

IN THE GRIP OF THE HAWK

A Story of the Maori Wars

BY REGINALD HORSLEY

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I FAMILY JARS

CHAPTER II THE QUEEN'S SHILLING SUNDERS FRIENDS

CHAPTER III THE PRICE OF SUCCESS

CHAPTER IV TE KAREAREA[1]

CHAPTER V THE GRATITUDE OF TE KAIHUIA

CHAPTER VI THE STORY OF THE GREENSTONE MERE

CHAPTER VII STORM SIGNALS

CHAPTER VIII THE STORM BURSTS

CHAPTER IX JUST IN TIME

CHAPTER X TOGETHER AGAIN

CHAPTER XI ONE MYSTERY THE LESS

CHAPTER XII VANISHED

CHAPTER XIII DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN

CHAPTER XIV MAGIC, BLACK AND WHITE

CHAPTER XV POKEKE, THE SULLEN ONE

CHAPTER XVI SPLENDIDE MENDAX

CHAPTER XVII SAFE BIND, SAFE FIND

CHAPTER XVIII PAEROA AT LAST

CHAPTER XIX PAEROA'S VENGEANCE

CHAPTER XX A BID FOR LIBERTY

CHAPTER XXI IN THE FLAX SWAMP

CHAPTER XXII THE DOOM OF THE HOUSE OF TE TURI

IN THE GRIP OF THE HAWK



There lay Winata Pakaro, famous fighting Chief, his lips set in a grin of hate
(page 73.)

**There lay Winata Pakaro, famous fighting Chief,
lips set in a grin of hate.**

TO
SIR JAMES BALFOUR PAUL, F.S.A. (SCOT.)
Lyon King of Arms
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
IN MEMORY OF MANY YEARS
OF FRIENDSHIP

PREFATORY NOTE

As the long struggle between Maori and Pakeha dragged to a close, a new interest was given to it by the perversion of numbers of Maoris of various tribes to a singular religion, styled by its founders *Pai Marire*—that is, 'good and peaceful.'

There was nothing good or peaceful about the new religion, which was a fantastic blend of very elementary Christianity, Judaism and Paganism. Deadly hostility to the Pakeha, or white man, was an all-important item in this curious creed, whose votaries were known as Hau-haus, and prominent amongst its prophets was the rebel chief, Te Kooti, one of the best generals and one of the worst men of his day.

Brave, ferocious and animated by an almost oriental fatalism, the Hau-haus were formidable antagonists and, moreover, shocked even their compatriots by their ruthless savagery. At the very outset they defeated a mixed contingent of the 57th Regiment and Colonials at Taranaki, and cut off the head of Captain Lloyd, who had been killed in action. Lloyd's head, preserved after the Maori fashion, was then carried round from tribe to tribe by two Hau-hau missionaries, who strove to make converts to the new faith. When they succeeded, the head was spiked upon the summit of the *niu*, or sacred pole, round which the fanatics leaped and danced until they grew frenzied, uttering at frequent intervals their characteristic barking howl, 'Hau-hau! Hau-hau!' which has been described as the most frightful of noises, and a trial to the nerves of the bravest.

While in no sense a history of a particular period of the war, the story is built upon a historical basis. Thus, the imprisonment of

Te Kooti on Chatham Island—according to some upon a fabricated charge—his escape thence in a brig, the sacrifice of his aged uncle in order to propitiate the wind-god, his landing near Poverty Bay, the massacre there, the fight at Paparatu and the final storming of a strong *pah* in which he had taken refuge, are all matters of history. Te Kooti, however, did not massacre the crew of the brig, nor was he slain in battle. Like the yet more infamous Nana Sahib, he escaped to be no more heard of. It is interesting to note that a nephew of Te Kooti appeared a few months ago in New Zealand, threatening to preach a new religion and to bring about the downfall of the Pakeha.

The *mere*^[1] (pronounced almost as 'merry') or war-club of the Maoris was in shape something like an old-fashioned soda-water bottle, flattened, and was made of wood, bone, a very hard gray stone, whalebone, jade, or of the valuable mineral, nephrite, more commonly known as 'greenstone,' which is found in the Middle Island. The Maoris regarded the greenstone with superstitious veneration, and in times of danger would sacrifice their ornaments fashioned from it to the particular god whose aid it was desired to invoke. Greenstone clubs were the peculiar possessions of chiefs or very important tribesmen, inferior mortals contenting themselves with those of less costly materials.

Regarding the particular greenstone club which figures so prominently in the story, it is, perhaps, only fair to admit that it will be useless for readers with archæological tastes to endeavour to verify the tradition of its origin or the sinister prophecy attached to it.

While I took no part in the struggle, I well remember, when a very little boy, adding my small voice to the enthusiastic cheers of

the people as first one regiment and, later on, another, marched through the streets of Sydney on their way to embark for New Zealand. When several sizes larger, it was my fortune to see much of the native races of the southern seas—in Maori-land, Fiji, the Loyalty Islands, and elsewhere. Now if I can succeed in interesting my readers by picturing for them some of the scenes which filled my childhood with so much colour and interest and delight, I shall be satisfied.

REGINALD HORSLEY.

[1] In Maori every letter is pronounced. Thus: *whare*, a house = 'wharry,' not 'whar.'

CHAPTER I

FAMILY JARS

The long-drawn, melancholy wail of the curlew rose and fell thrice in the garden, and Terence Moore went to the window and looked out into the clear moonlight.

'Is that you, George?' he hailed.

'Yes. Come out quietly; I want to talk to you.'

Terence hung by his hands from the sill and dropped to the ground beside his visitor. 'What is the matter, George?' he inquired anxiously. 'Why won't you come in?'

'Because I wish to see you alone, and I don't want any one to know that I am here. You may as well hear it first as last, old fellow—I have left home.'

'I am not surprised. My only wonder is that you have stayed there so long,' Terence commented, lifting his tip-tilted nose still higher.

'Things have come to a head, you see,' explained George Haughton. 'The colonel struck me this evening, and though, of course, I don't mind that, yet I can't stand any longer the sort of life I have been forced to lead for the past year or two.'

'I am not surprised,' repeated Terence. 'Few fellows would have been as patient, I think. Wait a moment and I'll get my hat.'

He was back again almost immediately, and, linking arms with George, drew him round the house to the front gate.

These two had been friends from earliest childhood, though both in appearance and disposition they differed remarkably from one another. George Haughton, tall and commanding, finely made, with well-knit, muscular frame, fair, curling hair, and Saxon-blue eyes, was the very type of a healthy young Englishman. The other, Terence Moore, was blue-eyed also; but his shock of red hair, his densely freckled skin, the tilt of his nose, and his wide smiling mouth as plainly betrayed his Irish origin as did his name. He was much shorter than George, but his broad shoulders and extraordinary length of arm amply atoned for any deficiency in the matter of inches.

Terence was a bushman to his finger-tips, and once had been heir to a fine estate, but on the death of his father, two years before the opening of this story, he had been left penniless. Mrs. Moore had died when her boy was but an infant, and so it happened that the lad lost parent, money and home at one stroke, for the creditors seized his father's station, along with everything upon it which could be turned into cash.

Young Moore, then only eighteen, had not money enough to take up land and develop a new station, and though his dear friends, the Haughtons, would have helped him to any extent, he was too proud to become dependent, even upon them. So he started driving fat cattle from one part of the country to another, an occupation at once profitable and healthy. In the intervals of work he stayed in Sydney with his mother's sister; and thus securing the companionship of George Haughton, proceeded to make the latter still more discontented with his lot, by pouring into his ear all the

moving incidents by flood and field which fall to the share of the gentleman-drover.

To this sympathetic friend did George now confide the tale of the crisis of his long dispute with his father, to which Terence, anxious to secure a congenial companion during his long rides through the bush, replied by an earnest appeal to George to throw in his lot with his own.

As a matter of fact, there had been a terrible scene at 'Sobraon.' For two years Colonel Haughton had fumed and fretted at his son's evident disinclination to follow the path marked out for him, and to-day a climax had been reached. The colonel, enraged at George's invincible opposition, had lost command of himself and struck his son; and the way in which it all came about was this:

After the famous battle of Sobraon, in which he was severely wounded, Colonel Haughton had retired from the army and bought a beautiful property on the wooded heights of one of the tiny bays which break the noble outline of Sydney Harbour. Here he had settled with his wife and his son, George, then a burly little fellow of three, whose obvious destiny was the army, in which his father had served with such distinction. But after the lad's tenth birthday the colonel's views underwent a change, and it was decided to send the youngster into the bush, so that he might grow familiar with station life, and in due course become capable of managing the fine run which his father intended to purchase for him.

This was much more to George's taste than school, and six months with his father's old friend, Major Moore, went far towards making a thorough little bushman of him. Terence and he were already chums, and the constant association which continued

during their youth cemented a friendship which endured throughout their lives.

The colonel's 'system,' thus inaugurated, was further developed by a visit to New Zealand, where George's uncle, Captain Haughton, R.N., retired, had settled some years before. Thereafter Colonel Haughton divided each successive year into four parts, every three months of study alternating with a like period in the bush, either with Major Moore in New South Wales, or with Captain Haughton in New Zealand, as the turn of each came round.

Brain and body developed most satisfactorily under this system, and, as a natural consequence of so much healthy outdoor life, George at nineteen was as sturdy and well-developed a youngster as could be found, while in height he already over-topped his father, who stood five feet eleven outside his boots. The boy's future seemed splendidly assured, when a season of drought, common enough in Australia, frightened the colonel, and, after much deliberation, he astounded everybody by declaring his intention to launch his son in business.

But here he reckoned without George, for nothing less suited to the lad's disposition, tastes or early training could have been hit upon, and the one thing which kept him from open rebellion was his desire not to give pain to his mother. But when, quite suddenly, Mrs. Haughton died, George, who had been devoted to her—though he had a great admiration and love for his father, too—determined to resist the proposed change with all his might.

He said little, however, until his twentieth birthday was passed, though his attitude was always one of firm, respectful opposition; and then at last the crisis came, and the blow struck by the hasty-

tempered father in support of his authority broke down the last lingering scruple on the part of his son. It is difficult, all facts considered, to blame George too severely, even if his conduct in taking the law into his own hands cannot be entirely excused.

'You can't do better than come with me, George,' urged the wily Terence, when George had told him of the tempestuous scene at 'Sobraon,' as Colonel Haughton had named his house. 'You can't do better,' he repeated; 'that is, if you have made up your mind not to return home.'

'That is decided,' said George. 'To go back would only mean further hopeless bickering with my father, and I don't want to run any risks.'

'Then that is settled. You will have to lie low for a week or so until I am on the move again; but you can write to your father and let him know that you are safe. I dare say he will come round as soon as he sees that you are really in earnest. He is a good sort, is the colonel,' wound up Terence, with a grin at the recollection of a sound thrashing his old friend had once given him.

'He is, I admit,' granted the colonel's wayward son. 'All the same, he won't come round easily. He would wear out my will by sheer persistence and get his own way if I remained in the house. My only safety lies in flight.'

'I believe you. And you will fly with me to the bush.'

'No, Terence; I have another plan.' And straightway George delivered himself of a statement which astonished his voluble friend into something like absolute silence. But this did not last very long. For a few moments Terence remained pensive, his

thoughts evidently far away; then, as they turned to take the homeward road he astonished George in his turn by cutting a caper in the middle of the street.

'Hurroo!' he cried, relapsing into the rich brogue he could assume at pleasure, and poured out a torrent of strange sounds, which George declared to be gibberish, but which Terence insisted were 'the rale Oirish for unbounded deloight.'

'But what is the matter with you?' George asked helplessly at last. 'Why should you behave like a lunatic because I am going away?'

'Because *we* are going, if you please,' corrected Terence, suddenly serious.

George stared at him. 'You don't mean that you are coming, too?'

'An' why wouldn't I? Do you think I'll allow a great baby like you to go off alone among all those murtherin' ruffians? Yes,' he concluded, with a mock salute, 'with your leave, or without your leave, I'm going with you.'

'But—but——' began George in stammering protest.

'No buts, old fellow. I am going with you,' declared Terence; 'so there is no more to be said.'

'But your prospects?' objected George.

'Oh yes, my prospects. Fine, aren't they? I shall have quite as good a chance of getting on in the world—and a better—by going with you, as I shall by jogging peacefully behind a lot of fat cattle. Besides, we are not going away for ever, I hope; and I know plenty

of people who will be only too glad to get me to drive their beasts, no matter how long I may stay away. So say no more about it; the thing is settled.'

'You are a good friend, Terence,' said George, with some emotion, and the two linked arms once more and set off in the direction of Woolloomooloo, where Terence resided when in town.

* * * * *

Midnight! The solemn strokes of some big clock in the city boomed over the quiet waters of the bay, and the two soldierly old men who were standing on the little jetty at the foot of the garden at 'Sobraon' turned rather helplessly towards one another.

'We may as well go in, Charles,' said the elder, who was Colonel Haughton's brother-in-law, General Cantor. He will not return to-night, I feel sure.' To himself he added: 'I don't believe he means to return at all, poor lad.' For General Cantor had been to a large extent in his nephew's confidence, and had long ago made up his mind that George would one day end the constant friction by a sudden snapping of home ties.

'I dare say you are right, William,' the colonel answered, too depressed to argue; 'yet he often pulls home across the bay at night. Well, well; I have been a tyrant and a fool. I see that {missing words} pray God not too late.' There was a {missing words} voice, and he turned about to cast one more look over the shimmering sea. 'God bless the boy, wherever he is, whatever he does,' he murmured, and, leaning heavily upon his upright little brother-in-law, went back to the house.

There they wished one another good-night rather tremulously; but the colonel set the French-window of his son's room ajar, and with a prayer in his sorrowful heart for the absent lad went thoughtfully to bed.

The first streak of morning found him again in George's room, looking eagerly for some sign of his presence. George was not there, but the window had been shut, and a letter lay conspicuously upon a table. The colonel caught it up and tore it open with trembling fingers. A glance gave him a grasp of the contents, and with a bitter cry he flung himself upon his knees by the empty bed and poured out his heart in prayer that no harm might come to the son whom he loved so well and had used so hardly.

The letter ran:

'MY DEAR FATHER,—I think that it is wiser for me to leave home for a time and strike out a line for myself. It grieves me to oppose you, but, as I feel myself to be utterly unfitted for a commercial life, there is nothing else to be done. We used to be such (missing words) and we have neither of us been very happy since mother died. Don't imagine that I am going away because of our little breeze to-day. I have not thought of that again. Really, I have not. I shall write as soon as I have settled to the work I have chosen, and will keep you posted as to my movements. Good-bye, my dear old dad. My love to Uncle William; and you may both of you be sure that I shall try and remember your teaching and his and keep straight. I am afraid

you will say that I am making a crooked beginning; but, father, in this matter I can't obey you. I can't indeed. Good-bye again. Try to remember me as your affectionate son,

GEORGE.'

And this was almost the last that Colonel Haughton heard of his son for many a day.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

