-awaited sacrifice. Their hands, free from all restraint, testified that they would not defend themselves.

Their deaths were quick. They were spared from long suffering. Torture was reserved for the authors of the murder, who — grouped twenty paces away — averted their eyes from this dreadful spectacle, the horror of which was about to increase.

Six blows from a *mere*, carried out by the hands of six strong warriors, laid the victims on the ground in the middle of a pool of blood.

This was the signal to begin a terrible scene of cannibalism.

The body of a slave is not protected by the *tapu* like the body of the master. It belongs to the tribe. It is the small change thrown to mourners. Also, the sacrifice to be consumed. The whole group of natives, chiefs, warriors, old men, women, and children, without distinction of age or sex, were seized with a bestial fury. They rushed upon the lifeless remains of the victims. In less time than a quick pen could trace it, the bodies, still warm, were torn apart, divided, cut up, not into slices, but into slivers. Of the two hundred Māori present at the sacrifice, each had his share of human flesh. They wrestled, struggled, and competed for the slightest scraps. Drops of hot blood spattered these monstrous revellers, and all this disgusting horde swarmed in a red rain. It was the madness and fury of fierce tigers on their prey. It was like a circus in which the gladiators devoured the wild beasts.



This was the signal to begin a terrible scene of cannibalism

Twenty fires were lit around the *pā*, and the smell of burnt meat filled the air. Without the dreadful tumult of this feast, without the cries still escaping from the throats engorged with flesh, the prisoners would have heard the bones of the victims cracking between the teeth of the cannibals.

Glenarvan and his companions, breathless, tried to hide this abominable scene from the eyes of the two poor women. They understood then what torture awaited them the next day at sunrise, and, without doubt, what cruel tortures would proceed such a death. They were struck dumb with horror.

The funeral dances began. Strong liqueurs, distilled from the *Piper excelsum*, true spirit of pepper, intoxicated the savages. They seemed completely inhuman. Would they, forgetting the *tapu* of the chief, turn in their delirium on the prisoners who were already terrified by this horrible scene? But Kai-Kúmu had kept his wits in the midst of the general drunkenness. He let this orgy of blood play out for an hour. After peaking in intensity, it faded away again, and the last act of the funeral took place with the usual ceremony.

The corpses of Kára-Téte and his wife were raised, their limbs bent and gathered against their bellies, according to the custom of the Māori. It was now time to bury them, not permanently, but until the earth, having devoured the flesh, left nothing but bones.

The location of the *Údu pá*, that is to say, the tomb, was chosen outside the fortification, at the top of a small mountain, called Maunganamu, situated on the east bank of the lake, about two miles away.

The bodies were to be transported there, carried on primitive palanquins — little more than stretchers. The corpses were placed on them; folded on themselves in a seated position, rather than lying down; and held that way in their clothes by a circle of lianas. Four warriors lifted the palanquins to their shoulders, and the whole tribe, resuming their funeral anthem, followed them in procession to the burial site.

The captives, still guarded, watched the procession leave the inner enclosure of the *pā*. The songs and the cries faded away.

For about half an hour this funeral procession remained out of sight in the depths of the valley. Then they saw it again, snaking up the paths of the mountain. The wavy movement of this long, sinuous column in the distance was an uncanny sight.

The tribe stopped at the top of Maunganamu, eight hundred feet above the lake, at the place prepared for the burial of Kára-Téte. A simple Māori would only have had a hole and a pile of stones. But for a powerful and feared chief, destined undoubtedly for deification, his tribe reserved a tomb worthy of his exploits.



The bodies were brought to the foot of the mound

The *Údu pá* was surrounded by palisades, and posts adorned with ocher-reddened figures stood near the grave where the bodies were to rest. The family had not forgotten that the *Wairua*, the spirit of the dead, feeds on material substances, as the body does during this perishable life. This is why food was left in the compound, as well as the weapons and clothing of the deceased.

Nothing was wanting in the comfort of the tomb. The two spouses were placed next to each other, then covered with earth and grass after another series of lamentations.

Then the procession silently descended the mountain, and now no one could climb Maunganamu on pain of death, because it was *tapu*, like Tongariro, where the remains of a chief crushed by an earthquake in 1846 rested.

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[fn1.](#) The title of *ariki* doesn't have any special religious significance. It simply means "persons of the highest rank and seniority." — DAS

## Chapter XIII

### The Last Hours

AS THE SUN DISAPPEARED BEYOND LAKE TAUPO, BEHIND THE PEAKS OF TUHAHUA AND Puketapu, the captives were taken back to their prison. They were not to leave it again before the first light of the day illuminated the peaks of the [Huiarau Range](#).<sup>fn1</sup>

They had one night left to prepare to die. Despite their despondency, despite the horror they felt, they took their meal together.

“We will need all of our strength, to look death in the face,” said Glenarvan. “We must show these barbarians that Europeans know how to die.”

When the meal was over, Lady Helena recited the evening prayer aloud. All her companions, bareheaded, joined in it.

Where is the man who does not think of God before his death?

This duty completed, the prisoners embraced.

Mary Grant and Helena retired to a corner of the hut, and lay on a mat. Sleep, which suspends all evils, soon dwelt on their eyelids. They fell asleep in each other’s arms, overcome by exhaustion and long insomnia. Glenarvan took his friends aside.

“My dear companions, our lives, and those of these poor women are with God,” he said. “If it is Heaven’s will that we die tomorrow, I am sure we will die as people of courage, as Christians, ready to appear without fear before the supreme judge. God, who sees the depths of souls, knows that we pursue a noble goal. If death is waiting for us instead of success, it is because God wills it. Hard as it is, I will not murmur against him. But death here is not death only; it is torture; it is infamy, perhaps; and as for the two women...”

Glenarvan’s voice, tightly controlled until then, faltered. He paused to regain his composure. Then, after a moment of silence, he went on.

“John,” he said to the young Captain, “you promised Mary what I promised Lady Helena. What have you resolved?”

“I think I have the right before God to fulfill my promise,” said John Mangles.

“Yes, John! But we are without weapons!”

“Here is one,” said John, raising a dagger. “I tore it out of Kára-Téte’s hands, when that savage fell at your feet. My Lord, whichever of us that survives the other will fulfill the wish of Lady Helena and Mary Grant.”

A profound silence reigned in the hut after these words. Finally, the Major interrupted it. “My friends, this can only be done as a last resort. I do not support that which is irrevocable.”

“I did not speak for us,” replied Glenarvan. “Whatever it is, we will brave death! Ah! If we were alone, twenty times already I would have shouted to you ‘My friends, let’s try an escape! Let’s attack these wretches!’ But Helena! Mary! ...”

John lifted the mat, and counted twenty-five natives who were watching at the door of the *Ware Atua*. A great fire had been lit and cast a sinister light on the rugged terrain of the *pā*. Some of these savages were lying around the fire. Others, standing motionless, stood out strongly against the light of the flames. But all of them cast frequent glances on the hut entrusted to their charge.

It is said that between a jailer who watches and a prisoner who wants to flee, the odds are for the prisoner. The interest of one is greater than the interest of the other. One can forget that he is guarding, the other can not forget that he is guarded. The captive is more likely to flee than his guardian to prevent his escape.

But here, hatred and vengeance kept watch over the captives, not an indifferent jailer. If the prisoners had not been bound, it was because bonds were useless since twenty-five men were watching over the only way out of the *Ware Atua*.

This hut, backed against the sheer wall at the rear of the fortress, was accessible only by a narrow tongue of land which connected its front to the plateau of the *pā*. Its other sides fell away in steep slopes and overlooked an abyss a hundred feet deep. Descent of that cliff was impossible. Nor would there be any way to escape from the bottom of the battlements. The only way out was the entrance of the *Ware Atua*, and the Māori guarded that tongue of land that united it to the *pā* like a drawbridge. Any escape was impossible, and Glenarvan, after having probed the walls of his prison twenty times, was obliged to recognize it.

The anxious hours of the night were passing. Pitch blackness covered the mountain. Neither moon nor stars disturbed the deep darkness. A few gusts of wind whirled around the flanks of the *pā*. The posts of the hut groaned. The natives’ hearth flared up at this passing wind, and the gleams of firelight flickered through the *Ware Atua*, illuminating the prisoners for a moment: these poor people who were absorbed in their final thoughts. A deathly silence reigned in the hut.

It must have been about four o’clock in the morning when the Major’s attention was aroused by a slight noise which seemed to be coming from behind the posts at the rear of the hut: the wall backing on the massif. MacNabbs at first ignored this noise, but as it continued, he listened more closely; then, intrigued by its persistence, he pressed his ear against the ground to hear it better. It seemed to him that the scratching was someone digging outside.

When he was certain of what he’d heard, the Major slipped near Glenarvan and John Mangles, tore them from their painful thoughts, and led them to the back of the hut.

“Listen,” he said in a low voice, beckoning them to bend down.

The scratches were becoming more pronounced; you could hear small stones grinding against a hard surface as they were rolled away.

"Some beast in its burrow?" said John Mangles.

Glenarvan slapped his forehead. "Who knows. What if it's a man?"

"Man or animal," said the Major, "We will soon find out!"

Wilson and Olbinett joined their companions, and they all began to dig by the wall — John with his dagger, the others with stones torn from the ground or with their fingernails. Mulrady, lying on the ground, watched the company of guarding natives through the gap at the bottom of the mat covering the door.

These savages, motionless around the fire, suspected nothing of what was happening twenty paces from them.

The ground was made up of loose, friable soil that covered the siliceous tuff. Despite the lack of tools, the hole grew quickly. Soon it was evident that a man or men, clinging to the flanks of the *pā*, was cutting a passage in its outer wall. What could be their goal? Did they know of the existence of the prisoners, or did some other venture explain the work that was being undertaken?

The captives redoubled their efforts. Their torn fingers were bleeding, but they kept digging. After half an hour of work, the hole they'd dug had reached a depth of half a metre. They could tell from the louder sounds that only a thin layer of earth prevented immediate communication.

A few more minutes passed, and suddenly the Major withdrew his hand, cut by a sharp blade. He bit back the cry that tried to escape his lips.

John Mangles, digging with the blade of his dagger, avoided the knife that was protruding above the ground, but he seized the hand that held it.

It was a woman's, or a child's hand — a European hand!

Not a word had been uttered, by either side. It was obvious that both sides wanted to keep quiet.

"Is it Robert?" murmured Glenarvan.

But, as low as he had pronounced this name, Mary Grant, who had been awakened by the movements that were taking place in the hut, slipped beside Glenarvan, and seizing that hand all spotted with earth, she covered it with kisses.

"*It is! It is!*" said the girl, who could not have been mistaken, "It's you, my Robert!"

"Yes, little sister," replied Robert, "I am here to save you all! But, be *quite!*"

"Brave child!" said Glenarvan.

"Watch the savages outside," said Robert.

Mulrady, momentarily distracted by the appearance of the child, resumed his observation post. "All is well," he said. "There are only four warriors keeping watch. The others are asleep."

"Courage!" said Wilson.

In an instant, the hole was enlarged, and Robert passed from his sister's arms into Lady Helena's. A long *Phormium* rope was coiled around his body.

"My child, my child," murmured the young woman. "The savages didn't kill you!"

"No, Madame," said Robert. "I do not know how, but during the confusion, I was able to hide myself from their eyes. I crossed the enclosure, and I remained hidden behind shrubs for two days. I slept at night; I wanted to see you again. While the whole tribe was busy with the funeral of the chief, I came to scout the side of the fortress where the prison stands, and I saw that I could reach you. I stole that knife and rope from a deserted hut. Tufts of grass, and branches of shrubs served me as a ladder. I was lucky to find a sort of cave dug in the massif beneath where this hut rests. I had only a few feet to dig in soft ground, and here I am."

Twenty silent kisses were the only answer Robert could get.

"Let's go!" he said in a determined tone.

"Is Paganel down below?" asked Glenarvan.

"Monsieur Paganel?" asked the child, surprised at the question.

"Yes, is he waiting for us?"

"No, my Lord. What? Monsieur Paganel is not here?"

"He's not here, Robert," said Mary Grant.

"What? Didn't you see him?" asked Glenarvan. "You didn't meet in the confusion? You didn't escape together?"

"No, my Lord," said Robert, aghast to learn of the disappearance of his friend Paganel.

"Let's go," said the Major. "There is not a minute to lose. Wherever Paganel is, he can not be worse off than we are. Let's go!"

Indeed, moments were precious. They had to flee. The escape did not present great difficulties, except for an almost perpendicular wall outside the tunnel, but that was only twenty feet. Afterward, the slope offered a gentle descent to the bottom of the mountain. From there, the captives could quickly reach the lower valleys while the Māori, if they came to notice their flight, would be forced to make a very long detour to reach them, since they were unaware of the existence of this tunnel dug between the *Ware Atua* and the outer slope.

The escape began. Every precaution was taken to make it succeed. The captives passed one by one through the narrow tunnel and found themselves in the cave. John Mangles, before leaving the hut, tidied up the debris from their hole and slipped in his turn through the opening, pulling the mats from the hut over the opening behind him. The tunnel was therefore entirely concealed.

It was now necessary to descend the perpendicular wall to the slope, and this descent would have been impossible had Robert not brought the *Phormium* rope.

They unrolled it, fixed it to a projection of rock, and threw it out.

John Mangles felt these *Phormium* filaments, twisted together into a rope, before letting his friends hang on them. They did not appear very strong to him. It was necessary not to risk themselves rashly, for a fall could be fatal.

"This rope can only bear the weight of two people," he said, "so proceed accordingly. Let Lord and Lady Glenarvan go first. When they arrive at the embankment, three tugs on the rope will give us the signal to follow them."

"I'll go first," said Robert. "I found a deep hole at the bottom of the embankment where the first ones down can hide to wait for the others."

"Go, my child," said Glenarvan, shaking the boy's hand.

Robert disappeared through the cave opening. A minute later, three tugs of the rope indicated that he had successfully reached the bottom.

Glenarvan and Lady Helena immediately ventured out of the cave. The darkness was still deep, but a few grey tints were already shading the peaks that rose in the east.

The brisk morning cold revived the young woman. She felt stronger and began her perilous escape.

Glenarvan first, then Lady Helena, slid along the rope to where the perpendicular wall met the top of the embankment. Then Glenarvan, preceding his wife and supporting her, began to descend backwards. He sought for tufts of grass and shrubs to offer him a foothold; he found them first, and then guided the feet of Lady Helena. A few birds, awakened suddenly, flew away with little cries, and the fugitives shuddered when a stone, detached from its hollow, rolled noisily down to the bottom of the mountain.

They had descended half of the slope, when they heard a voice from the opening of the cave.

"Stop!" whispered John Mangles.

Glenarvan, clinging with one hand to a clump of *Tetragonia*, and holding his wife with the other, waited, barely breathing.



Glenarvan first, then Lady Helena, slid along the rope

Wilson had heard some noise outside the *Ware Atua*. He had returned to the hut, and, raising the mat, he was observing the Māori. At a signal from him, John had stopped Glenarvan.

One of the warriors, aroused by some strange sound, had gotten up and approached the *Ware Atua*. Standing a stone's throw from the hut, he listened with his head cocked. He remained in this attitude for a minute that seemed like an hour, listening and watching intently. Then, shaking his head like a man who misapprehended himself, he returned to his companions, took an armful of dead wood, and threw it into the half-extinguished fire, reviving its flames. His face, brightly lit, betrayed no more preoccupation, and after observing the first glimmers of dawn lightening the horizon, he settled down by the fire to warm his cold limbs.

"Everything is fine," Wilson said.

John motioned Glenarvan to resume his descent. Glenarvan slid gently down the slope; soon he and Lady Helena stepped onto the narrow path where Robert was waiting for them.

The rope was shaken three times, and in turn John Mangles, preceding Mary Grant, followed the perilous way. When they reached the bottom they joined Lord and Lady Glenarvan in the depression found by Robert.

Five minutes later, all the fugitives, so fortuitously escaped from the *Ware Atua*, left their provisional retreat, and fleeing the inhabited banks of the lake, they plunged along narrow paths deeper into the mountains.

They moved quickly, trying to avoid any place where some lookout might see them. They did not speak, they slid like shadows through the shrubs. Where were they going? They didn't know, but they were free.

The day began to dawn at about five o'clock. Shades of blue marbled the high clouds. The misty peaks emerged from the morning fog. The day star would soon appear, and this sun, instead of signalling the beginning of the torture, would, on the contrary, announce the flight of the condemned.

It was necessary to put as much distance as possible between themselves and the natives before their escape was discovered, but they could not move quickly over the steep trails. Lady Helena climbed the slopes, supported — not to say carried — by Glenarvan, and Mary Grant leaned on the arm of John Mangles. Robert — happy, triumphant, his heart full of joy at his success — led the march. The two sailors brought up the rear.

Another half hour, and the sun would emerge from the mists of the horizon.

The fugitives went on as chance led them for half an hour. Paganel was not there to guide them. They were all concerned about Paganel; his absence cast a dark shadow over their happiness. They headed east, as nearly as possible, and advanced toward a

magnificent dawn. Soon they had reached a height of five hundred feet above Lake Taupo, and the morning chill, increased by this altitude, stung them sharply. Indistinct forms of hills and mountains stood one above the other; but Glenarvan only wanted to get lost. Later, he would look for a way out of this mountainous labyrinth.

At last the sun appeared, and sent its first rays to meet the fugitives.

Suddenly a terrible scream, made up of a hundred cries, burst into the air. It rose from the *pā*. Glenarvan didn't know its exact position. A thick curtain of mists stretching under his feet prevented him from seeing into the low valleys.

But the fugitives could not doubt that their escape was discovered. Would they escape the pursuit of the natives? Had they been seen? Would their tracks betray them?

The lower fog rose, momentarily enveloping them with a damp cloud before it cleared, and they saw, three hundred feet below them, the frenetic mass of natives.

They saw, but they had also been seen. A hue and cry broke out, and the whole tribe, after trying in vain to climb the rock walls by the *Ware Atua*, rushed out of the *pā*, and darted by the shortest paths in pursuit of the prisoners who were fleeing their vengeance.



The day began to dawn at about five o'clock

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[fn1.](#) Verne has "Wahiti Ranges" here, but I can find no reference to any mountain range with that name anywhere in New Zealand. I have substituted "Huiarau" which is the name of the mountains east of Lake Taupo (though they are quite a bit farther east than the mountains Verne describes.) I can also find no reference to any mountains named Tuhahua or Puketapu west of Lake Taupo, but I left those names unchanged. "Pūke tāpu" means "the sacred hill" and can be a person's name, but doesn't seem to apply to any particular mountain. — DAS

## Chapter XIV

### The *Tapu* Mountain

THE SUMMIT OF THE MOUNTAIN WAS STILL A HUNDRED FEET ABOVE THEM. THE FUGITIVES HOPED to disappear from the Māori's sight on the opposite side. They hoped that some passable ridge would allow them to reach the jumble of neighbouring peaks, an intricate network of mountains which poor Paganel would have doubtless, if he had been with them, sorted out the complications.

They hurried up the mountain, pursued by the shouts which were getting closer and closer. The pursuing horde arrived at the foot of the mountain.

*"Courage, my friends! Courage!"* shouted Glenarvan, encouraging his companions with voice and gesture.

In less than five minutes they reached the summit. There, they paused to judge the situation and to choose a direction which might evade the Māori.

From this height their gaze took in all of Lake Taupo, which stretched westward in its picturesque setting of mountains; to the northwest, the peaks of Pirongia; to the south, the fiery crater of Tongariro. But to the east, the eye stumbled against the barrier of peaks and ridges which formed the Huiarau Ranges, part of the chain of ranges that crosses the whole northern island from the East Cape to Cook Strait. They had to descend the opposite side and enter its narrow gorges, perhaps without exit.

Glenarvan glanced anxiously around him. The fog had melted in the rays of the sun; his gaze penetrated into the smallest hollows of the ground. No Māori movement could escape his sight.

The natives were not five hundred feet from him when they reached the plateau on which the solitary cone rested.

Glenarvan could not prolong this halt for a moment. Exhausted or not, they had to flee, or they would be surrounded.

*"Let's go!"* he exclaimed, *"let's go before we're cut off!"*

But as the poor women were rising by a desperate effort, MacNabbs stopped them.

*"It's unnecessary, Glenarvan,"* he said. *"See."*

And all, indeed, saw the inexplicable change that had occurred in the onrush of the Māori.

Their pursuit had suddenly stopped. The assault on the mountain had ceased as if by an peremptory command. The band of natives had ceased its momentum, and had stopped like the waves of the sea breaking against an immovable rock.

All these savages — hungry for blood — now ranged around the foot of the mountain, howling, gesticulating, waving their guns and axes, but they did not advance

one foot up the mountain. Their dogs, also rooted on the spot, barked furiously.

What was going on? What invisible power held the natives? The fugitives looked down without understanding, fearing that the charm which chained the tribe of Kai-Kúmu would break.

Suddenly, John Mangles uttered a cry that made his companions turn around. He pointed toward a small fortress raised at the top of the cone.

"It's the tomb of Chief Kára-Téte!" exclaimed Robert.

"Are you sure, Robert?" asked Glenarvan.

"Yes, my Lord, it is the tomb! I recognize it."

Robert was correct. Fifty feet above, at the very top of the mountain, freshly painted posts formed a small, palisaded enclosure. Glenarvan too, now recognized the tomb of the Māori chief. The fortunes of their escape had brought them to the very top of Maunganamu.

The Lord, followed by his companions, climbed the last slopes of the cone to the very foot of the tomb. A wide opening covered with mats gave access to it. Glenarvan was about to enter the interior of the *Údu pá* when he suddenly stepped back sharply.

"A savage!" he said.

"A savage in this tomb?" asked the Major.

"Yes, MacNabbs."

"What does it matter? Go in."

Glenarvan, the Major, Robert, and John Mangles entered the compound. There was a Māori there, wearing a large *Phormium* cloak. The gloom of the *Údu pá* hid his features. He seemed very quiet, and was eating his breakfast with the utmost casualness. Glenarvan was about to speak to him, when the native, very politely, and with a kind voice, spoke to him in good English.

"Sit down please, my dear Lord, breakfast is waiting for you."

It was Paganel. On hearing his voice, everyone rushed into the *Údu pá* to exchange joyous hugs with the excellent geographer. Paganel was found! They were all saved! They all wanted to question him. They wanted to know how and why he was at the top of Maunganamu, but Glenarvan stopped this untimely curiosity.

"The savages!" he said.

"The savages," Paganel shrugged. "I supremely despise those people!"

"But can't they...?"

"Them? The fools! Come see them!"

They all followed Paganel out of the *Údu pá*. The Māori surrounding the foot of the cone, and uttering frightful shouts hadn't moved.

"Shout! Yell! Wear yourselves out, you stupid creatures!" cried Paganel. "I challenge you to climb this mountain!"

"Why?" asked Glenarvan.

"Because the chief is buried here; because his tomb protects us; because the mountain is *tapu*!"

"*Tapu*?"

"Yes, my friends! And that is why I took refuge here, as many wretches in the middle ages took sanctuary in a church."

"God is on our side!" exclaimed Lady Helena, raising her hands to the heavens.

Paganel was correct. The mount was *tapu*, and because of its consecration the superstitious savages would not invade it.

This wasn't an escape for the fugitives, but it gave them a respite that they hoped would benefit them. Glenarvan, overcome by indescribable emotion, did not say a word, and the Major shook his head with a truly satisfied air.

"And now, my friends," said Paganel, "if these brutes believe they can wait us out, they are mistaken. We will be out of the reach of these rascals within two days."

"We will escape!" said Glenarvan. "But how?"

"I do not know," said Paganel, "but we will think of something."

Everyone wanted to know about the geographer's adventures. It was somewhat bizarre, but for such a loquacious man he was showing singular restraint in describing what had befallen him. It was necessary to drag his account from his lips in bits and pieces. He, who normally loved to talk so much, replied to many of his friends' questions with evasions.

"They have changed my Paganel," thought MacNabbs.

In fact, the appearance of the worthy scholar had changed. He wrapped himself tightly in his vast *Phormium* shawl, and seemed to avoid too inquisitive looks. His embarrassed manner when someone asked about him escaped no one, but by discretion, no one seemed to notice them. Moreover, when Paganel was no longer the subject he resumed his usual playfulness.

As for his recollections, here is what he thought fit to tell his companions when they were all seated near him at the foot of the *Údu pá*'s palisade:



"Sit down please, my dear Lord."

After the death of Kára-Téte, Paganel, like Robert, took advantage of the natives' turmoil, and escaped the enclosure of the *pā*. But, less fortunate than the young Grant, he stumbled into another Māori encampment. This camp was commanded by a handsome, intelligent-looking chief, evidently superior to all the warriors of his tribe. This leader spoke good English, and welcomed the geographer with the nose to nose *hongi* greeting in which two people exchange the breath of life.

At first, Paganel wondered whether he should consider himself a prisoner or not. But he soon found that he could not take a step without being kindly accompanied by the chief, so he knew what to expect in this respect.

This chief, named "Híhi," which means "sunbeam," was not a wicked man. The geographer's spectacles and telescope seemed to give him a high regard for Paganel, and he attached him particularly to himself, not only by granting him his protection, but also by strong *Phormium* chords. Especially at night.

This situation lasted three long days. They asked if he was well or poorly treated, to which Paganel would only say "Yes and no," without further explanation. In short, he was a prisoner, and except for the prospect of immediate execution, his condition seemed to him hardly more enviable than that of his unfortunate friends.

Fortunately, one night he managed to gnaw through his ropes and escape. He had witnessed the burial of the chief from afar. He knew that he had been buried at the top of Maunganamu, and that this had made the mountain *tapu*. It was there that he resolved to take refuge — not wishing to leave the area where his companions were detained. He succeeded in his perilous escape. He arrived at the tomb of Kára-Téte last night, and waited there, "while recovering strength," hoping that Heaven might, through some chance, deliver his friends.

That was Paganel's story. Did he purposely omit certain incidents from his stay with the natives? More than once his evident embarrassment made everyone believe so. Be that as it may, he received unanimous congratulations, and with his story completed they returned their concern to the present.

Their situation was extremely dire. The natives, if they did not venture to climb up Maunganamu, counted on hunger and thirst to drive their prisoners down. It was only a matter of time, and the savages have long patience.

Glenarvan had no illusions about the difficulties of his position, but he resolved to wait for favourable circumstances, or to make them, if necessary.

First, Glenarvan wished to carefully scout his improvised fortress of Maunganamu — not to defend it, for attack was not to be feared, but to find a way to leave it. He, the Major, John, Robert, and Paganel made a survey of the mountain. They observed the directions of the paths, their ends, their slopes. A ridge, one mile long which united Maunganamu to the Huiarau Range, descended close to the plain. Its spine, narrow and

capriciously contoured, presented the only feasible route by which an escape might be made. If the fugitives crossed it unnoticed in the night, perhaps they would be able to get into the deep valleys of the Ranges and evade the Māori warriors.

But this route offered more than one danger. At its lowest point, it passed within gunshot range of the Māori. Natives posted on the lower slopes could set up a crossfire there, and stretch a net of lead across the ridge that no one could pass with impunity.

Glenarvan and his friends, having ventured onto the dangerous part of the ridge, were saluted with a hail of lead which fell short of them. A few bits of smouldering wadding, carried by the wind, did reach them. They were made of printed paper which Paganel picked up out of pure curiosity and deciphered with some difficulty.

"Ha!" he said. "Do you know, my friends, what these animals stuff their rifles with?"

"No, Paganel," said Glenarvan.

"With slips of the Bible! If this is the use they make of sacred verses, I pity the missionaries! They will have trouble founding Māori libraries."

"And what passage of the holy books have these natives fired at us?" asked Glenarvan.

"A word from Almighty God," said John Mangles, who had just read the paper singed by the explosion. "This word tells us to hope in Him," added the Captain, with the unshakable conviction of his Scottish faith.

"Read it, John," said Glenarvan.

And John read this verse that survived the explosion of the powder. "Psalm 91:14. 'Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.'"

"My friends, we must deliver these words of hope to our brave and dear companions," said Glenarvan. "This is something that will revive their hearts."

Glenarvan and his companions returned up the steep slopes of the cone to the tomb they wished to further examine.

On the way, they were astonished at times to feel a slight vibration in the ground. It was not a shaking, but more like the continuous vibration experienced by the walls of a boiler. Vapour arising from the action of the subterranean fires was evidently stored under great pressure within the envelope of the mountain.

This could not particularly amaze people who had just passed between the hot springs of the Waikato. They knew that this central region of *Te Ika-a-Māui* is essentially volcanic. It is a veritable sieve whose fabric lets the Earth's vapours escape through boiling springs and solfataras.

Paganel, who had already observed it, called the attention of his friends to the volcanic nature of the mountain. Maunganamu was just one of the many cones that bristle in the central plateau of the island. It was a volcano in the making. The slightest mechanical action could create a crater in its walls made of a siliceous and whitish tuff.

“Indeed,” said Glenarvan, “but we are no more in danger here than with the *Duncan’s* boiler. The crust of the Earth makes a solid plate!”

“True,” said the Major. “But a boiler, good as it may be, always breaks down after a long service.”

“MacNabbs,” said Paganel, “I do not wish to stay on this cone. Let Heaven show me a passable road, and I will leave it at once.”

“Ah! Why can’t this Maunganamu take us himself,” said John Mangles. “So much mechanical power is contained in its flanks! There may be, under our feet, the strength of several millions of horses, sterile and lost! Our *Duncan* could carry us to the ends of the world with a thousandth of this power!”

This memory of the *Duncan* evoked by John Mangles brought the saddest thoughts back to Glenarvan’s mind. As desperate as his own situation was, he often forgot it to mourn the fate of his crew.

He was still thinking of them when he returned to his companions in misfortune at the top of Maunganamu.

Lady Helena came to him as soon as she saw him. “My dear Edward, did you reconnoiter our position? Should we hope or fear?”

“Hope, my dear Helena,” said Glenarvan. “The natives will never climb the mountain, and in time we will form an escape plan.”

“Besides, Madame,” said John Mangles, “God himself recommends for us to hope.”

He handed Lady Helena the page of the Bible which contained the sacred verse. The young woman and the girl — with their confident souls, their hearts open to all the interventions of Heaven — saw an infallible omen of salvation in these words from the holy book.

“Now, to the *Údu pá!*” said Paganel, gayly. “This is our fortress, our castle, our dining room, our office! Nobody will bother us! Ladies, allow me to do you the honours of this charming dwelling.”

They followed the amiable Paganel. When the savages saw the fugitives again desecrating this *tapu* tomb they fired numerous gunshots, and terrible howls arose — each as noisy as the other. But fortunately, the bullets did not carry as far as the cries and fell half way, while the shouts were lost in the air.

Lady Helena, Mary Grant, and their companions — quite reassured by seeing that the Māori superstition was even stronger than their anger — entered the funereal monument.

The *Údu pá* of the Māori chief was a palisade of red painted posts. Symbolic figures, a veritable tattoo on wood, told of the nobility and the deeds of the deceased. Strings of amulets, shells or cut stones, swayed between the poles. Inside, the ground was covered

with a carpet of green leaves. A slight mound in the centre betrayed the freshly dug grave.

The chief's weapons rested there: his loaded and primed rifles, his spear, and his superb green jade axe, along with a sufficient supply of powder and bullets for the eternal hunts.

"That's a whole arsenal," said Paganel, "we'll make better use of it than the deceased. It's a good thing that these savages carry their weapons into the other world!"

"Hey! These are English manufactured guns!" said the Major.

"No doubt," said Glenarvan. "It is a foolish custom to give firearms to the savages that they can then turn against their invaders, and they are right to do so! In any case, these guns can be useful to us!"

"But what will be more useful to us," said Paganel, "are the food and water destined for Kára-Téte."

Indeed, the family and friends of the deceased had not been stingy. The supply testified to their esteem for the virtues of the chief. There was enough food to feed ten people for fifteen days, or rather the deceased for eternity. These plant-based foods consisted of ferns, sweet potatoes: indigenous *Ipomoea batatas*, and potatoes imported into the country long ago by Europeans. Large vases contained the pure water which appears in Māori meals, and a dozen artistically woven baskets contained tablets of an unknown green gum.

The fugitives were therefore provisioned against hunger and thirst for a few days. They had no compunctions against taking their first meal at the expense of the chief.

Glenarvan noted that they had the food they needed, and entrusted it to the care of Mr. Olbinett. The steward, always formal even in the most serious situations, found the menu of the meal a little thin. Besides, he did not know how to prepare these roots, and he had no fire. But Paganel took matters in hand, and advised him to simply bury the ferns and sweet potatoes in the soil itself.

The temperature of the upper layers was very high, and a thermometer sunk in this ground would certainly have indicated a temperature of sixty to sixty-five degrees.<sup>[fn1](#)</sup> Olbinett was even very nearly seriously scalded, for as he was digging a hole in which to deposit his roots, a column of steam burst forth, and whistled a fathom up into the air.

The steward fell back, terrified.

"Shut the tap!" cried the Major, who, with the aid of the two sailors, ran up and filled the hole with pumice debris while Paganel contemplated this phenomenon with a strange expression on his face.

"*Tiens! Tiens!*" he murmured to himself. "*Hé! Hé! Pourquoi pas?*"<sup>[fn2](#)</sup>

"Are you hurt?" MacNabbs asked Olbinett.

"No, Mr. MacNabbs," said the steward, "but I did not expect so much—"

“So many blessings from Heaven!” Paganel exclaimed cheerfully. “After the water and the food of Kára-Téte, the fire of the Earth! This mountain is a paradise! I propose to found a colony here, to cultivate it, to settle here for the rest of our days! We will be the Robinsons of Maunganamu! In truth, I search in vain for what we miss on this comfortable cone!”

“Nothing, if it’s solid,” said John Mangles.

“Well! It was not made yesterday,” said Paganel. “It has resisted the force of the interior fires for a long time, and it will hold until well after we leave.”

“Breakfast is served,” announced Mr. Olbinett, as gravely as if he had been performing his duties at Malcolm Castle.

At once the fugitives, seated near the palisade, began one of those meals which for some time Providence had sent them precisely when it was most needed.

There was little choice in what to eat, and opinions were divided on the edible fern root. Some found it sweet and pleasant to the taste, the others bland, perfectly tasteless, and a remarkably tough. The sweet potatoes cooked in the hot earth were excellent. The geographer remarked that Kára-Téte was not to be pitied.

Then, hunger sated, Glenarvan proposed that they discuss their escape plan without delay.

“Already!” said Paganel, in a truly pitiful tone. “How are you thinking about leaving this place of delights?”

“But Monsieur Paganel,” said Lady Helena. “Admitting that we are at Capua, you know that we must not imitate Hannibal!”

“Madame,” replied Paganel, “I will not allow myself to contradict you, and since you wish to discuss it, let us discuss.”

“I think first of all,” said Glenarvan, “that we must attempt an escape before being driven out by hunger. We still have our strength, and we must take advantage of it. Next night, we will try to reach the valleys of the east by crossing the circle of natives under the cover of darkness.”

“Perfect,” replied Paganel, “if the Māori let us pass.”

“What if they stop us?” asked John Mangles.



The steward fell back

“Then we will use drastic measures,” said Paganel.

“So, you have drastic measures?” asked the Major.

“More than I know what to do with!” said Paganel without further explanation.

It only remained to wait for the night to try to cross the line of the natives.

They had not gone away. Their ranks even seemed to have grown with the arrival of the tribe’s stragglers. Burning hearths formed a belt of fires spread around the base of the cone. When darkness invaded the surrounding valleys, Maunganamu appeared to rise out of a vast fire while its summit was lost in a thick darkness. The agitation, shouts, and murmur of the enemy’s camp could be heard six hundred feet below.

At nine o’clock, when it was very dark, Glenarvan and John Mangles resolved to make a reconnaissance before leading their companions on this dangerous path. They descended quietly for about ten minutes, and mounted the narrow ridge which crossed the native line, fifty feet above the camp.

All was well until then. The Māori lying near their fires did not seem to see the two fugitives, who took a few more steps. Suddenly, to the left and right of the ridge, a double fusillade broke out.

“Back!” shouted Glenarvan. “These bandits have cat’s eyes and riflemen!”

He and John Mangles immediately ascended the steep slopes of the mountain, and promptly reassured their friends, frightened by the gunfire. Glenarvan’s hat had been shot twice. It was impossible to cross the lengthy ridge between these two ranks of skirmishers.

“I’ll see you in the morning,” said Paganel. “And since we can not deceive the vigilance of these natives, you will allow me to serve them a dish of my own!”

The night was quite cold. Fortunately, Kára-Tête had carried his best night clothes to his grave. The fugitives had no scruples against wrapping themselves in these warm *Phormium* blankets, and soon, guarded by the native superstition, they slept quietly in the shelter of the palisades on this lukewarm soil, shivering with interior bubbling.

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[fn1.](#) 140° to 150° Fahrenheit. — DAS

[fn2.](#) “Wait! Wait! Hey! Hey! Why not?” — DAS

## Chapter XV

### Paganel's "Drastic Measures"

THE NEXT DAY, FEBRUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, THE FIRST RAYS OF THE RISING SUN AWAKENED THE SLEEPERS ON Maunganamu. The Māori had been stirring for some time, coming and going from around the foot of the cone without abandoning their encirclement. A furious clamour greeted the appearance of the Europeans coming out of the desecrated enclosure.

Each of them took their first look at the surrounding mountains; deep valleys, still drenched in mists; and the surface of Lake Taupo, rippled by the morning breeze.

Then they all gathered around Paganel expectantly, anxious to learn about his new project.

Paganel immediately responded to the eager curiosity of his companions. "My friends, my project has the advantage that if it does not produce all the effect I expect, even if it fails completely, our situation will not be worse. But it must succeed; it will succeed."

"And this project?" asked MacNabbs.

"Here it is," said Paganel. "The natives' superstition has made this mountain a place of asylum; superstition will help us to get off of it. If we succeed in persuading Kai-Kúmu that we have been the victims of our desecration, that heavenly wrath has struck us, that we died a terrible death, do you believe that he will abandon this plateau? Leave Maunganamu and return to his village?"

"That is likely," said Glenarvan.

"And what horrible death are you threatening us with?" asked Lady Helena.

"The death of desecrators, my friends," answered Paganel. "The vengeful flames are under our feet. Let us open them!"

"What? You want to *make a volcano!*" exclaimed John Mangles.

"Yes, a dummy volcano, an improvised volcano, whose fury we will direct! There is a whole supply of steam and underground fire waiting to come out! Let us organize an artificial eruption for our benefit!"

"That's quite an idea," said the Major. "Well imagined, Paganel!"

"You understand," said the geographer, "that we will pretend to be devoured by the flames of the Māori Pluto, and that we will disappear spiritually into the tomb of Kára-Téte where we will stay three, four, five days, if necessary, until the savages, convinced of our death, abandon the field."

"But what if they want to witness our punishment?" asked Miss Grant. "What if they climb the mountain?"

“No, my dear Mary,” said Paganel. “They will not do it. The mountain is *tapu*, and when she has devoured her profaners herself, her *tapu* will be even stronger!”

“This really is a good idea,” said Glenarvan. “The only way it can go wrong is if the savages persist in staying so long at the foot of Maunganamu that we run out of food. But this is unlikely, especially if we play our game skillfully.”

“And when will we try this last chance?” asked Lady Helena.

“This very evening,” said Paganel, “as soon as it is fully dark.”

“Agreed,” said MacNabbs. “Paganel, you are a man of genius and I — who do not easily get excited — anticipate a great success. *Ah*, those scoundrels! We will serve them a little miracle which will delay their conversion by a good century! May the missionaries forgive us!”

Paganel’s plan was adopted, and truly, with the superstitious beliefs of the Māori, it had every chance of success. Only its execution remained. The idea was good, but its implementation difficult. Would this volcano devour those daring to create a crater in it? Could they control, and direct this eruption when its vapours, flames, and lava were unleashed? Might the entire cone sink into a pit of fire? They were touching one of those phenomena on which nature reserved an absolute monopoly.

Paganel had foreseen these difficulties so he intended to act with caution, and without pushing things to the extreme. It only took the appearance to deceive the Māori, and not the terrible reality of an eruption.

The day seemed very long. Everyone counted the endless hours. Everything was prepared for the escape. The provisions of the *Údu pá* had been divided into small, manageable packs. A few mats and firearms taken from the chief’s tomb completed this light baggage. It goes without saying that these preparations were made inside the palisaded enclosure, out of sight from the savages.

At six o’clock the steward served a comforting meal. No one could foresee where and when they would eat in the valleys of the district, so they dined for the future. The main dish consisted of half a dozen big stewed rats that Wilson had caught. Lady Helena and Mary Grant stubbornly refused to taste this game so esteemed in New Zealand, but the men feasted like real Māori. This flesh was really excellent, even tasty, and the six rodents were gnawed to the bone.

Evening twilight arrived. The sun disappeared behind a band of thick, stormy clouds. A few lightning flashes illuminated the horizon, and distant thunder rolled across the depths of the sky.

Paganel hailed the storm that helped his plans and completed his staging. The savages are superstitiously affected by these great phenomena of nature. The Māori believe the thunder to be the irritated voice of *Nui Atua* and the lightning is the angry

flashing of his eyes. The deity would therefore appear to personally punish the profaners of the *tapu*. At eight o'clock, the summit of Maunganamu disappeared in a sinister darkness. The sky gave a black background to the blossoming of flames that Paganel's hand was about to produce. The Māori could no longer see their prisoners. The moment to act had come.

It had to be done quickly. Glenarvan, Paganel, MacNabbs, Robert, the steward, and the two sailors set to work together.

The location of the crater was chosen thirty paces down from the tomb of Kára-Téte. It was important, even critical, that the *Údu pá* was spared from the eruption, because without it the *tapu* of the mountain would be erased. Paganel had noticed an enormous block of stone there around which vapours poured out especially strongly. This block covered a small natural crater dug in the cone, and its weight alone opposed the effusion of the underground flames. If it could be thrown out of its cavity the vapours and lava would immediately burst through the open vent.

The workers made levers with the poles pulled up from inside the *Údu pá*, and vigorously attacked the rocky mass. Under their simultaneous efforts the rock soon began to shake. They had dug a shallow trench below it on the slope of the mountain so that it could slip on this inclined plane. As they lifted it up, the vibrations of the ground became more violent.

Dull roars of flame, and the whistling of a furnace ran under the thinned crust. The daring workmen, veritable cyclopes wielding the fires of the Earth, worked silently. Soon, a few cracks and jets of burning steam told them that the place was becoming dangerous. A final effort tore the block loose, and it slid down the slope of the mount and disappeared.

The thinned layer immediately yielded. A violent detonation sent an incandescent column shooting up into the sky while streams of boiling water and lava flowed toward the natives' encampment in the lower valley.

The whole cone shook as if it was about to collapse into a bottomless chasm. Glenarvan and his companions barely had time to escape the eruption. They fled to the



They attacked the rocky mass with levers

enclosure of the *Údu pá* while being hit by a few drops of nearly boiling water. This water at first gave off a slight odour of broth, which soon changed into a very strong odour of sulphur.

The mud, lava, and volcanic ash were merged into the same conflagration. Torrents of fire crisscrossed the flanks of Maunganamu. The nearby mountains lit up with the fire of the eruption. The deep valleys echoed with intense reverberations.

All the savages had risen, screaming under the bite of the lava burning into the middle of their bivouac. Those whom the river of fire had not overwhelmed fled up the surrounding hills. They turned, frightened, and surveyed this frightful phenomenon: the volcano with which the wrath of their god had destroyed the profaners of the sacred mountain. At moments when the roar of the eruption waned they could be heard screaming their sacramental cry.

*"Tapu! Tapu! Tapu!"*

A huge quantity of vapour, burning stones, and lava escaped from the new crater of Maunganamu. It was no longer a mere geyser like those near Mount Hecla in Iceland, but Mount Hecla itself. All this volcanic suppuration had hitherto been contained under the envelope of the cone because the valves of Tongariro were sufficient for its release. But when a new escape opened it rushed out with extreme vehemence, and that night, by a law of equilibrium, the other eruptions of the island were to lose their usual intensity.

An hour after the debut of this volcano on the world stage, large streams of incandescent lava flowed on its flanks. A whole legion of rats could be seen coming out of their uninhabitable holes and fleeing the burning ground.

During the whole night, and under the storm that was unleashed in the heights of the sky, the cone shook with a violence that worried Glenarvan. The eruption gnawed at the edges of the crater.

The prisoners, hidden within the palisade, followed the frightful progress of the phenomenon.



An incandescent column shot up into the sky

The morning came. The volcanic fury did not abate. Thick yellowish vapour mingled with the flames. The streams of lava wound out on all sides.

Glenarvan kept watch, his heart throbbing, glancing through the interstices of the stockade and observing the natives' encampment.

The Māori had fled to neighbouring plateaus, out of reach of the volcano. Some corpses lying at the foot of the cone were charred by the fire. Farther on, toward the *pā*, the lava had destroyed about twenty huts, which still smoked. The Māori, in scattered groups, regarded Maunganamu's shrouded summit with a religious terror.

Kai-Kúmu came, surrounded by his warriors, and Glenarvan recognized him. The chief advanced to the foot of the cone on the side untouched by the lava, but he did not ascend even the lowest slopes.

There, his arms outstretched like a sorcerer performing an exorcism, he made a few gestures whose meaning did not escape the prisoners. As Paganel had foreseen, Kai-Kúmu was laying a stronger *tapu* on the vengeful mountain.

Soon after, the natives filed away down the winding paths that led back to the *pā*.

"*They're leaving!*" exclaimed Glenarvan. "*They've given up! God be praised! Our stratagem has succeeded! My dear Helena, my good companions: we are dead, and here we are buried! But tonight, we will be resurrected; we will leave our tomb; we will flee these barbarous tribes!*"

It would be difficult to imagine the joy that reigned in the *Údu pā*. Hope had risen in all their hearts. These courageous travellers forgot the past, forgot the future, and thought only of the present! And yet they still had the difficult task of reaching some European settlement in the midst of this unknown country. But with Kai-Kúmu outwitted they thought they were saved from all the savages of New Zealand!

The Major, for his part, did not hide the utter contempt in which he held the Māori, and he did not lack the words to express it. It became a contest between him and Paganel. They called them unforgivable brutes, stupid donkeys, Pacific idiots, Bedlam savages, antipodean cretins, etc., etc. They did not run out of epithets.

A whole day had to pass before the final escape. It was employed discussing a flight plan. Paganel had preciousely kept his map of New Zealand, and he was able to seek the safest ways.

After discussion, the fugitives resolved to move north, <sup>fn1</sup> toward the Bay of Plenty. They would be passing through unknown but probably deserted territory. The travellers — already accustomed to extricating themselves from natural difficulties, and overcoming physical obstacles — feared nothing but meeting the Māori. They wanted to avoid them at all costs, and to reach the northern coast of the island where missionaries

had founded a few settlements. Moreover, that part of the island had so far escaped the disasters of the war, and native parties did not campaign there.

The distance between Lake Taupo and the Bay of Plenty was estimated to be a hundred miles: [fn2](#) ten days of walking at ten miles a day. This could be done; it would be exhausting, but in this courageous troop no one counted their steps. Once they reached a mission the travellers could rest there while waiting for a favourable opportunity to go on to Auckland, since this city was still their ultimate destination.

These various points decided, they continued to watch the natives until evening. There were none left at the foot of the mountain, and when the valleys around Lake Taupo fell into the shadows, no fire marked the presence of Māori at the bottom of the cone. The path was clear.

At nine o'clock, in the dark of night, Glenarvan gave the signal to depart. He and his companions, armed and equipped at the expense of Kára-Téte, began to cautiously descend the ramps of Maunganamu. John Mangles and Wilson were in the lead, ears and eyes on watch. They stopped at the slightest sound, they investigated the slightest gleam. Each of them crawled down the slope of the mountain to be better concealed by it.

Two hundred feet above the plateau, John Mangles and his sailor reached the perilous ridge that had been defended so obstinately by the natives. If, unfortunately, the Māori were more cunning than the fugitives, and had feigned a retreat to lure them down — if they had not been duped by the volcanic eruption — this was where their trap would be set. Glenarvan, despite all his confidence and despite Paganel's jokes, could not help but shudder. The salvation of his people was going to be played out during the ten minutes necessary to cross this crest. Lady Helena clung to his arm. He could feel her heart beating.

He did not consider going back. Neither did John. The young Captain, hidden by the complete darkness, and followed by the rest, crept along the narrow ridge, stopping when some loose stone rolled to the bottom of the plateau. If the savages were still waiting in ambush below, these unusual noises would have provoked a furious fusillade from both sides.

The fugitives did not go quickly, slipping like a snake across the inclined ridge. When John Mangles reached the lowest point, only twenty-five feet separated him from the plateau where the natives had camped the night before. The ridge now rose up in a steep slope to a copse of trees, a quarter of a mile ahead.

They crossed the low saddle of the ridge without accident, and the travellers began to go up in silence. The cluster of trees was invisible, but they knew it was there. And provided a native ambush was not prepared in it, Glenarvan hoped for it to be a safe place. However, he knew that from this moment he was no longer protected by the *tapu*.

The rising ridge did not belong to Maunganamu, but to the mountainous system that bristled on the eastern side of Lake Taupo. So not only the natives' gunshots, but a hand-to-hand attack was to be feared.

For ten minutes the little troop rose almost imperceptibly toward the upper plateau. John could not yet see the dark copse, but it must have been less than two hundred feet away.

Suddenly he stopped, and almost backed up. He thought he heard some noise in the darkness. His hesitation stopped the movement of his companions.

He remained motionless, and that was enough to disturb those who followed him. They waited in inexpressible anguish! Would they be forced to go back and return to the summit of Maunganamu?

But John, finding that the noise was not repeated, resumed his ascent up the narrow path of the ridge.

Soon the copse was vaguely outlined in the shadows. A few more steps and they reached it, and the fugitives huddled under the thick foliage of the trees.

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[fn1.](#) Verne says that the Bay of Plenty is on the *east* coast here. The map included in the Hetzel edition does put it on the northern coast. — DAS

[fn2.](#) 40 leagues (160 kilometres.) — DAS

## Chapter XVI

### Between Two Fires

IT WAS NECESSARY TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE NIGHT TO TO GET AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FROM the fatal area of Lake Taupo. Paganel took the lead of the little troop, and his marvellous traveller's instinct was revealed again during this difficult journey into the mountains. He maneuvered through the darkness with surprising skill, choosing almost invisible paths without hesitation, not deviating from his chosen direction. His nyctalopia served him well, and his cat-like eyes allowed him to distinguish the smallest objects in the profound darkness.

They walked for three hours along the broad flanks of the eastern ranges, without stopping. Paganel inclined their route a little to the southeast, in order to reach the narrow pass between the Kaimanawa and the Huiarau Ranges used by the road from Auckland to Hawke's Bay. Once through this gorge, he intended to leave the road and — sheltered by the high mountain chains — march to the coast through the uninhabited regions of the province.

By nine o'clock in the morning, they had covered twelve miles in twelve hours. No more could be demanded of the courageous women. Besides, they had reached a good place to camp. The fugitives had reached the pass separating the two chains. The overland road remained to their right and ran south. Paganel, his map in his hand, made a hook to the northeast, and at ten o'clock the little troop reached a natural redan formed by a projection of the mountains. Some of their provisions were taken from the sacks, and they were thankfully consumed. Mary Grant and the Major, who had not cared for the edible fern until then, enjoyed it that day. They rested until two o'clock in the afternoon before they continued eastward. In the evening the travellers were eight miles from the mountains when they stopped. No one objected to sleeping in the open air.

The route became more difficult the next day. It was necessary to cross a curious district of volcanic lakes, geysers, and solfataras which extends to the east of the Huiarau Ranges. It was much more delightful to the eyes than to the legs. Every quarter of a mile there were detours, obstacles, and false trails. It was exhausting, but what a strange spectacle, and what an infinite variety of scenery nature provided!

In this vast area of twenty square miles the effusions of the subterranean forces took place in all their forms. Salt springs of strange transparency, populated by myriads of insects, emerged from the cosses of native tea trees. They gave off a penetrating odour of burned powder, and deposited a white residue like dazzling snow on the ground. Their limpid waters were nearly boiling, while other nearby springs flowed in icy sheets.

Gigantic ferns grew on their banks under conditions analogous to those of the Silurian age.

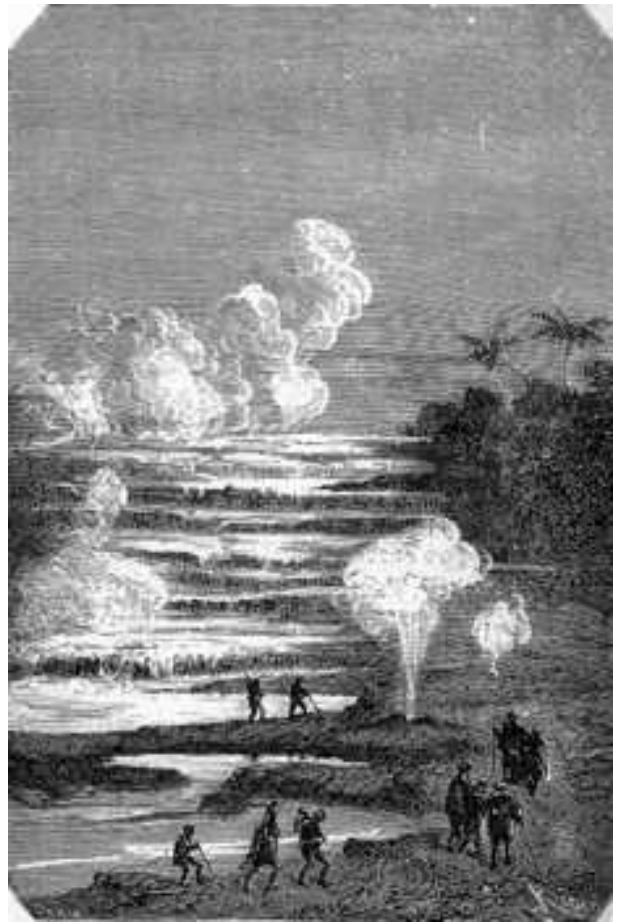
Liquid sheaves, enveloped in swirling vapour, darted from the ground like the fountains of a park on all sides. Some were continuous, others intermittent and subject to the pleasure of a capricious Pluto. They were arranged in amphitheatres of natural terraces layered in a cascade of shallow basins. Their waters were gradually confused beneath the spirals of white steam, and eroding the diaphanous steps of these gigantic staircases, they fed entire lakes with their bubbling waterfalls. Farther on, the hot springs and the tumultuous geysers were succeeded by the solfataras. There were so many half eroded craters, cracked with numerous fissures from which various gases were emerging, that the ground appeared covered with large pustules.

The atmosphere was saturated with the pungent and unpleasant odour of sulphurous acids. Crusts and crystalline concretions of sulphur carpeted the ground. Incalculable sterile riches had accumulated for centuries, and it is to this little known district of New Zealand that industry will come to supply itself, if the *soufrières* of Sicily are exhausted one day.

It is easy to understand how exhausting it was for the travellers to cross these regions bristling with obstacles. Suitable campsites were difficult to find, and the hunters' rifles did not meet a bird worthy of being plucked by Mr. Olbinett. It was most often necessary to be content with ferns and sweet potatoes, a meagre meal which did not recoup the exhausted strength of the little troop. Everyone was eager to leave these arid and deserted lands.

It took no less than four days to cross this impracticable country. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February, only fifty miles from Maunganamu, Glenarvan camped at the foot of an unnamed mountain marked on Paganel's map. Plains of shrubs stretched before him, and the great forests reappeared on the horizon.

This was a good omen, provided that the habitability of these regions didn't bring back too many inhabitants. So far, the travellers had not seen the shadow of a Māori.



Salt springs of strange transparency

MacNabbs and Robert had killed three kiwis that day which figured with honour on the camp table, but not for long, to tell the truth, because in a few minutes they were devoured from beaks to feet.

Then at dessert, between potatoes and sweet potatoes, Paganel made a motion that was adopted with enthusiasm.

He proposed to give the name "Glenarvan" to the unnamed mountain which rose three thousand feet into the clouds, and he carefully printed the name of the Scottish lord onto his map.

To recount all the rather monotonous and uninteresting events which marked the rest of the journey would be pointless. Only two or three incidents of some importance marked this crossing of the island from the lakes to the Pacific Ocean.

They walked all day through forests and plains. John took sightings of the sun and the stars. The weather was rather mild, sparing its heat and its rains. Nevertheless, increasing exhaustion was slowing these travellers who had been so cruelly tried, and they were eager to reach the missions at the coast. They were still chatting, but not all together. The little troop was divided into groups which formed, not by close sympathy, but a communion of more personal ideas.

Most often Glenarvan walked by himself, thinking of the *Duncan* and her crew as he approached the coast. He forgot the dangers that still threatened him en-route to Auckland to think of his slain sailors. The horrible image would not leave him.

They did not talk about Harry Grant anymore. What good was it, since nothing could be done for him? If the name of the Captain was still mentioned it was in the conversations between his daughter and John Mangles.

John had not reminded Mary of what she had told him during the last night in the *Ware Atua*. His discretion did not allow him to take advantage of a word uttered in a moment of supreme despair.

When he talked about Harry Grant, John always talked of continuing the search. He told Mary that Lord Glenarvan would resume this aborted endeavour. He started from the position that the authenticity of the document could not be doubted, so Harry Grant was alive somewhere. If they had to search the whole world, they would find him. Mary was entranced by these words, and she and John, united by the same thoughts, were now joined in the same hope. Lady Helena often took part in their conversations, but she did not lose herself to so many illusions. And yet, she did not bring these young people back to sad reality.

Meanwhile, MacNabbs, Robert, Wilson, and Mulrady hunted without straying far from the little troop, and each of them supplied his share of game. Paganel, still draped in his *Phormium* cloak, kept aloof, quiet and thoughtful.

And yet, it is good to say — in spite of the law of nature which states that in the midst of trials, danger, exhaustion, and privation, the best of characters may be wrinkled and soured — all these companions in misfortune remained united, devoted, and ready to die for each other.

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, the route was blocked by a river that was marked on Paganel's map as the Waikare. They crossed it.

Plains of scrub succeeded one another for two uninterrupted days. Half the distance between Lake Taupo and the coast had been crossed without an accident, if not without fatigue.

They came to immense and endless woodlands, reminiscent of the Australian forests; but here, *kauris* replaced eucalyptus. Despite the preceding four months of incredible sights, Glenarvan and his companions were still amazed by these gigantic pines: worthy rivals of the cedars of Lebanon, and the mammoth trees of California. These *kauris* — *Agathis australis* to a botanist — grew to one hundred feet in height before branching. They grew in isolated clusters, and the forest was composed not of trees, but of innumerable clumps of trees which extended their parasol of green leaves to two hundred feet in the air.

Some of these pines, still young — scarcely a hundred years old — resembled the red firs of Europe. They carried a dark green crown topped by a sharp cone. On the other hand, their elders — trees five or six centuries old — formed immense tents of greenery supported on an inextricable latticework of branches. These patriarchs of the New Zealand forest measured up to fifty feet in circumference, and the united arms of all the travellers could not encircle their trunks.

For three days the little troop ventured under these vast arches on a clay soil that no man's foot had ever trod. It was easy to see in the heaps of resinous gum piled up in many places at the foot of the *kauris*, which would have supported many years of native exploitation. [fn1](#)

The hunters found many coveys of kiwis, so rare in the middle parts of the island frequented by the Māori. It is in these inaccessible forests that these curious birds have taken refuge from being hunted by the New Zealand dogs. They provided an abundant and healthy food for the travellers' meals.

It even happened that Paganel saw a couple of gigantic birds in a thicket in the distance. His naturalist's instinct was revived. He called his companions, and in spite of their exhaustion, the Major, Robert, and he hurled themselves on the tracks of these animals.

The ardent curiosity of the geographer could be understood, for he had recognized — or believed he recognized — these birds to be “moas,” belonging to the genus of *Dinornis*, which several scholars rank among the extinct varieties. But this meeting confirmed the opinion of Dr. von Hochstetter, and other explorers, that these wingless giants of New Zealand still existed. [fn2](#)

The moas pursued by Paganel, these contemporaries of the *megatheriums* and *pterodactyls*, [fn3](#) were up to eighteen feet in height. They were oversized and easily frightened ostriches, that fled with extreme speed. Not even a rifle bullet could stop them in their flight! After a few minutes of chase, these elusive moas disappeared behind some large trees, and the hunters gained nothing for their pains, or expense of powder.

That evening, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, Glenarvan and his companions finally abandoned the immense forest of *kauris*, and encamped at the foot of Mount Hikurangi, whose summit rose 5,500 feet in the air.

They had travelled nearly a hundred miles since leaving Maunganamu, and the coast was still thirty miles away. John Mangles had hoped to make this crossing in ten days, but he was unaware of the difficulties that this region presented.

The detours, obstacles of the road, and the imperfections of their bearings, had lengthened their trek by a fifth, and unfortunately the travellers who arrived at Mount Hikurangi were completely exhausted.

It would take two more long days of walking to reach the coast. An extreme vigilance, unnecessary for many days, became necessary again for they were returning to a country often frequented by the Māori.

However, everyone tamed their weariness, and the next day the little troop set out at daybreak.

Between Mount Hikurangi, which they passed to their right, and Mount Hardy, the summit of which rose to a height of 3,700 feet on their left, the journey became very painful. For ten miles the plain bristled with “supplejack,” a sort of flexible creeper aptly named “choking vines.” Arms and legs were entangled at every step, and these lianas — veritable serpents — wound their bodies in their tortuous coils. For two days it was necessary to advance with an axe in hand, and to fight against a hydra with a hundred thousand heads. [Paganel would have gladly classified these troubling and tenacious plants among the zoophytes.](#)

Hunting became impossible in these plains, and the hunters no longer brought their accustomed tribute. They reached the end of their provisions; they could not be renewed. There was no water; they could not quell their thirsts, doubled by fatigue.

The sufferings of Glenarvan and his people were horrible, and for the first time their morale was about to abandon them.

Finally, no longer walking, but dragging themselves along, soulless bodies only led by the instinct for survival that outlasted any other feeling, they reached Point Lottin on the shores of the Pacific.

They found some deserted huts — the ruins of a village recently devastated by the war — abandoned fields, marks of plunder and fire everywhere. Destiny had reserved a new and terrible trial for the unfortunate travellers.

They were wandering along the shore when a detachment of natives appeared a mile from the coast. The natives rushed toward them, waving their weapons. Glenarvan, his back to the sea, could not escape, and, drawing his last strength, he was prepared to fight, when John Mangles exclaimed "*A boat, a boat!*"

Twenty paces away, indeed, a boat with six oars was stranded on the beach. To launch it, to jump into it and to flee this dangerous shore, took only a moment. John Mangles, MacNabbs, Wilson, and Mulrady took to the oars; Glenarvan took the rudder; the two women, Olbinett, and Robert lay beside him.

In ten minutes the boat was a quarter mile off the shore. The sea was calm. The fugitives kept a profound silence.

John, not wishing to deviate too far from the coast, was about to follow the shore, when his oar suddenly stopped in his hands.

He had just caught sight of three canoes coming out of Point Lottin, with the evident intention of chasing them.

"*Out to sea! Out to sea!*" he yelled. "*It would be better to perish in the waves!*"

The boat, propelled by its four oars, turned out to sea. For half an hour they were able to maintain their distance; but the poor exhausted rowers were beginning to falter, and the three canoes were noticeably gaining on them. Scarcely two miles now separated them. There was no possibility of avoiding an attack from the natives, who were preparing their rifles to fire.

What was Glenarvan to do? Standing at the back of the boat, he looked for some chimerical help on the horizon. What did he hope for? What could he expect? Did he have a premonition? Suddenly, his gaze caught fire, his hand extended to a point on the horizon.

"*A ship!*" he cried. "*My friends, a ship! Row! Row hard!*"

Not one of the four rowers turned to see this unexpected ship, because one should not lose a stroke of an oar. Only Paganel, getting up, pointed his telescope at the point indicated.

"Yes!" he said. "A ship! A steamer! She's at full steam! She's coming to us! Row hardy, my friends!"

The fugitives found a new energy, and for half an hour they maintained their distance with strong strokes of their oars. The steamer became more and more visible. They could see her two masts, empty of canvas, and big billows of her black smoke. Glenarvan, abandoning the tiller to Robert, had seized the geographer's telescope and was tracking all of the ship's movements.

But what did John Mangles and his companions think when they saw the Lord's features contract, his face turn pale, and the instrument fall from his hands? A single word explained this sudden despair to them.

"The *Duncan*!" cried Glenarvan. "The *Duncan*, and the convicts!"

"The *Duncan*?" cried John, who dropped his oar and got up immediately.

"Yes! Death on both sides!" murmured Glenarvan, broken by so much anguish.

It was indeed the yacht; they could not be mistaken. The yacht with its crew of bandits! The Major could not restrain a curse he threw against the sky. It was too much!

The boat was allowed to drift. Which way to go? Where to flee? Was it possible to choose between savages or convicts?

A gun fired from the nearest native boat, and the bullet struck Wilson's oar. A few strokes of the oars then pushed the boat toward the *Duncan*.

The yacht was steaming only half a mile away. John Mangles, cut off on all sides, did not know where to turn, in which direction to flee. The two poor women, kneeling, desperate, prayed.

The savages fired a volley, and bullets rained around the boat. A loud detonation broke out, and a cannonball, launched by the gun of the yacht, passed over the heads of the fugitives. The latter, caught between two fires, remained motionless between the *Duncan* and the native canoes.

John Mangles, mad with despair, seized his axe. He was about to scuttle the boat, to submerge it with his unfortunate companions, when a cry from Robert stopped him.

"Tom Austin! Tom Austin!" yelled the child. "He's on board! I see him! He's recognized us! He's waving his hat!"

The axe remained hanging on John's arm.



A ball cut the closest of the three canoes in half

A second ball whistled over his head and cut the closest of the three canoes in half, while a “*Hurrah!*” burst out on board the *Duncan*.

The frightened savages fled, and returned to the coast.

“To us! *To us, Tom!*” shouted John Mangles in a loud voice.

And a few moments later the ten fugitives — without knowing how, without understanding anything — were all safely aboard the *Duncan*.

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[fn1. Kauri gum](#) has many uses, both by the Māori, and for export markets. It was one of New Zealand's principle exports in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. — DAS

[fn2.](#) Dr. von Hochstetter, *et al* were mistaken. It is now generally accepted that all varieties of [Dinornis](#) had gone extinct by the 15<sup>th</sup> century. — DAS

[fn3. Megatheriums](#), yes; [pterodactyls](#), no. Pterosaurs had been extinct for sixty-five million years or so before either megatheriums or moas arrived on the scene. — DAS

## Chapter XVII

### How the *Duncan* Came to Be at New Zealand

IT WOULD BE FUTILE TO ATTEMPT TO DEPICT THE FEELINGS OF GLENARVAN AND HIS COMPANIONS when the music of Scotland fell on their ears. By the time they stepped on *Duncan's* deck, the piper, blowing his bagpipes, was playing the Malcolm clan's pibroch, and vigorous "Hurrahs!" saluted the laird's return.

Glenarvan, John Mangles, Paganel, Robert, and even the Major, all cried and embraced one another. At first they were all delirious with joy. The geographer was absolutely mad. He frolicked about, and aimed his inseparable telescope at the remaining canoes that were returning to the coast.

But at the sight of Glenarvan and his companions — their ragged clothes, haggard features, and marks of horrible suffering — the yacht's crew interrupted his demonstrations. It was ghosts who came back on board, and not those bold and brilliant travellers who had set out with such hope on the track of the castaways three months before. Luck, chance alone, had brought them back to this ship which they no longer expected to see again! And in what emaciated and exhausted condition!

But before thinking of his exhaustion, or the pressing needs of hunger and thirst, Glenarvan asked Tom Austin how he came to be here.

Why was the *Duncan* off Point Lottin on the coast of New Zealand? How was she not in the hands of Ben Joyce? By what providential destiny had God brought her across the path of the fugitives?

"Why?" "How?" "For what reason?" Tom Austin was bombarded with questions from all sides. The old sailor did not know who to listen to. He therefore resolved to listen only to Lord Glenarvan, and to answer only to him.

"But the convicts?" asked Glenarvan. "What have you done with the convicts?"



They all cried and embraced one another

"The convicts?" asked Tom Austin in the tone of a man who does not understand the question.

"Yes! The wretches who attacked the yacht?"

"Which yacht?" asked Tom Austin. "Your Honour's yacht?"

"But yes, Tom! The *Duncan*, and Ben Joyce who came on board?"

"I do not know any Ben Joyce; I've never seen him," said Austin.

"Never?" cried Glenarvan, stupefied by the old sailor's replies. "So, will you tell me, Tom, why the *Duncan* is cruising right now off the shores of New Zealand?"

If Glenarvan, Lady Helena, Miss Grant, Paganel, the Major, Robert, John Mangles, Olbinett, Mulrady, and Wilson, did not understand the old sailor's astonishment, what was their amazement when Tom replied in a calm voice "But the *Duncan* is here by Your Honour's order."

"By my orders?" exclaimed Glenarvan.

"Yes, my Lord. I only complied with your instructions contained in your letter of January 14<sup>th</sup>."

"My letter? My letter?" exclaimed Glenarvan.

At that moment, the ten travellers surrounded Tom Austin and stared at him. The letter dated at Snowy River had reached the *Duncan*?

"Come," said Glenarvan; "Explain it to us, for I think I'm dreaming. Did you receive a letter, Tom?"

"Yes, a letter from Your Honour."

"In Melbourne?"

"In Melbourne, when I was finishing repairing the damage."

"And this letter?"

"It was not written by your hand, but signed by you, my Lord."

"That's the letter. My letter was brought to you by a convict named Ben Joyce."

"No, by a sailor named Ayrton, quartermaster of the *Britannia*."

"Yes! Ayrton, Ben Joyce, it's the same person. Well! What did this letter say?"

"It gave me the order to leave Melbourne without delay, and come to the eastern shores of—"

"Australia!" exclaimed Glenarvan with a vehemence that disconcerted the old sailor.

"Australia?" repeated Tom, his eyes widening. "No! Of New Zealand!"

"Of Australia, Tom! Of Australia!" said all of Glenarvan's companions with one voice.

Austin felt a wave a dizziness. Glenarvan spoke with such assurance that he feared he had been mistaken in reading this letter. He, the faithful and exact sailor, could he have made such a mistake? He flushed; he was troubled.

"It's all right, Tom," said Lady Helena, "Providence wanted—"

"No, Madame, forgive me," said old Tom. "No! It is not possible! I was not mistaken! Ayrton read the letter like me, and it was he who wanted to bring us back to the Australian coast!"

"Ayrton?" exclaimed Glenarvan.

"Himself! He told me it was a mistake, that you would meet me at Twofold Bay!"

"Do you have the letter, Tom?" asked the Major, intrigued to the highest degree.

"Yes, Mr. MacNabbs," Austin replied. "I'll go get it."

Austin ran to his forecabin. During the moment of his absence, they looked at each other, they were silent, except the Major, who crossed his arms, and fixed his gaze on Paganel.

"We must admit, even for you, Paganel, that would be a bit much!"

"Huh?" said the geographer, who, with his back bowed and the glasses on his forehead, looked like a gigantic question mark.

Austin came back. He held in his hand the letter written by Paganel, and signed by Glenarvan.

"Read it, Your Honour," said the old sailor. Glenarvan took the letter and read.

*Order to Tom Austin to put to sea without delay and to sail the Duncan to the 37° of latitude on the eastern coast of New Zealand ...*

"New Zealand!" Paganel leapt up and he grabbed the letter from Glenarvan's hands, rubbed his eyes, adjusted his glasses to his nose, and read in his turn.

"New Zealand!" He said with an incredulous emphasis, as the letter dropped from his fingers.

At that moment he felt a hand lean on his shoulder. He straightened up and saw himself face to face with the Major.

"Come, my brave Paganel," said MacNabbs gravely. "We're just glad you did not send the *Duncan* to Cochinchina!" [fn1](#)

This joke finished the poor geographer. The entire crew of the yacht broke out in a Homeric laugh. Paganel ran about like a madman. He grabbed at his head with both hands, tearing at his hair. He didn't know where to go, or what to do. He unthinkingly descended by the ladder from the poop; he paced the deck, staggering back and forth aimlessly. He went up onto the forecabin. There, his feet got tangled in a bundle of ropes. He stumbled. His hands grabbed for a rope at random.

A terrible detonation broke out. The cannon on the forecabin had fired, peppering the calm waves of a volley of grape shot. The unfortunate Paganel had grabbed the lanyard of the still loaded gun, and the hammer had struck the primer: hence this thunderclap. The geographer was knocked down the forecabin ladder and disappeared through the hatch into the crew's quarters.

The surprise of the explosion was followed by a cry of fear. Everyone thought something terrible had happened. Ten sailors rushed down between decks and pulled Paganel up, bent in two. The geographer did not speak.

His long body was carried onto the poop. The companions of the brave Frenchman were desperate. The Major, always the physician in an emergency, started to remove the unfortunate Paganel's clothes in order to dress his wounds. But scarcely had he laid his hands on the dying man than the latter sat up, as if he had been hit with an electric shock.

"*Jamais! Jamais!*"<sup>fn2</sup> he exclaimed, and he pulled his ragged clothes back around himself and buttoned them up with singular vivacity.

"But, Paganel!" said the Major.

"No! I tell you!"

"I have to see—"

"You will not see!"

"You may have broken—" said MacNabbs.

"Yes," said Paganel, climbing back onto his long legs. "But what I have broken, the carpenter will mend!"

"What?"

"The companionway railing, which broke my fall!"

At this reply, the bursts of laughter began again. This reply had reassured all of the worthy Paganel's friends that he had come out safe and sound from his adventure with the forecastle cannon.

"In any case," thought the Major. "This is a strangely prudish geographer!"

However, Paganel, recovering from his great agitation, had yet to answer a question he could not avoid.

"Now, Paganel," said Glenarvan. "Tell me truly. I recognize that your distraction was providential. Certainly, without you, the *Duncan* would have fallen into the hands of the convicts; without you, we would have been overtaken by the Māori! But, for God's sake, tell me what strange association of ideas, what supernatural aberration of mind, led you to write 'New Zealand' for 'Australia'?"

"Eh! *Parbleu!*" exclaimed Paganel, "It's—"



"*Jamais! Jamais!*" he exclaimed

But at that moment, his eyes fell on Robert and Mary Grant, and he stopped short; then he answered "What do you want, my dear Glenarvan? I am a fool — a fool, an incorrigible being, and I will die in the skin of the most famously distracted—"

"Unless you get skinned," said the Major.

"Get skinned!" exclaimed the geographer furiously. "Is this an allusion—?"

"An allusion to what, Paganel?" asked MacNabbs in his quiet voice.

Paganel didn't say, and the matter was dropped. The mystery of the *Duncan's* presence was explained. The travellers — so miraculously saved — thought only of returning to their comfortable cabins, and breakfast.

Leaving Lady Helena, Mary Grant, the Major, Paganel, and Robert to enter the poop, Glenarvan and John Mangles held back with Tom Austin. They still wanted to question him.

"Now, old Tom," said Glenarvan. "Answer me: did not this order to cruise off the coasts of New Zealand seem strange to you?"

"Yes, Your Honour," said Austin. "I was very surprised, but I am not used to questioning the orders I receive, and I obeyed. Could I do otherwise? If, by not following your instructions to the letter, a catastrophe had occurred, would I not have been guilty? Would you have done otherwise, Captain?"

"No, Tom," said John Mangles.

"But what did you think?" asked Glenarvan.

"I thought, Your Honour, that in the interest of Harry Grant, you had to go where you told me to go. I thought that, as a result of new circumstances, a ship was to transport you to New Zealand, and that I should wait for you on the east coast of the island. Moreover, leaving Melbourne, I kept our destination a secret, and the crew knew it only when we were at sea, when the lands of Australia had already disappeared from our sight. But then an incident happened on board which made me very perplexed."

"What do you mean, Tom?" asked Glenarvan.

"I mean," said Tom Austin, "when the quartermaster Ayrton learned, the day after the departure, of the *Duncan's* destination—"

"*Ayrton!*" exclaimed Glenarvan. "So is he on board?"

"Yes, Your Honour."

"*Ayrton, here!*" repeated Glenarvan, looking at John Mangles.

"God willed it!" said the young Captain.

In an instant, quick as lightning, the conduct of Ayrton, his long prepared betrayal, the injury of Glenarvan, the stabbing of Mulrady, the miseries of the expedition trapped in the swamps of the Snowy — the whole wretched past appeared before the eyes of these two men. And now, by the oddest combination of circumstances, the convict was in their power.

“Where is he?” asked Glenarvan quickly.

“In a cabin of the forecastle,” replied Tom Austin, “and kept under guard.”

“Why this imprisonment?”

“Because when Ayrton saw that the yacht was sailing for New Zealand, he got furious; because he wanted to force me to change the direction of the ship; because he threatened me; because he finally attempted to incite my men to mutiny. I understood that he was a dangerous individual, and I had to take precautionary measures against him.”

“And since that time?”

“Since that time he has remained in his cabin, without trying to get out of it.”

“Good, Tom.”

At that moment Glenarvan and John Mangles were summoned to the cabin. The breakfast, which they so urgently needed, was prepared. They took their places at the table in the saloon and did not speak of Ayrton.

But when the meal was over — when the guests, refreshed and restored, were assembled on deck — Glenarvan informed them of the presence of the quartermaster on board. At the same time, he announced his intention to bring him before them.

“May I excuse myself from attending this interrogation?” asked Lady Helena. “I confess, my dear Edward, that the sight of this unfortunate man would be extremely painful to me.”

“It’s a confrontation, Helena,” Lord Glenarvan replied. “Stay, please. Ben Joyce must be face to face with all his victims!”

Lady Helena stayed for this confrontation. She and Mary Grant took seats beside Lord Glenarvan. Around them ranged the Major, Paganel, John Mangles, Robert, Wilson, Mulrady, and Olbinett: all those so seriously harmed by the betrayal of the convict. The crew of the yacht, without yet understanding the gravity of this scene, kept a profound silence.

“Bring Ayrton,” said Glenarvan.

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[fn1.](#) “Cochinchina” is a region in southern Vietnam. — DAS

[fn2.](#) Never! Never! — DAS

## Chapter XVIII

### Ayrton or Ben Joyce?

A YRTON APPEARED. HE CROSSED THE DECK WITH A sure step and climbed the stairs to the quarterdeck. His eyes were dark, his teeth clenched, his fists closed convulsively. His demeanour was neither boastful nor humble. When he came into the presence of Lord Glenarvan, he folded his arms, mute and calm, waiting to be questioned.

“Ayrton,” said Glenarvan. “Here we are, you and us, on the *Duncan* you wanted to deliver to Ben Joyce’s convicts!”

At these words, the quartermaster’s lips trembled slightly. A quick flush coloured his impassive features. Not the redness of remorse, but the shame of failure. On this yacht, which he had planned to command as its master, he was a prisoner, and his fate would be decided in a few moments.

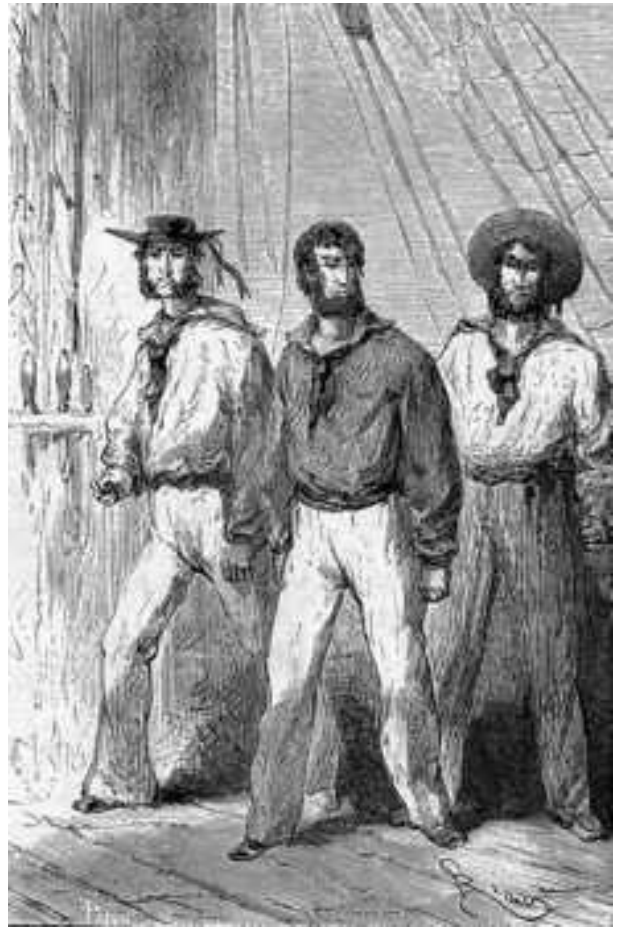
However, he did not answer. Glenarvan waited patiently, but Ayrton persisted in keeping an absolute silence.

“Speak, Ayrton. What do you have to say?” asked Glenarvan.

Ayrton hesitated; the creases of his brow furrowed deeply. Eventually, he spoke in a calm voice. “I have nothing to say, my Lord. I was foolish enough to let myself be captured. Act as you please.”

His answer given, the quartermaster turned his gaze to the coast to the [south](#), [fn1](#) and he affected a profound indifference to everything that was going on around him. To look at him, you would think that he was a stranger to this serious affair. But Glenarvan had resolved to remain patient. He had a strong desire to know some of the details of Ayrton’s mysterious past, especially his connection with Harry Grant and the *Britannia*. He resumed his interrogation, speaking with extreme gentleness, and imposing the most complete calm over the violent irritation of his heart.

“I think, Ayrton, that you will not refuse to answer some of the questions I want to ask you,” he said. “But first, should I call you Ayrton or Ben Joyce? Yes or no: are you the



Ayrton crossed the deck with a sure step

quartermaster of the *Britannia*?"

Ayrton remained impassive, watching the coast, deaf to any questions.

Glenarvan, his eyes flashing, continued to question the quartermaster.

"Will you tell me how you left the *Britannia*? Why were you in Australia?"

The same silence; the same imperturbability.

"Listen to me, Ayrton," said Glenarvan. "It's better for you if you talk. You should be aware that frankness is your last recourse. For the last time, do you want to answer my questions?"

Ayrton turned his head to Glenarvan and looked him in the eyes "My Lord, I do not have to answer. It is up to justice, and not to me, to provide evidence against me."

"The proofs will be easy!" said Glenarvan.

"Easy, my Lord?" said Ayrton mockingly. "It seems to me that Your Honour is a great deal ahead of himself. Me, I affirm that the best judge at the bar would be embarrassed to have me before him! Who can say how I came to Australia, since Captain Grant is no longer here to tell it? Who will prove that I am this Ben Joyce sought by the police, since the police have never held me in their hands, and my companions are at liberty? Who, except you, will report a single crime or blameworthy action against me? Who can say that I wanted to seize this ship and deliver it to the convicts? Nobody, hear me. *Nobody!* You have suspicions, true, but you need certainty to convict a man, and you have no certainties. Until proven otherwise, I am Ayrton, quartermaster of *Britannia*."

Ayrton stopped talking, and he soon returned to his previous indifference. He no doubt imagined that his statement would terminate the interrogation, but Glenarvan spoke again.

"Ayrton, I am not a prosecutor charged with indicting you. It's not my business. It is important that our respective positions are clearly defined. I'm not asking you for anything that could compromise you. That's the concern of justice. But you know the search that I'm pursuing, and with a word you can put me back on the trail I lost. Do you want to talk?"

Ayrton shook his head like a man determined to remain silent.

"Will you tell me where Captain Grant is?" asked Glenarvan.

"No, my Lord," said Ayrton.

"Will you tell me where the *Britannia* ran aground?"

"Nothing more."

"Ayrton," said Glenarvan, almost imploringly, "will you at least, if you know where Harry Grant is, tell his poor children, who are just waiting for a word from your mouth?"

Ayrton hesitated. His features contracted, but in a low voice he murmured "I can not, my Lord." And he added violently, as if he had reproached himself for a moment of

weakness "No! I will not talk! Hang me if you want!"

"Hang!" exclaimed Glenarvan, overcome by a sudden flash of anger. Then, mastering himself, he continued in a low voice. "Ayrton, there are neither judges nor executioners here. At the first port of call, you will be handed over to the English authorities."

"That's all I ask!" said the quartermaster.

He returned quietly to the cabin which served as his prison, and two sailors were placed at his door with orders to watch his slightest movements. The witnesses of this scene retired, indignant and desperate.

Since Glenarvan had just failed against Ayrton's obstinacy, what was left for him to do? Obviously to continue the plan formed at Eden to return to Europe, even if to resume this unsuccessful enterprise later, because the traces of the *Britannia* seemed to be irrevocably lost. The document did not lend itself to any new interpretation. There was no other country to search on the path of the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel. All that remained was for the *Duncan* to return to Scotland.

Glenarvan, after consulting with his friends, dealt with the specifics of returning with John Mangles. John inspected his bunkers; they had no more than fifteen days supply of coal remaining. They needed to refuel at the next opportunity.

John proposed to Glenarvan that they set sail for Talcahuano Bay, where the *Duncan* had already refuelled once, before embarking on her circumnavigation voyage. It was a direct journey precisely on the 37<sup>th</sup> degree. Then the yacht, fully stocked, could go south to double Cape Horn, and return to Scotland via the Atlantic.

This plan was adopted, and the order was given to the engineer to build his pressure. Half an hour later they set course for Talcahuano on a sea worthy of its Pacific name, and at six o'clock in the evening the last mountains of New Zealand disappeared in the warm mists of the horizon.

Thus, the return journey began. It was a sad crossing for those brave seekers returning to port without bringing back Harry Grant! The crew, so happy and confident at the outset, was now returning to Europe vanquished and discouraged. Of these brave sailors, no one felt moved by the thought of seeing his country again, and they all would have been willing to continue facing the perils of the sea for a long time to find Captain Grant.

The cheers that had hailed Glenarvan on his return were soon followed by discouragement. There were no more of those incessant discussions between the passengers, none of those conversations which once brightened up the journey. Everyone was keeping aloof, in the solitude of their cabins, and rarely did anyone appear on the *Duncan's* deck.

Paganel, the man in whom the feelings on board — painful or joyful — were usually exaggerated, Paganel, who — if need be — had invented hope, remained dull and silent. He was seldom seen. His natural loquacity and his French vivacity had changed into muteness and despondency. He seemed even more completely discouraged than his companions. If Glenarvan spoke of resuming his search, Paganel shook his head like a man who does not hope for anything, and who seemed convinced as to the fate of the castaways of the *Britannia*. He believed them irrevocably lost.

There was one man on board who could provide the last word on this catastrophe, but who maintained his silence. It was Ayrton. There was no doubt that this wretch knew, if not the truth about the present situation of the Captain, at least the place of the shipwreck. But Grant would obviously be a witness against him, if found, so he stubbornly kept quiet. Hence a seething anger grew, especially among the sailors, who wanted to deal summarily with him.

Several times Glenarvan renewed his attempts with the quartermaster. Promises and threats were useless. Ayrton's refusal to speak was so complete, and inexplicable, that the Major came to believe that he knew nothing. This opinion was shared by the geographer, corroborating his particular ideas of Harry Grant's fate.

But if Ayrton knew nothing, why didn't he confess his ignorance? It couldn't be turned against him. His silence increased the difficulty of forming a new plan. Was it possible to deduce the presence of Harry Grant on the continent of Australia from the meeting of the quartermaster there? It was decided that, at all costs, Ayrton had to explain himself on that subject.

Lady Helena, seeing her husband's failure, asked permission to take her own turn against the obstinacy of the quartermaster. Where a man had failed, perhaps a woman's gentle influence might succeed. Is it not an eternal fable that while the strongest hurricane may not tear the cloak from a traveller's shoulders, the slightest ray of sunshine will make him gladly shed it? Glenarvan, knowing the intelligence of his young wife, left her free to act.



The two women remained shut up with the quartermaster for an hour

On that day, March 5<sup>th</sup>, Ayrton was brought to Lady Helena's saloon. Mary Grant attended the interview because the girl might have a great influence on him, and Lady Helena did not want to overlook any chance for success.

The two women remained shut up with the quartermaster of the *Britannia* for an hour, but nothing came from their conversation. What they said, the arguments they used to extract the convict's secret, all the details of this interrogation remained unknown. Moreover, when Ayrton left them, they did not seem to have succeeded, and their faces showed a profound discouragement.

So when the quartermaster was escorted back to his cabin across the deck, the sailors greeted him with violent threats. He only shrugged his shoulders, which increased the fury of the crew, and it took the intervention of John Mangles and Lord Glenarvan to restrain it.

But Lady Helena did not give up her campaign. She wanted to struggle to the end against this pitiless soul, and the next day she went to Ayrton's cabin herself, to avoid a repetition of the last day's scene on the deck.

For two long hours the good and gentle Scottish woman remained alone, face to face, with the chief of the convicts. Glenarvan, in nervous agitation, lurked outside the cabin, sometimes determined to see this last chance for success through to the end, sometimes to tear his wife away from this painful conversation.



Ayrton only shrugged his shoulders

But this time, when Lady Helena reappeared, her features exuded confidence. Had she stirred the last threads of pity in the heart of this wretch, and snatched the secret?

MacNabbs, who saw her first, could not restrain a very natural expression of incredulity.

Yet the rumour spread quickly among the crew that the quartermaster had finally yielded to Lady Helena. It was like an electric shock. All the sailors assembled on deck faster than if Tom Austin's whistle had called them there.

Meanwhile Glenarvan rushed up to his wife.

"He spoke?" he asked.

"No," said Lady Helena. "But, yielding to my pleas, Ayrton wants to see you."

“Ah! Dear Helena, you have succeeded!”

“I hope so, Edward.”

“Have you made any promise that I must ratify?”

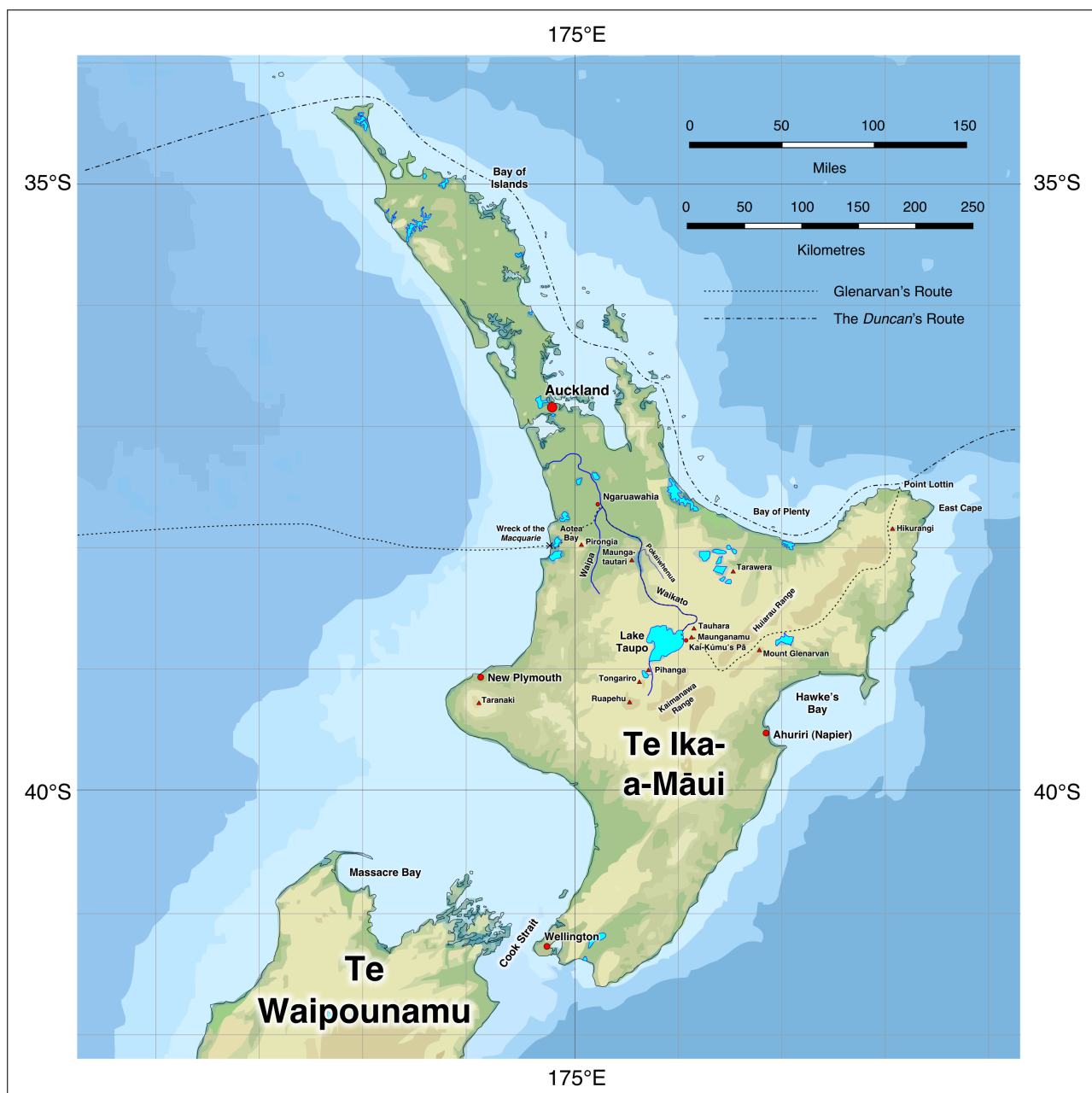
“Only one, my friend. It is that you will use all your influence to soften the fate of this unfortunate man.”

“Good, my dear Helena,” he said. Lady Helena retired to her cabin, accompanied by Mary Grant.

“Have Ayrton brought to me, right now.”

The quartermaster was led to the saloon, where Lord Glenarvan was waiting for him.

fn1. Verne has “west” here, but Point Lottin is on the northern coast of the northeastern tip of New Zealand. —  
DAS



The searcher's route across New Zealand

## Chapter XIX

### A Bargain

AS SOON AS THE QUARTERMASTER WAS BROUGHT INTO THE PRESENCE OF LORD GLENARVAN, HIS guards withdrew.

"Did you want to talk to me, Ayrton?" asked Glenarvan.

"Yes, my Lord," said the quartermaster.

"To me alone?"

"Yes, but I think it would be better if Major MacNabbs and Mr. Paganel were present at the interview."

"For who?"

"For me," Ayrton said calmly.

Glenarvan stared at him; then he sent word to MacNabbs and Paganel, who came promptly at his invitation.

"We are listening," said Glenarvan, as soon as his two friends were seated at the table in the saloon.

Ayrton stood for a moment and said "My Lord, it is customary for there to be witnesses to any contract or bargain between two parties. That's why I asked for the presence of Messrs. Paganel and MacNabbs. Because it is, strictly speaking, a bargain that I have come to propose to you."

Glenarvan, accustomed to Ayrton's way, did not flinch, though any bargain between him and that man seemed strange.

"What is your proposal?" he said.

"Here it is," answered Ayrton. "You wish to learn from me some details which may be useful to you. I want some reward that will be valuable to me. One for the other, my Lord. Does this suit you, or not?"

"What are the details?" asked Paganel.

"No," said Glenarvan. "What is the reward?"

Ayrton, with a nod of his head, showed that he understood the distinction observed by Glenarvan.

"Here is the reward I demand," he said. "You always intended to put me into the hands of the English authorities, my Lord?"

"Yes, Ayrton; that is only justice."

"I do not dispute it," said the quartermaster quietly. "So, you would not consent to give me back my freedom?"

Glenarvan hesitated before answering the question so clearly posed. His answer might decide Harry Grant's fate; however, his duty to justice prevailed. "No, Ayrton, I

can not set you free."

"I do not ask for it," said the quartermaster proudly.

"So, what do you want?"

"A compromise, my Lord, between the gallows waiting for me, and the liberty you can not grant me."

"And that is...?"

"To abandon me with the necessities of life on one of the deserted islands of the Pacific. I'll make out as best I can, and perhaps, in time, I'll repent!"

Glenarvan, unprepared for this proposal, looked at his two friends, who remained silent. After thinking for a moment, he said "Ayrton, if I grant you your request, will you tell me everything I want to know?"

"Yes, my Lord. That is, all that I know about Captain Grant and the *Britannia*."

"The whole truth?"

"Whole."

"But what guarantee can you give?"

"Oh! I see what worries you, my Lord. You will have to trust the word of a villain, it is true! But what can you do? That is the way things stand. Take it or leave it."

"I'll trust you, Ayrton," Glenarvan said simply.

"And you will be right, my Lord. Besides, if I deceive you, you will always have the means to avenge yourself!"

"How?"

"By coming back to the island that I could not escape."

Ayrton had an answer to everything. He was anticipating all objections; he was providing unanswerable arguments against himself. He appeared to treat his "bargain" with indisputable good faith. It was impossible to surrender with more perfect confidence. And yet he found a way to go even further in this path of disinterestedness.

"My Lord and gentlemen," he added, "I want you to be convinced of this fact, because I am laying my cards on the table. I am not trying to deceive you, and will give you another proof of my sincerity in this affair. I can act frankly, because I can rely on your honesty."

"Speak, Ayrton," replied Glenarvan.

"My Lord, I have not yet your word to accede to my proposal, and yet I do not hesitate to tell you that I know very little about Harry Grant."

"You know a few things!" said Glenarvan.

"Yes, my Lord. The details which I am able to communicate to you are pertinent to me, and my history, but they will not help to put you back on the trail you have lost."

It was plain from their expressions that this revelation greatly disappointed Glenarvan and the Major. They believed the quartermaster possessed an important

secret, and he stated that his revelations would be almost fruitless. As for Paganel, he remained impassive.

Be that as it may, Ayrton's confession — freely given without any guarantee — particularly affected his hearers, especially when the quartermaster added "So, you are warned, my Lord: the bargain will be less advantageous for you, than for me."

"It does not matter," said Glenarvan. "I accept your proposal, Ayrton. You have my word to be landed on one of the islands of the Pacific Ocean."

"Very well, my Lord," said the quartermaster.

Was this strange man happy with this decision? It might have been doubted for his impassive expression betrayed no emotion. He seemed to be treating for someone other than himself.

"I'm ready to answer," he said.

"We have no questions for you," said Glenarvan. "Tell us what you know, Ayrton, starting by declaring who you are."

"Gentlemen," replied Ayrton, "I really am Tom Ayrton, the quartermaster of *Britannia*. I left Glasgow on Harry Grant's ship on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1861. For fourteen months we sailed together on the Pacific Seas, seeking some advantageous location to found a Scottish colony there. Harry Grant was a man who did great things, but often there were serious disagreements between us. We did not get along. I do not know how to bend, and with Harry Grant, when he has made up his mind, all resistance is futile, my Lord. This man has an iron will, both for himself and for others. I dared to revolt. I tried to drag the crew into my revolt and seize the ship. Whether I was wrong or not, it does not matter. Be that as it may, Harry Grant did not hesitate, and on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1862, he landed me on the west coast of Australia."



"Gentlemen, I really am Tom Ayrton."

"On Australia," said the Major, interrupting Ayrton's story, "and consequently you left the *Britannia* before his stop at Callao, whence his latest news is dated?"

"Yes," replied the quartermaster, "for the *Britannia* never stopped at Callao while I was on board. And if I told you about Callao at Paddy O'Moore's farm, it's because your

story had given me that detail.”

“Go on, Ayrton,” said Glenarvan.

“So I found myself abandoned on an almost deserted coast, but only twenty miles from the penitentiary institutions of Perth, the capital of Western Australia. While wandering on the shore, I met a band of convicts who had just escaped. I joined them. You will exempt me, my Lord, from telling you my life for two and a half years. Just know that I became the leader of the escapees under the name of Ben Joyce. In September, 1864, I went to the Irish farm. I was admitted as a servant under my real name of Ayrton. I was waiting for the opportunity to seize a ship. It was my supreme goal. Two months later, the *Duncan* arrived.

“You told the whole story of Captain Grant during your visit to the farm, my Lord. I learned then what I did not know of the *Britannia*'s stop at Callao, her latest news dated June 1862 — two months after my landing — the matter of the document, the loss of the ship on a point of the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel, and finally, the reasons you had to look for Harry Grant on the Australian continent. I did not hesitate. I resolved to take possession of the *Duncan*: a marvellous ship that is faster than the finest vessels of the British navy.

“But she had serious damage to repair. So I let her go to Melbourne, and I gave myself to you in my true capacity of quartermaster, offering to guide you to the scene of a shipwreck that I fictitiously placed on the east coast of Australia. It was thus that, sometimes followed at a distance, and sometimes preceded by my band of convicts, I directed your expedition through the province of Victoria.

“My people committed a useless crime at Camden Bridge, since the *Duncan* — once at the coast — could not escape me, and with this yacht I would be the master of the ocean. I thereby drove you without distrust to the Snowy River. Horses and oxen gradually fell poisoned by the *Gastrolobium*. I mired the wagon in the marshes of the Snowy. At my insistence ... but you know the rest, my Lord, and you can be sure that, without the distraction of Mr. Paganel, I would now command the *Duncan*. That is my story, gentlemen. Unfortunately, my revelations can not put you back on the trail of Harry Grant, and you see that by dealing with me you have made a bad bargain.”

The quartermaster fell silent, crossed his arms as usual, and waited. Glenarvan and his friends were silent. They felt that the whole truth had just been told by this strange miscreant. The capture of the *Duncan* had been thwarted only by a cause beyond his control. His accomplices had come to the shores of Twofold Bay, as shown by the convict shirt found by Glenarvan. There, faithful to their natures, they had tired of waiting for Ayrton, and had no doubt returned to their profession of plunderers and arsonists in the countryside of New South Wales. The Major asked the first questions, in order to specify the dates relative to the *Britannia*.

"So," he asked the quartermaster, "it was on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, 1862, that you were disembarked on the west coast of Australia?"

"Exactly," Ayrton replied.

"And do you know what Harry Grant's plans were?"

"In a vague way."

"Tell us everything, Ayrton," said Glenarvan. "The slightest clue may put us on the path."

"Here is what I can tell you, my Lord," said the quartermaster. "Captain Grant intended to visit New Zealand. This part of his programme was not executed during my stay on board. It would not be impossible, therefore, that the *Britannia*, on leaving Callao, could have come to reconnoitre the lands of New Zealand. This would agree with the date of June 27, 1862, assigned by the document to the sinking of the three-master."

"Of course," said Paganel.

"But," said Glenarvan, "nothing in the remains of the words preserved on the document can apply to New Zealand."

"I can not answer that," said the quartermaster.

"Well, Ayrton," said Glenarvan. "You have kept your word; I will keep mine. We will decide on which island of the Pacific Ocean you will be abandoned."

"Oh! I do not care, my Lord," said Ayrton.

"Go back to your cabin," said Glenarvan, "and wait for our decision."

The quartermaster retired under the guard of two sailors.

"This scoundrel could have been a man," said the Major.

"Yes," said Glenarvan. "He has a strong and intelligent nature! Why must his faculties have turned to evil!"

"But Harry Grant?"

"I'm afraid he'll be lost forever! Poor children, who could tell them where their father is?"

"Me!" said Paganel. "Yes! Me."

It must have been noticed that the geographer, usually so loquacious and impatient, had scarcely spoken during the interrogation of Ayrton. He listened without loosening his lips. But this last word which he pronounced was worth many others, and he startled Glenarvan.

"You!" he exclaimed. "You, Paganel? You know where Captain Grant is?"

"Yes, as far as one can know," said the geographer.

"And how do you know?"

"By the eternal document."

"Ha!" said the Major in the tone of the most perfect incredulity.

"Listen first, MacNabbs," said Paganel, "You can shrug afterwards. I did not speak earlier because you would not have believed me. Then, it was useless. But if I decided to speak today, it is because Ayrton's opinion has just come to support mine."

"So ... New Zealand?" asked Glenarvan.

"Listen and judge," said Paganel. "It's not without reason, or rather, it's not without a reason, that I made the mistake that saved us. As I was writing the letter Glenarvan was dictating, the word 'Zealand' was working on my brain. Here's why: you remember we were in the wagon. MacNabbs had just told Lady Helena the story of the convicts; he had given her the issue of the *Australian and New Zealand Gazette* on the Camden Bridge disaster. Now, as I was writing, the newspaper lay on the floor, and folded so that much of the title was concealed. What appeared before my eyes was 'ealand.' What an illumination that was in my mind! 'e land' appeared in the English document, which we had translated as *have landed, or are landing*, but it could also have been *Zealand* with the first and third letters obliterated." [fn1](#)

"Huh!" said Glenarvan.

"Yes," said Paganel, with profound conviction. "That interpretation had escaped me, and do you know why? Because my research was done naturally on the French document, more complete than the others, and where this important word is missing."

"Oh! Oh!" said the Major. "You have too much imagination, Paganel, and you forget a little easily your previous deductions."

"Go ahead, Major, I'm ready to answer you."

"Then," said MacNabbs, "what becomes of your word 'austra'?"

"What we first thought: that it means *southern*."

"Well. And what of the 'indi' syllable, which was at first the root of *Indians*, and then the root of *natives*?"

"Well, the third and last time," replied Paganel, "it will be the first syllable of the word *indigence*!"

"And 'contin'!" exclaimed MacNabbs. "Does it still mean a *continent*?"

"No, since New Zealand is only an island."

"So...?" asked Glenarvan.

"My dear Lord," said Paganel, "I will translate the document according to my third interpretation, and you will judge. I make only two observations: First, as far as possible, forget the preceding interpretations, and free your mind from all previous preconceptions. Second, certain passages may appear 'forced' to you, and it is possible that I translate them badly, but they have no importance. Among others the word 'agonie' which shocks me, but which I can not explain otherwise. Moreover, it is in the French document that word appears, and do not forget that it was written by an Englishman, to whom the idiomatic French might not be familiar. This posed, I begin."

And Paganel, articulating each syllable slowly, recited the following:

*“June 27, 1862, the three-master Britannia, of Glasgow, sank after a long agony in the southern seas, stranding two sailors and their skipper Harry Grant in New Zealand. Landed there, continually preyed upon by cruel poverty — ‘indigence’ in the French document — [fn2](#) they threw this document into the sea at ... of longitude and 37° 11’ of latitude. Bring them assistance, or they are lost.”*

Paganel stopped. His interpretation was plausible. But precisely because it seemed as likely as the previous ones, it could also be false. Glenarvan and the Major did not seek to dispute it. However, since traces of the *Britannia* had not been found on the coasts of Patagonia, or the coasts of Australia, at the points where these two countries were crossed by the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel, the odds were in favour of New Zealand.

His friends were especially struck when Paganel remarked on this.

“Now, Paganel,” said Glenarvan. “Will you tell me why, for the last two months or so, you have kept this interpretation secret?”

“Because I did not want to give you any more false hopes. Besides, we were going to Auckland, precisely at the point indicated by the latitude of the document.”

“But since then, when we were dragged off of that path, why not talk?”

“It is because, valid as this interpretation may be, it can not contribute to Captain Grant’s salvation.”

“Why is that, Paganel?”

“Because, even if Captain Harry Grant was stranded in New Zealand, two years have passed without his reappearing. He must have been a victim of the shipwreck, or the Māori.”

“So, your opinion is?” asked Glenarvan.

“That we might perhaps find some remains of the sinking, but that the castaways of the *Britannia* are irrevocably lost!”

“Silence on all this, my friends,” said Glenarvan, “and let me choose when I will bear this sad news to Captain Grant’s children!”

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[fn1.](#) This is more of me changing the interpretation to match the changes I made to the English version of the document, because Verne was once again having Paganel base his latest interpretation primarily on the French document (except for the ‘e land’ part) and excusing some of the dicier parts of his interpretation on it being written by an Englishman. Unfortunately this excuse doesn’t work so well for explaining the dubious grammar and wording of his original English version. — DAS

[fn2.](#) Verne again has Paganel do his interpretation in French, and rather than glossing ‘poverty’ as ‘indigence’ he glossed ‘Zélande’ as ‘Zealand.’ — DAS

## Chapter XX

### A Cry in the Night

THE CREW SOON LEARNED THAT THE MYSTERY OF CAPTAIN GRANT HAD NOT BEEN CLEARED UP by Ayrton's revelations. This was discouraging to everyone on board, for they'd had high hopes, and it turned out that the quartermaster knew nothing that could put the *Duncan* on the trail of the *Britannia*!

The yacht maintained her course. It remained to choose an island on which Ayrton was to be abandoned.

Paganel and John Mangles consulted the charts. An isolated island known as Maria Theresa lay precisely on the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel: a rock lost in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, thirty-five hundred miles from the American coast, and fifteen hundred miles from New Zealand.<sup>fn1</sup> The nearest lands to the north were the French protectorate of the Pomotou Archipelago.<sup>fn2</sup> There was nothing to the south until you reached the eternally frozen ice pack around the southern pole. No ships came to this lonely island. No echo of the world reached her. Only the storm birds rested there during their long crossings, and many maps did not even show this rock beaten by the waves of the Pacific.<sup>fn3</sup>

If ever absolute isolation were to be found on the earth, it was on this island far from the rest of humanity. The choice was made known to Ayrton, who agreed to live there, far from his fellows, and the course was set for Maria Theresa. At this moment, a line drawn with a ruler on a Mercator map would have passed through the *Duncan*, the island, and Talcahuano Bay.

Two days later, at two o'clock, the lookout signalled sighting land on the horizon. It was Maria Theresa: low-lying, barely emerging from the waves, it looked like a huge cetacean. The yacht was still thirty miles off, and her bow sliced through the waves at a speed of sixteen knots.

Little by little, the profile of the islet grew on the horizon. The sun, sinking toward the west, outlined her sinuous silhouette. A few higher peaks stood out here and there, highlighted by the rays of the day star.

At five o'clock John Mangles thought he could see a light smoke rising into the sky.

"Is it a volcano?" he asked Paganel, who was watching this new land with his telescope.

"I do not know what to think," said the geographer. "Maria Theresa is little known. However, it would not be surprising if its origin was due to some submarine uprising, and therefore volcanic."

"But then," said Glenarvan, "if an eruption has produced it, can we not fear that an eruption will destroy it?"

"It is unlikely," said Paganel. "It has evidently existed for several centuries, it should continue to exist for several more. When Julia Island emerged from the Mediterranean she did not stay out of the water for long, and disappeared a few months after her birth."

"Good," said Glenarvan. "Do you think we can land before dark, John?"

"No, Your Honour. I must not risk the *Duncan* in the darkness on an unknown coast. I will keep her under low pressure, running short tacks, and tomorrow at daybreak, we will send a boat ashore."

At eight o'clock in the evening, Maria Theresa — though only five miles upwind — appeared as a barely visible shadow on the horizon. The *Duncan* drew still closer.

At nine o'clock, a bright glow, a fire, shone in the darkness. It was motionless and continuous.

"That would confirm a volcano," said Paganel, watching attentively.

"However," said John Mangles, "at this distance we should hear the noise that always accompanies an eruption, and the east wind brings no sound to our ears."

"Indeed," said Paganel, "this volcano shines, but does not speak. It seems, moreover, that it is intermittent, like a flashing lighthouse."

"You are right," said John Mangles, "and yet we are not on a lighted coast. *Ah!*" he cried. "Another fire! On the beach this time! See! It's moving! It's changing places!"

John was correct. A new fire had appeared which sometimes seemed to go out, only to be revived in a different location.

"Is the island inhabited?" asked Glenarvan.

"By savages, no doubt," said Paganel.

"If so, we can not abandon the quartermaster, here."

"No," said the Major. "That would be a bad gift ... even to savages."

"We'll look for some other desert island," said Glenarvan, who could not help but smile at MacNabbs' jest. "I promised life to Ayrton, and I intend to keep my promise."

"In any case, let's be careful," said Paganel. "The Māori have the barbaric custom of fooling ships with moving lights, as once did the inhabitants of Cornwall. Now the natives of Maria Theresa seem to have learned the practice."

"Bear away by a quarter!" John shouted to the sailor at the helm. "Tomorrow, at sunrise, we'll know what to expect."

The passengers and John Mangles returned to their cabins at eleven o'clock. The man on watch was pacing on the foredeck of the yacht. At the stern, the helmsman was alone at his post.

Mary and Robert Grant climbed onto the poop.

The Captain's two children, leaning on the rail, looked sadly at the phosphorescent sea and the luminous wake of the *Duncan*. Mary was thinking of Robert's future; Robert was thinking of his sister's. Both thought of their father. Was there any hope left for their beloved father? Should they give up? But no, what would life be without him? What would become of them without him? What would have become of them without Lord Glenarvan, and Lady Helena?

The young boy, matured by misfortune, divined the thoughts that disturbed his sister. He took Mary's hand in his.

"Mary," he said, "we must never despair. Remember what our father taught us. 'Courage supersedes everything down here,' he said. Let us have it: that stubborn courage which rises above all else. So far you have worked for me, my sister, I want to work for you in my turn."

"Dear Robert!" said the girl.

"I need to tell you something," said Robert. "Don't be angry, Mary."

"Why should I anger myself, my child?"

"And you will let me do it?"

"What do you mean?" asked Mary, worried.

"My sister! I will be a sailor—"

"Will you leave me?" cried the girl, grasping her brother's hand.

"Yes, sister! I'll be a sailor, like my father; a sailor like Captain John! Mary, my dear Mary, Captain John has not lost all hope! You can, like me, trust in his dedication! He has promised that he will make me a good, a great sailor. Until then we will seek our father together! Say that you want it, sister! What our father would have done for us, our duty — mine at least — is to do for him! I am dedicating my life to a single purpose: to seek, always to seek the one who never abandoned either of us! Dear Mary, how good our father was!"

"And so noble, so generous!" said Mary. "You know, Robert, that he was already a famous man in our country, and that he would have counted among its great men, if fate had not stopped him in his mission!"



The Captain's two children ... looked sadly at the phosphorescent sea

"I know it!" said Robert.

Mary Grant squeezed Robert to her heart. The young child felt tears running down his forehead.

"Mary! Mary!" he exclaimed, "Our friends won't say that they have given up, but they have become very quiet. I still hope, and I will always hope! A man like my father does not die before having accomplished his task!"

Mary Grant could not answer. Sobs choked her. A thousand feelings were throbbing in her soul at the thought that new attempts would be made to find Harry Grant, and that the young Captain's dedication was boundless.

"Mr. John still hopes?" she asked.

"Yes," said Robert. "He is a brother who will never leave us. I'll be a sailor, my sister, a sailor to look for my father with him! Do you want it?"

"I want it!" said Mary. "But we will be apart!" whispered the girl.

"I know that you will not be alone, Mary! My friend John told me so. Mrs. Helena will not let you leave her. You are a woman: you can — you must — accept her help. To refuse it would be ingratitude! But a man, my father told me a hundred times, a man must make his his own fate in the world!"

"But what will become of our dear house in Dundee, so full of memories?"

"We'll keep it, little sister! It has been arranged by our friend John, and also by Lord Glenarvan. He'll keep you at Malcolm Castle, like his daughter! The Lord told my friend John, and John told me! You'll be at home there, gathering news about our father, waiting for John and me to bring him back one day! *Ah!* What a beautiful day it will be!" exclaimed Robert, whose face shone with enthusiasm.

"My brother, my child," said Mary. "How proud our father would be, if he could hear you! You already look so much like him, dear Robert; like our dear father! When you become a man, you will be just like him!"

"God hear you, Mary," said Robert, blushing with pious and filial pride.

"But how do we repay Lord and Lady Glenarvan?" said Mary Grant.

"*Oh*, it will not be difficult!" said Robert, with his youthful confidence. "We love them, we venerate them, we tell them so, we embrace them well, and one day — at the first opportunity — we get killed for them!"

"On the contrary! Live for them!" exclaimed the girl, kissing her brother's forehead. "They will like that better — and me too!"

The Captain's two children lapsed into indefinite reveries, talking together in the darkness of the night. They talked together, sometimes asking and answering each other's questions. The yacht gently rocked in the long swells of the calm sea, and the screw turned up a luminous trail in the dark water.

Then came a strange and seemingly supernatural incident. By one of those magnetic communications which mysteriously bind souls to each other, the brother and sister, at the same moment, seemed to experience the same hallucination. From the midst of these alternately dark and shining waves, Mary and Robert thought they heard a voice rise to them whose deep and woeful sound made all the fibres of their hearts tremble.

*"To me! To me!"* called the voice.

"Mary," said Robert, "Did you hear that? You heard it?"

And, leaning over the rail, both of them, peered into the dark of the night.

But they saw nothing, only the shadow that stretched endlessly before them.

"Robert," said Mary, pale with emotion, "I thought ... yes, I thought like you ... We both have a fever, my Robert!"

But a new call came to them, and this time the illusion was such that the same cry came at once from both of their hearts *"My father! My father!"*

It was too much for Mary Grant. Overcome by emotion, she fell fainting into Robert's arms.

*"Help!"* Robert shouted. *"My sister! My father! Help!"*

The helmsman rushed to lift the girl up. The sailors on watch came running, followed by John Mangles, Lady Helena, and Lord Glenarvan, who had been suddenly awakened.

*"My sister is dying, and our father is there!"* exclaimed Robert, pointing to the waves. They did not understand his words.

"Yes," he repeated. "My father is here! I heard my father's voice! Mary heard it too!"

And at this moment, Mary Grant, returning to her senses also exclaimed *"My father! My father is here!"*

The poor girl, getting up and leaning over the rail, wanted to jump into the sea.

"My Lord! Mrs. Helena!" she repeated, clasping her hands, "I tell you my father is here! I tell you that I heard his voice coming out of the waves like a lament, like a last goodbye!"

Then, fresh seizures convulsed the poor child, overcoming her arguments. She had to be transported to her cabin, and Lady Helena followed to take care of her while Robert kept repeating *"My father! My father is here! I am sure of it, my Lord!"*

The witnesses to this painful scene finally understood that the two children of the Captain had been the victims of a hallucination. But how to restore their senses, so violently abused?

Glenarvan tried, however. He took Robert by the hand and said to him "Did you hear your father's voice, my dear child?"

"Yes, my Lord. There, in the middle of the waves! He cried out *'To me! To me!'*"

"And you recognized the voice?"

"I recognized his voice, my Lord! *Oh, yes!* I swear to you! My sister heard it; she recognized it, too! How could we both be wrong? my Lord, let us go to the aid of my father! A boat! A boat!"

Glenarvan saw that he could not calm the poor child. Nevertheless, he made one last attempt and called the helmsman.

"Hawkins," he asked, "were you at the helm when Miss Mary was so singularly struck?"

"Yes, Your Honour," answered Hawkins.

"And did you see anything? Did you hear anything?"

"Nothing."

"You see it, Robert."

"If it had been Hawkins' father," replied the young child with indomitable energy, "Hawkins would not say he heard nothing. It was my father, my Lord! My father! *My father—!*"

Robert's voice died in a sob. Pale and mute, in his turn, he lost consciousness. Glenarvan carried Robert to his bed, and the child, shattered by emotion, fell into a deep slumber.

"Poor orphans!" said John Mangles, "God tests them in a terrible way!"

"Yes," replied Glenarvan, "the surfeit of pain has produced the same hallucination in both of them, and at the same time."

"In both of them?" muttered Paganel. "It's strange! Pure science would not admit it."

Paganel beckoned for everyone to be quiet. He leaned over the rail, and listened. He heard only the deep silence of the night. He loudly hailed the shore. He heard no answer.

"It's strange!" said the geographer, returning to his cabin. "An intimate harmony of thought and pain is not enough to explain this phenomenon!"

At dawn the next day, March 8<sup>th</sup>, at five o'clock in the morning, the passengers — Robert and Mary among them, for it had been impossible to restrain them — were assembled on the deck of the *Duncan*. Each of them wanted to examine that land which had scarcely been visible the day before.

The glasses eagerly wandered over the main points of the island. The yacht sailed one mile off the shore. The lookout could see its every detail. A shout suddenly arose from Robert. The child announced seeing two men running and gesticulating, while a third waved a flag.

"The English flag," exclaimed John Mangles, who had seized his telescope.

"*It's true!*" exclaimed Paganel, turning quickly to Robert.

“My Lord,” said Robert trembling with emotion. “My Lord, if you do not want me to swim to the island, you will have a boat put to sea. Oh, my Lord! I beg you on my knees to be the first to land!” No one dared to speak on board. *What?* On this islet crossed by the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel, three men, shipwrecked, English! And each one, returning to the events of the day before, thought of that voice heard in the night by Robert and Mary! Perhaps the children had only been wrong on one point: a voice could have come to them, but could this voice be that of their father? No, a thousand times no. Alas! And each one, thinking of the horrible disappointment which awaited them, trembled that this new test did not exceed their strength! But how to stop them? Lord Glenarvan did not have the courage.

“Lower the boat!” he cried.

In a minute, the boat was put to sea. The two children of Captain Grant, Glenarvan, John Mangles, and Paganel, rushed into it, and it pushed off quickly under the impulse of six sailors who rowed with passion.

Ten yards from the shore, Mary uttered a heart-rending cry.

“*My father!*”

A man was standing on the shore between two other men. His tall and strong figure, his countenance — at once soft and bold — offered an expressive mixture of the features of Mary and Robert Grant. He was the man that the two children had so often described. Their hearts had not deceived them. It was their father. It was Captain Grant!

The Captain heard Mary’s cry, opened his arms, and fell on the sand, as if struck by lightning.



A man was standing on the shore

[fn1.](#) 3,500 miles = 1,400 leagues = 5,600 kilometres;  
1,500 miles = 600 leagues = 2,400 kilometres. — DAS

[fn2.](#) Now known as the Tuamotu Archipelago. — DAS

[fn3.](#) The maps that didn’t show the island were correct.

[Maria Theresa](#) is (was?) a “phantom island” reported by Asaph P. Taber (hence it’s other name) captain of the whaling ship *Maria Theresa*, in 1843, and remained on many maps up until the 1950s, when extensive surveys of that area of ocean failed to find it again. — DAS

## Chapter XXI

### Tabor Island

**Y**OU DO NOT DIE OF JOY, BECAUSE THE FATHER AND THE CHILDREN CAME BACK TO LIFE EVEN before they had reached the yacht. How to paint this scene? Words do not suffice. The whole crew was crying when they saw these three people joined in a mute embrace. Harry Grant arrived on deck and fell to his knees. The pious Scott wished, by touching what to him was the soil of his country, to thank God, before all, for his deliverance.

Then, turning to Lady Helena, Lord Glenarvan, and their companions, he gave them thanks in a voice broken by emotion. His children had told him the outline of the voyage of the *Duncan* during the short crossing from the islet to the yacht.

What an immense debt he had contracted toward this noble woman and her companions! From Lord Glenarvan to the least of the sailors, they had all struggled and suffered for him! Harry Grant expressed the feelings of gratitude that flooded his heart with so much simplicity and nobility, his face illuminated with such pure and gentle emotion, that the entire crew felt more than rewarded for all the hardships they had suffered. Even the impassive Major's eye wet with a tear that he could not restrain. As for the worthy Paganel, he cried like a child who does not think to hide his tears.

Harry Grant never tired of looking at his daughter. He thought her beautiful and charming! He said it to himself and said it again aloud, with Lady Helena as his witness, as if to certify that his paternal love did not mislead him.

Then he turned to his son. "You have grown up! You've become a man!" he cried with delight.

And he lavished on these two people, so dear to him, the thousand kisses piled up in his heart during two years of absence.

Robert introduced him in turn to all of his friends, and found means of varying his formulas, although he had to say the same of each one! It was because everyone was perfect in the boy's eyes. When it was John Mangles' turn to be introduced, the Captain blushed like a girl and his voice trembled as he spoke to Mary's father.

Lady Helena then told Captain Grant more of the story of the trip, and she made him proud of his son, and his daughter.

Harry Grant learned of the exploits of the young hero, and how this child had already paid Lord Glenarvan a portion of the paternal debt. Then, in turn, John Mangles spoke of Mary in such terms that Harry Grant, guided by a few hints from Lady Helena, put his daughter's hand in the valiant hand of the young Captain.

He turned to Lord and Lady Glenarvan. "My Lord, and you, Madame," he said. "Bless our children!"

When all was said and said again a thousand times, Glenarvan told Harry Grant about Ayrton. Grant confirmed the quartermaster's confession about his landing on the Australian coast.

"He is an intelligent, audacious man," he said, "whose passions have thrown him to evil. May reflection and repentance bring him back to better feelings!"

But before Ayrton was transferred to Maria Theresa Island, Harry Grant wanted to do the honours of his rock for his new friends. He invited them to visit his wooden house and sit at the table of the Pacific Robinsons. Glenarvan and his companions wholeheartedly agreed. Robert and Mary Grant were burning with the desire to see these lonely places where their father had shed so many tears.

A boat was prepared, and the father, the two children, Lord and Lady Glenarvan, the Major, John Mangles, and Paganel soon landed on the shores of the island.

A few hours were enough to see all of Harry Grant's estate. It was the summit of an underwater mountain, a plateau where basaltic rocks abounded with volcanic debris. In the geological epochs of the Earth, this mountain had gradually risen from the depths of the Pacific under the action of subterranean fires. But for centuries the volcano had been a peaceful mountain, its crater filled, an island emerging from the liquid plain. Topsoil had formed and the vegetable kingdom established itself in this new earth. A few passing whalers had landed some domestic animals — goats and pigs — which multiplied in the wild, and now nature manifested itself in its three kingdoms on this island lost in the middle of the ocean.

When the castaways of the *Britannia* had taken refuge there, the hand of man came to regularize the efforts of nature. In two and a half years, Harry Grant and his sailors metamorphosed their islet. Several acres of land, cultivated with care, produced vegetables of excellent quality.

The visitors arrived at the house shaded by verdant gum trees. The magnificent sea stretched in front of its windows, sparkling in the rays of the sun. Harry Grant had his table set in the shade of the beautiful trees, and everyone took their place. A leg of kid, some nardoo bread, some bowls of milk, a few roots of wild chicory, and a pure and fresh water formed the elements of this simple meal, worthy of the shepherds of Arcadia.

Paganel was delighted. His old ideas of becoming a Robinson came back into his head.

"That rascal Ayrton is not to be pitied!" he cried in his enthusiasm. "This islet is a paradise."

"Yes," said Harry Grant, "a paradise for three poor shipwrecked men whom Heaven guarded! I regret that Maria Theresa is not a vast and fertile island, with a river instead

of a stream and a harbour instead of a cove beaten by the waves of the open sea.”

“Why, Captain?” asked Glenarvan.

“Because then I could have laid here the foundation for the colony I want to give to Scotland in the Pacific.”

“Ah! Captain Grant,” said Glenarvan. “You have not abandoned the idea which has made you so popular in our old country?”

“No, my Lord, and God has saved me by your hands only to allow me to accomplish it. It is necessary that our poor brothers of old Caledonia, all those who suffer, have a refuge against misery in a new land! Our dear country must possess a colony of her own in these seas, where she can find a little of the independence and well-being which she lacks in Europe!”

“Ah! That’s right, Captain Grant,” said Lady Helena. “It is a beautiful project, and worthy of a big heart. But this islet...?”

“No, Madame, it is a good rock to feed at most a few colonists, while we need a vast and rich land with all the treasures of the first ages.”

“Well, Captain,” said Glenarvan. “The future is ours, and we will seek this land together!”

Harry Grant and Glenarvan exchanged a warm handshake, as if to ratify this promise.

Then, on this very island, in this humble house, everyone wanted to know the story of the castaways of the *Britannia* during their two long years of abandonment. Harry Grant hastened to satisfy the curiosity of his new friends.

“My story,” he said, “is that of all the Robinsons thrown on an island, and who, being able to rely only on God and themselves, feel that they have the duty of disputing for their lives with the elements!

“It was during the night of June 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>, 1862, that the *Britannia*, in distress after six days of storm, broke on the rocks of Maria Theresa. The sea was stormy, rescue impossible, and all my unhappy crew perished. Only my two sailors — Bob Learce, Joe Bell, and I — managed to reach the coast after twenty unsuccessful attempts!

“The land that received us was only a desert island, two miles wide, five miles long, with about thirty trees in the interior, a few meadows and a source of fresh water that



“This islet is a paradise.”

fortunately never dries up. Alone in this corner of the world with my two sailors, I did not despair. I put my trust in God, and I prepared to resolutely fight. Bob and Joe, my brave companions in misfortune, my friends, assisted me energetically.

“We began — like our model, the ideal Robinson of Daniel Defoe — by collecting the wreckage from the ship: tools, a little powder, weapons, a bag of precious seeds. The first days were difficult, but soon hunting and fishing provided us with food, because wild goats swarmed inside the island, and marine animals abounded on its coasts. Gradually the work for our survival became routine.

“I measured the position of the island exactly with my instruments, which I had saved from sinking. This discovery placed us out of the shipping lanes, and we could not be rescued unless by a providential chance. While thinking of those who were dear to me and whom I no longer hoped to see again, I bravely accepted this trial, and the names of my two children were mixed daily with my prayers.

“We worked hard. Soon several acres of land were sown with the seeds from the *Britannia*. Potatoes, chicory, and sorrel fortified our usual diet, then other vegetables. We captured a few kid goats, which were easily tamed. We had milk, butter. The nardoo, which grew in dried up creeks, furnished us with a kind of substantial bread, and material life no longer inspired us with fear.

“We had built a clapboard house with debris from the *Britannia*. It was roofed with carefully tarred sails, and the rainy season passed happily under this solid shelter. There, we discussed many plans, many dreams, the best of which has just been realized!

“At first, I had the idea of facing the sea on a canoe made with the wreckage of the ship, but fifteen hundred miles separated us from the nearest land, that is to say, the islands of the Pomotou Archipelago. No small boat could have withstood such a long voyage. So I gave it up, and I waited for my salvation by no more than a divine intervention.

“Ah! My poor children! How many times have we watched far off ships from the high rocks of the coast? During the whole time that our exile lasted scarcely two or three sails appeared on the horizon, only to disappear immediately! Two and a half years passed thus. We did not hope anymore, but we did not yet despair.

“Finally, yesterday, I was on the highest peak of the island when I saw a slight smoke in the west. It grew bigger. Soon a ship became visible to me. She seemed to be heading toward us. But would she avoid this islet that offered her no harbour?

“Ah! What a day of anguish, and how did my heart not break in my breast! My companions lit a fire on one of Maria Theresa’s peaks. Night came, but the yacht made no signal of recognition! Salvation was right there! Were we to see it disappear?

“I did not hesitate any more. The darkness was growing. The ship could round the island during the night. I threw myself into the sea and headed for her. Hope tripled my

strength. I split the waves with superhuman vigour. I was nearing the yacht, scarcely thirty fathoms away, when she tacked!

"Then I uttered those desperate cries that my two children alone heard, and which had not been an illusion.

"I returned to the shore, exhausted, overcome by emotion and fatigue. My two sailors collected me, half-dead. That last night we passed on the island was horrible, and we thought we were still abandoned. But then, when the day came, I saw the yacht running along under a low steam. Your boat was put to sea! We were saved, and — divine goodness from Heaven — my children, my dear children, were there, stretching out their arms!"

Harry Grant's story ended with kisses and hugs from Mary and Robert. And it was only then that the Captain learned that he owed his rescue to the rather hieroglyphic document which he had shut up in a bottle, and entrusted to the caprices of the waves eight days after his shipwreck.

But what was Jacques Paganel thinking during Captain Grant's story? The worthy geographer turned the words of the document over in his brain a thousand times! He recalled those three successive interpretations, all three wrong! How was this island of Maria Theresa indicated on these papers gnawed by the sea? Paganel could not hold back any longer.

He grabbed Captain Grant by the hand. "Captain, will you *finally* tell me what was in your indecipherable document?"

Everyone shared the geographer's curiosity. They all wanted to hear the answer to the riddle that they had sought for nine months. They were finally going to be told.

"Well, Captain," asked Paganel. "Do you remember the precise wording of the document?"

"Exactly," said Harry Grant, "and not a day has passed without my memory recalling those words to which our only hope was attached."

"And what are they, Captain?" asked Glenarvan. "Tell us, because our pride is stung."

"I am ready to satisfy you," said Harry Grant, "but you know that to increase the chances of salvation, I had enclosed three documents written in three languages in the bottle. Which one do you want to know?"

"So they are not identical?" exclaimed Paganel.

"As close as I could make them."

"Well, quote the French document," said Glenarvan. "It is the one that the waves have respected most, and it has mainly served as a basis for our interpretations."

"My Lord, here it is word for word," said Harry Grant.

*“27 juin 1862, le trois-mâts Britannia, de Glasgow, s’est perdu à quinze cents lieues de la Patagonie, dans l’hémisphère austral. Portés à terre, deux matelots et le capitaine Grant ont atteint à l’île Tabor...”*

“Huh!” said Paganel.

Captain Grant continued.

*“...là, continuellement en proie à une cruelle indigence, ils ont jeté ce document par 153° de longitude et 37° 11’ de latitude. Venez à leur secours, ou ils sont perdus.”*

At that name of ‘Tabor,’ Paganel had risen abruptly; then, no longer containing himself, he exclaimed: “How, ‘l’île Tabor?’ But it’s ‘Maria Theresa Island!’”

“No doubt, Mr. Paganel,” said Harry Grant. “‘Maria Theresa’ on the English and German charts, “but ‘Tabor’ on the French charts!”

At that moment, a tremendous punch hit Paganel’s shoulder, who folded in shock. The truth requires it to be said that it was addressed to him by the Major, abandoning for the first time his careful habit of conviviality.

“Geographer!” said MacNabbs with the tone of the deepest contempt.

But Paganel had not even felt the Major’s hand. What was it, compared to the geographical blow that overwhelmed him?

He had Captain Grant recite the words of the English document, which went thus:

*“June 27, 1862. The three-master Britannia, of Glasgow, sank fifteen hundred leagues from Patagonia, in the Southern Hemisphere, stranding two sailors and their skipper, Harry Grant. They have landed on Maria Theresa Island. Continually plagued by cruel poverty, they threw this document into the sea at 153° of longitude and 37° 11’ of latitude. Bring them assistance, or they are lost.”*

So, as Paganel told Captain Grant, he had nearly arrived at the truth! He had deciphered almost the entirety the indecipherable document! In turn, the names of Patagonia, Australia, and New Zealand had appeared to him with irrefutable certainty. ‘Contin,’ first *continent*, had gradually assumed its true meaning of *continual*. ‘Indi’ had successively meant *Indians, natives*, then finally *indigence*, its true meaning. Only the fragment ‘abor’ had deceived the wisdom of the geographer! Paganel had stubbornly made it the radical of the verb *aborder*, to approach, when it was the proper name — the French name — of Tabor Island, the island which served as a refuge for the *Britannia*’s castaways! An error easy to understand, however, since all the maps on the *Duncan* gave this islet the name of Maria Theresa.

“It does not matter!” exclaimed Paganel, tearing at his hair. “I should not have forgotten this double name! It is an unforgivable mistake. An unworthy error for *un Secrétaire de la Société de Géographie*! I am dishonoured!”

"Monsieur Paganel," said Lady Helena. "Please, calm yourself!"

"No, Madam! *No!* I am an ass!"

"And not even a learned ass!" said the Major, as a consolation.

When the meal was over, Harry Grant put everything in his house in order. He took nothing, wanting Ayrton to inherit the riches of an honest man.

They came back on board. Glenarvan planned to leave that day, and gave his orders for the landing of the quartermaster. Ayrton was brought to the poop, and found himself in the presence of Harry Grant.

"It's me, Ayrton," Grant said.

"It's you, Captain," said Ayrton, pretending not to be surprised to see him. "Well, I'm not sorry to see you in good health."

"It seems, Ayrton, that I made a mistake in landing you on an inhabited land."

"It seems so, Captain."

"You will replace me on this desert island. May Heaven inspire you with repentance!"

"So be it!" Ayrton answered calmly.

Glenarvan addressed the quartermaster. "You persist, Ayrton, in this resolution to be abandoned?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"Tabor Island suits you?"

"Perfectly."

"Now listen to my last words, Ayrton. Here you will be, far from any land, and without any possibility of communication with your fellow men. Miracles are rare, and you will not be able to flee this islet where the *Duncan* leaves you. You will be alone, under the eye of a God who reads the deepest hearts, but you will not be lost or ignored, as was Captain Grant. As unworthy as you are of men's remembrance, men will remember you. I'll know where you are, Ayrton, I'll know where to find you, I'll never forget it."

"God preserve Your Honour!" said Ayrton simply.

These were the last words exchanged between Glenarvan and the quartermaster. The boat was ready. Ayrton climbed down into it.

John Mangles had previously shipped some boxes of preserved food, tools, weapons, and a supply of powder and lead to the island. The quartermaster could therefore rehabilitate himself with work. Nothing was lacking, not even books, including the Bible so dear to English hearts.

The hour of separation had come. The crew and passengers stood on the deck. More than one felt a tightness in their soul. Mary Grant and Lady Helena could not contain their emotion.

“Must it be so?” the young woman asked her husband. “Is it necessary that this unfortunate man be abandoned?”

“It must be, Helena,” said Lord Glenarvan. “It is his expiation!”

The boat, commanded by John Mangles, pushed off. Ayrton, standing, still impassive, took off his hat and bowed gravely.

Glenarvan removed his hat, and his crew removed their hats as well, as one does before a man who is going to die, and the boat moved away in the midst of a deep silence.

Ayrton arrived at the beach, jumped onto the sand, and the boat came back to the ship. It was four o’clock in the evening, and from the top of the poop the passengers could see the quartermaster, arms crossed, motionless as a statue on a rock, looking at the ship.

“Are we leaving, my Lord?” asked John Mangles.

“Yes, John,” said Glenarvan, more excited than he wished to appear.

“Full steam!” John shouted to the engineer.

The steam whistled in its pipes, the screw beat the waves, and at eight o’clock the last summits of Tabor Island disappeared in the shadows of the night.



The quartermaster stood motionless, his arms crossed

## Chapter XXII

### The Last Distraction of Jacques Paganel

THE *DUNCAN* SIGHTED THE AMERICAN COAST ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> OF MARCH, ELEVEN DAYS AFTER leaving Tabor Island, and she anchored the next day in Talcahuano Bay.

She returned after a journey of five months, during which — strictly following the line of the 37<sup>th</sup> parallel — she had circumnavigated the world. The passengers of this memorable expedition, unprecedented in the annals of the traveller's club, had crossed Chile, the Pampas, the Argentine Republic, the Atlantic, the da Cunha Islands, the Indian Ocean, the Amsterdam Islands, Australia, New Zealand, Tabor Island, and the Pacific. Their efforts had not been fruitless, and they repatriated the castaways of the *Britannia*.

Not one of those brave Scots who had answered the call of their laird was missing from the roll. They were all returning to their old Scotland, and this expedition recalled history's "*bataille «sans larmes»*." [fn1](#)

The *Duncan*, her refuelling completed, followed the coast of Patagonia south, rounded Cape Horn, and sailed across the Atlantic Ocean.

No trip was less incidental. The yacht carried a cargo of happiness within it. There were no secrets aboard, not even John Mangles' feelings for Mary Grant.

A mystery still intrigued MacNabbs, however. Why did Paganel always remain tightly bundled up in his clothes, and wrapped in a scarf that went up to his ears? The Major greatly desired to know the reason for this singular mania. But in spite of the all the interrogations, the allusions, and the suspicions of MacNabbs, Paganel did not unbutton himself.

No, not even when the *Duncan* crossed the equator and the seams of the bridge melted under a heat of fifty degrees. [fn2](#)

"He is so distracted, that he thinks himself in St. Petersburg," said the Major, seeing the geographer enveloped in a huge greatcoat as if the mercury had been frozen in the thermometer.

Finally, on May 9<sup>th</sup>, fifty-three days after leaving Talcahuano, John Mangles raised the light of Cape Clear. The yacht entered the St. George's Channel, crossed the Irish Sea, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, she reached the Firth of Clyde. At eleven o'clock she was anchoring at Dumbarton. At two o'clock in the afternoon her passengers entered Malcolm Castle to the "*Hurrah!*"s of the Highlanders.

It was thus written that Harry Grant and his two companions would be saved, that John Mangles would marry Mary Grant in the old St. Mungo's Cathedral, where Reverend Morton — who had prayed nine months earlier for the salvation of the father

— blessed the marriage of his daughter and his saviour! It was therefore written that Robert would be a sailor like Harry Grant and John Mangles, and that he would take up with them the great project of Captain Grant under the patronage of Lord Glenarvan!

But was it written that Jacques Paganel would not die a bachelor? Probably.

In fact the learned geographer could not escape celebrity after his heroic exploits. His distractions created a sensation in Scottish society. His modesty was insufficient to extract him from the attention lavished on him.

And it was then that an amiable thirty year old young lady — Major MacNabbs' cousin, no less — a little eccentric herself, but still good and charming, fell for the eccentricities of the geographer and offered him her hand. Forty thousand pounds sterling came with it, but no one mentioned that.

Paganel was far from insensitive to Miss Arabella's feelings, but he did not dare to answer her.

It was the Major who had matched these two hearts, so made for each other. He even told Paganel that marriage was the "last distraction" he would be allowed.

It was a great embarrassment to Paganel who, by a strange singularity, could not bring himself to say the final word.

"Miss Arabella does not please you?" MacNabbs kept asking.

"Oh, Major, she is charming!" cried Paganel. "A thousand times too charming, and — if it is necessary to tell you everything — I would like her more if she were less! I wish she had a fault."

"Rest easy," said the Major. "She has, and more than one. The most perfect woman still has her quota. So, Paganel, is it decided?"

"I do not dare," said Paganel.

"Come, my learned friend, why are you hesitating?"

"I am unworthy of Miss Arabella!" the geographer invariably answered. And he would not say more than that.

Finally, the Major backed him against a wall one day, and Paganel entrusted to him — under the seal of secrecy — a peculiarity which would facilitate his identification if



They entered Malcolm Castle, to the "Hurrah!"s of the Highlanders

the police were ever on his heels.

“Bah!” cried the Major.

“It’s like I tell you,” said Paganel.

“What does it matter, my worthy friend?”

“You think?”

“On the contrary, this adds to your personal merits! You are only more singular. This makes you the unmatched man of Arabella’s dreams!”

And the Major, keeping an imperturbable seriousness, left Paganel prey to the most poignant anxieties.

A short interview took place between MacNabbs and Miss Arabella.

Fifteen days later, a wedding was loudly celebrated in the Malcolm Castle Chapel. Paganel was gorgeous, but tightly buttoned, and Miss Arabella splendid.

And the geographer’s secret would have always remained buried in the depths of the unknown if the Major had not spoken to Glenarvan, who did not hide it from Lady Helena, who had a word with Mrs. Mangles. Shortly the secret reached the ears of Mrs. Olbinett, and it burst forth.

Jacques Paganel, during his three days of captivity with the Māori, had been *tattooed*. Tattooed from his feet to his shoulders, and he wore on his breast the image of a heraldic kiwi with outstretched wings, which pecked at his heart.

This was the only adventure of his great journey to which Paganel never consoled himself, and he did not forgive New Zealand.

It was also what, in spite of many solicitations and despite his regrets, prevented him from returning to France. He would have feared his person exposing the entire *Geographic Society* to the jokes of caricaturists and tabloids by bringing back a freshly tattooed Secretary.

Captain Grant’s return to Scotland was hailed as a national event, and Harry Grant became the most popular man in Old Caledonia. His son Robert became a sailor like himself, and Captain John, and it was under the auspices of Lord Glenarvan that he resumed the project of founding a Scottish colony in the Pacific Seas.



A wedding was celebrated fifteen days later

## THE END

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[fn1.](#) "Battle without tears." The Battle of Brécourt, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1793, during the French Revolution, became known as the "*bataille «sans larmes»*". Fifteen hundred National Convention forces surprised a force of five thousand Federalists, near Pacy-sur-Eure. The Federalist forces broke and ran at the first sound of cannon fire, and there were no deaths or injuries on either side — DAS

[fn2.](#) 122° Fahrenheit — DAS