

consider all their priests as a species of sorcerers, and believe they have the power to take the lives of whomsoever they choose by incantation. Themoranga,\* one of the most enlightened of the chiefs, came one day to Marsden, in great agitation, to inform him that a brother chief had threatened to employ a priest to destroy him in this manner, for not having sold to sufficient advantage an article which he had given him to dispose of. "I endeavoured," says Marsden, "to convince him of the absurdity of such a threat; but to no purpose; he still persisted that he should die, and that the priest possessed that power; and began to draw the lines of incantation on the ship's deck, in order to convince me how the operation was performed. He said that the messenger was waiting alongside, in a canoe, for his answer. Finding it of no use to argue with him, I gave him an axe, which he joyfully received, and delivered to the messenger, with a request that the chief would be satisfied, and not proceed against him."

Themoranga seems to have been particularly selected by these priests as a subject for their roguish practices, perhaps by way of revenge for the freedom with which he occasionally expressed himself in regard to their pretensions, when his fears were not excited. A short time before this, one of them had terrified him not a little by telling him that he had seen his

\*Te Morenga, a chief of the Bay of Islands.