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## Current Topics.

AT HOME & ABROAD



LL parties are agreed, then, that there is not the least chance for newspaper reporters. It was only the other day the illuminated Mr. Varley informed them they need never expect to see the right side of the clouds. They were to be left behind to report the uplifting of all our godly ministers and the pious portion of their congregations; but considering the "tricks and manners" of the uplifted we do not think their loss would be a very heavy one. And now we find another prophet following in the wake of Mr. Varley, and uttering words to the same effect. Te Whiti, in short, as reported by our contemporary the *New Zealander*, declares that the gentlemen referred to are by no means spiritually minded. "When I speak of the land, the survey, and such matters of little consequence" said he, "(the reporters') pencils fly with the speed of the wind, but when I speak the word of the spirit, they say this is the dream of a madman. They are so intent on accumulating wealth, that nothing appears to interest them except what is in some way connected with the accumulation of wealth." This is plainly confirmatory of what the great revivalist had previously announced. But indeed it is not the only point of agreement that we remark between the wild raving of the Maori fanatic and the claptrap that distinguishes the evangelical pulpit. Te Whiti's whole harangue is a striking comment on the unrestricted use of Holy Writ and the danger of placing it in ignorant hands, with license to explain it *ad libitum*. This address of which we speak delivered by him at Parihaka is filled with biblical quotations and allusions, and is, by its blasphemy a loud testimony against the false doctrine that has made Christianity a thing to be caricatured by the heathen, and an additional curse to them rather than a blessing.

THERE is the most elegant creature imaginable staying on a visit in Nelson. The pink of politeness, the culmination of gentility, and the "glass of fashion," all in one, are sojourning in that favoured city. Will not some body take his photograph and let the public have the advantage of observing his deportment and the general style of his get-up. It is not fair that he should be allowed to hide himself under a bushel, and deprive us all of our chance of catching the air of refinement and benefiting by superiority when it comes within our reach. And yet we should not have known one word about him if he had not written home to a London paper called the *Christian World*, and in that round about way informed us of his presence that we might reasonably have been made acquainted with several months ago. His name is only a common place one, but it might have been Horatio Sparkins, or Cymon Tuggs, or something else belonging to the heroes of ultra-genteel life commemorated in fiction; at least we are admonished that the race thus celebrated is not extinct or abnormal, and that real live specimens are to be found in highly favoured localities, and delighting circles of appreciative exquisites. This charming representative of kalydor and lavender kids is greatly disgusted with the average New Zealand colonists:—"I should be sorry to speak disrespectfully of any class of men," says he "but I must say that I miss here in New Zealand that moral and intellectual backbone which I have been accustomed to at home. Most of the tradesmen, farmers, etc., appear to have risen from the ranks of the working community, and as a consequence there is a sad lack of polish and refinement amongst them." Shocking creatures; not one of them who can tell if he had a grandfather, or who would faint at the sight of thick bread and butter. "Oss" is the common pronunciation and nobody ever thinks of saying "orse:" its perfectly barbarous. Neither does our man of much polish approve of our politicians: they also are inferior, and of our pious folk he says:—"There is a good deal of earnestness apparent, but I miss the high tone of the churches at Home. It is astonishing to an Englishman what will pass for good preaching. Those unfortunates, the third-rate preachers of England, should come out here at once. Let them only bring a stock

of Sankey's tune-books, and go in for revivalism, and their success is sure. Next to a political rumpus the dearest thing to multitudes of colonists is a good religious noise." We rejoice to think we know nothing about the preaching; we only know the pious writing and about that it is undoubted there is a very strong smack of the slums and the bothies, for it is, for the most part, not only stupid but vulgar in the extreme; we suspect our beau is not far out here. The remedy for all our evils, however, is to be found in "an infusion of the public-spirited higher middle-class population of England."—By the way are these any relations to the puritanical parties of whom Mr. Matthew Arnold lately painted so agreeable a picture: they would indeed be a most admirable introduction here? These people would reform our politics, and as for our piety—"the correction would be an immigration of English congregationalists," a sect we conclude of the utmost elegance, but one with whose peculiarities we are not acquainted. The pulpit oratory of which this correspondent speaks and the elegance apart—and very widely apart—how does it differ from the thousand and one congregations we find around us?

THE arrival of the militant evangelist of New Britain at the present juncture of affairs appears a most fortunate circumstance. It is to be hoped our Government will not let slip the opportunity now afforded them. The "gospel," with ball cartridge accompaniments, is the very thing that is wanted in the neighbourhood of Hawera, and the champion missionary who hit upon so happy a combination, and what is more, carried it out to perfection, is the man of all others to fit the situation. Let us hope, then, that no stupid prejudices on the part of any one whomsoever will prevent the organisation of a pious *battue*, which, under the conduct of so able an "Avenger of Blood," will make the way of our settlers plain and ensure them against improvised ploughing matches. This is at least as great a desideratum as it was to have the inhabitants of New Britain subdued in the interests of traders. It is true there is great authority for stating that it is contrary to the spirit of Christianity to call down fire from Heaven upon our adversaries, and the fire would be most unlikely to answer the call; but the earthly element is quite another thing, and may be lawfully, and even laudibly employed whenever the occasion offers. Decidedly we should have a crusade and now is the time. The hour and the man have arrived.

M. REVEILLAUD the French "convert from the errors of Popery," over whom our good Evangelical friends are just now making so mighty a clucking, and whose "conversion" was wrought in an instant by a great light like that which accompanied the conversion of St. Paul, except that it blinded nobody, and there were no other witnesses of it, has a rival here amongst us in New Zealand. Te Whiti, in a word, was also converted in this manner. He was given a Bible, he tell us, by a missionary named Reimenschneider, and authorised by this man of God "to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it," expecting according to the presumptuous doctrine of the sects that he should receive a special guidance of the Holy Spirit, and there find for himself "all that was good, and true, and holy." He took, and read; but, although his experiences were those of St. Paul, they did not result even in the production of a St. Augustine. There emerged instead this Maori fanatic. According to the report of the *Auckland Herald*:—"Te Whiti said he read it for a time without any good resulting. He persevered, and still he was like one foolishly groping his way. At last, like St. Paul, the scales fell from his eyes. A great light shone into his mind, and the words of the spirit flowed from his lips like rivers of water swelled by the raising of the sea. He has gone in on this course of inspiration until he now believes himself to be Jesus Christ, and that his second advent is nigh at hand." Reveillaud, we believe, is also a herald of the Second Advent, and there is, in fact, all the likeness between the two that we might expect to be shown by men acting under a like influence; the one of whom was civilized and educated, the other an ignorant barbarian, but both misled by a highly imaginative mind under no heavenly influence whatsoever. But whatever the French reproduction of the Great Apostle may be, the Maori one is not without "method in his madness." If his Bible reading taught him a dubious Christianity, it also showed him that the enlightened Christians—the very missionary it may be who had given him the Bible—were