

# GOUT

Readers of this paper should know that to effectually cure Gout the great thing to do is to eliminate the urates from the system, which are the cause of the malady, and nothing does this so effectually as Bishop's Citrate of Lithia, which is strongly recommended by the "Lancet," and "British Medical Journal." Supplied by all Chemists in two sizes.

Australian Offices  
18, O'CONNELL STREET, SYDNEY.

## CURED.

# TOPICS OF WEEK.

### BACK TO WORK.

THE festive season is over and holiday making at an end for most people, and they have to turn from the easy task of spending money to the hard labour of making it. Dear me, but it is irksome to have to come back to work and deliberately lay our noses to the grindstone for another twelve months. I don't care how philosophic a man is, he is apt to be a trifle demoralised by a holiday. He may be the most patient beast of burden imaginable until he gets the holiday; but ten to one he returns to the shafts a little collar proud and restive. His profession or occupation that has probably seemed to him a decent enough sort of way of making a living looks unattractive and ungenial. He doubts very much if he has not really mistaken his vocation in life; nay, he is sure that he has done so. There is Charley, whose ambition has never soared beyond life



"He is convinced he should have been a sailor."

collar. Poor Charley feels that he ought to have been the sturdy bushman he conversed with up country the other day, or the bronzed farmer with his free out-of-door existence. The country's the place for me, sighs Charley, and bubbles among his friends of green fields. Or it may be that he has gone yachting. Then he is convinced that he should have been a sailor, and that he can never be happy in this life till he throws up his billet and trends the rolling deck. Beautiful visions these, which we have all more or less indulged in. Who is there that has not sat in his easy chair dreaming of the little farm, and the cows, and the pigs, and the hens, and the sweet-smelling fields, and the warm milk and the new-laid eggs, and the whole idyllic existence? Farming doesn't pay! say you. Why, we have

figured it all out here over our own hearths, and we can tell you a very different story. It's because the farmers don't know how. But just wait until we get on the land, and we shall show you how the trick is worked. I think I see us. Fine farmers we would make! It is all very easy to farm on paper, but when you have to tackle old mother earth, and contend against unfavourable seasons and markets yet more unfavourable, you begin to understand things. I think I have told you before of my friend who started a poultry farm on the strength of a publication entitled 'A Fortune in Fowls.' The experiences of my friend were such that he is not very sure to this day whether the rogue was to be taken out of or put into the poultry yard.

### WHERE WE COME IN.

THE chairman of the Auckland Board of Education, Mr Hobbs, evidently anticipates no ordinary destiny for New Zealand. Speaking the other day, he exhorted the boys and girls to pay great attention to their studies, and fit themselves for important positions. He thought New Zealanders would have to fill important positions because, in his opinion, New Zealand was going to be the mistress of the seas in these parts. Well, of course, we all understand that Fate has it on the cards that ultimately these islands will stand in the same relation to the Southern Hemisphere as Great Britain does to the Northern; but few of us anticipated that our day of exaltation was so near at hand as Mr Hobbs' words would imply. It means quick work if this marvellous change is going to take place in time for the present rising generation to benefit by it. Well, who knows, perhaps Mr Hobbs may be a true prophet, and, in any case, if the effect of his words is to make the boys and girls attend more closely to their lessons, he will have done good, even if his vaticinations turn out false. It must be obvious, however, that education in the colony has not hitherto been conducted with a single eye to the great part we are destined to play according to Mr Hobbs. If New Zealand is to be mistress of the seas, say, within the next fifty years, it is time that we were preparing our young citizens for the onerous duties they will certainly have to discharge. Let me see, we shall want dozens of admirals and commanders, and captains, and major-generals, and lord-lieutenants, and legislators, besides hundreds of less important officials to take charge of our enormous interests in these seas and manage all the neighbouring colonies. Are we making any provision for a regular supply of these against the time we shall require them? I am afraid we have been very negligent in this matter. So far as I can learn, we have no special machinery in our primary or secondary schools for the manufacture of either admirals or major-generals, not even for turning out a decent sub-lieutenant—and we are going to rule the sea! Surely we should have thought of a sub-lieutenant at least. The colony owes an eternal debt of gratitude to Mr Hobbs for letting a little light in on this shameful neglect; and I hope that gentleman will not stop now that he has indicated the danger, but will see that our whole system of education is remodelled at once so as to provide a sufficiency of admirals and major-generals, and the rest. Special classes should be organised, and boys that show a clear Napoleonic tendency should at once be put under the best military instructors. In the same way the budding Nelsons should be picked from their parent tree—their mothers, I mean—as soon as they can walk, and taught how to manoeuvre a fleet. Only by such means can we hope to be competent to take the place Providence has assigned to us in the philosophy of the modern Hobbs.

### THE POLITICAL MAELSTROM.

ON Auckland lady who often spends her Christmastide in Wellington complained to me yesterday that her visits to the Empire city were always somewhat marred by the smell of stale politics which hangs about the place. There's a good deal in the complaint, one must admit. The dust from the Parliamentary arena can scarcely help getting into the social life of the community there, and flavouring it so that after a long

session it is quite likely even the Christmas plum pudding may taste a trifle gritty to a stranger. Then again there is always a flavour of fresh politics about Wellington that goes against stomachs not used to it. It isn't Wellington's blame that things are so. It's what must be if a town is to have the honour of being the seat of Government in a colony like this where politics have got to be a good deal of a trade, and a somewhat dirty one at that. All roads lead to Rome; and naturally all our political ideas and all our political idealists, faddists, and cranks, the aspiring politicians and the despairing politicians gravitate to the political centre, which is Wellington. Just imagine what that means. But, of course, you can't. You must really be in the vortex yourself before you get to know the strange heterogeneous fotsam that gyrates there. Only by accident do we outsiders learn even a little about it. For instance, not very long ago I read in the papers



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that a woman with a baby in her arms applied to the Wellington Benevolent Trustees for money to get her to another part of the colony. Her husband, she explained, used to maintain her, but now he was a politician, and she got nothing from him. Again, only the week before last the benevolent Trustees had a curious application from a man of 50 years of age, who had come from Marlborough with the object of studying political economy at the Victoria College. He had no money—if he had, he said he would put it into politics—and he asked the trustees to help him towards the realisation of his dream. It was certainly a case of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, but the trustees could not see their way to commend the aspirations of the gentleman after the manner of the story books, and I suppose he is now back in Marlborough nursing his wrongs. Alas! poor politician, and poor would-be political economist. Wellington has been unkind to both of you. You saw the city afar off with the radiant light of Parliament on her brow. She seemed to beckon you, as she has seemed to beckon scores before you. Once there, you thought to yourselves, there will be no doubt of my success, and, Alnuschar-like, you saw yourself rising step by step on the political ladder till you had in very deed become 'the pillar of the people's hope, the centre of a world's desire.' It's the old, old story. I have met your fac-similes dozens of times in the remote bush—you and men who dream that nature had meant them to be politicians and political economists, but who, fortunately, for want of cash, could never get to Wellington. What a place it would be if they could get there!

### THE SCHOOL BOGEY MAN.

THE headmaster of the Auckland College and Grammar School in his speech at the distribution or prizes expressed pleasure in the fact that the number of girls and boys who were excused Latin showed a tendency to decrease; but he was alarmed to find that Euclid was one of the subjects of which the young Aucklanders showed dread. I am not disposed to infer from the first part of the headmaster's remark that the youth of the secondary schools in Auckland are on any better terms with these terrible ailments than youngsters generally are.

If the relations between the generality of boys to-day and the Romans are not every bit as strained and cold as they were in my day I should very much like to know what has brought about the rapprochement. I am glad to say that I have long got over my boyish antipathy to that glorious people, but I can well remember how sincerely I once hated them. Why we should be bullied into learning the language of folks with whom we never by any possibility could expect to meet on this side of the grave at all events—or even on the other, for were they not heathens?—was a thing that I never could satisfactorily explain to myself, except on the ground of a wicked and quite gratuitous passion for tormenting their pupils on the part of the masters. And even the most enthusiastic Latinist must admit that the first steps to Parnassus are singularly uninteresting especially to the poor boy who knows nothing about Parnassus and has not the very remotest anxiety to get there. It is so much easier to say in good plain English that Peter is a good boy or that you know that Peter is a good boy, than to express the same sentiment in a foreign tongue that nobody speaks, and for the life of him the boy does not see what possible advantage can be gained by himself or society generally by saying it in Latin. As to Euclid the boys of my day had no very deep regard for the gentleman. There was no love lost between us, but so far as I can remember we had no special dread of the old man. I think we regarded him somewhat in the light of a harmless lunatic with his triangles and his straight lines and his circles and all the rest of it. What good it was to follow him through his Chinese puzzle to his funny finale Q.E.D. we never enquired. We assumed, as in the case of the Latin, that it was all part and parcel of the pedagogic conspiracy to make work for us poor boys and unnecessarily harass us. I am surprised that the Auckland boys dread old Eucly as we used to call him. There surely must be something wrong in the way he is introduced to them. I can fancy youngsters taking a distaste to their great friend Robinson Crusoe if they had to make his acquaintance through the medium of a stick.

### THE SHOPPING VAMPIRE.

THE first case in the colony of a shopkeeper being fined for failing to provide sitting accommodation for one of his female employees was recently reported in Auckland. But I am by no means sure that that employer was the only offender against the law in this respect. In fact, there is little doubt that in many shops the sitting accommodation for saleswomen is very often inadequate, and the poor girls are not encouraged by their employers to make use of what there is. Customers, too, are in many cases less merciful than employers. Who does not



"and for an hour keeps the poor shop-assistant running backwards and forwards"

know the lady who sits in a shop with the very haziest conception of what she wants to buy, or even with a deliberate intention of purchasing nothing, seats herself in a chair and for an hour keeps the poor assistant running backwards and forwards and up and down in a vain attempt to please