

## Current Topics

### A Maori War-Cry

'The war-cry of the Maoris who welcomed the American Fleet at Auckland,' says the *Boston Pilot*, 'is several laps ahead of any college cheer yet recorded.'

It takes a Maori to put 'beef' into a war-cry.

### Faith Healing

The Anglican Bishop of Christchurch is evidently desirous of giving faith-healing (or mental healing) a trial in his diocese. He invites the local medicos to co-operate with clerical and other persons who claim the gift of healing. But the medical profession will no more sniff the same air as the 'psychotherapists' (as the new quacks grandiloquently call themselves) than it will touch hands or brush coat-tails with the bone-setter or the 'cancer-curer' or the 'magnetic healer' or other-such irregular practitioners. Faith-healing or 'Christian Science' (which is neither scientific nor Christian) made a multi-millionaire of Mrs. Eddy. We are not aware that it did any good to the bodily or spiritual health of Mrs. Eddy's adherents. Calling it 'psychotherapy' may make it sound better; it is doubtful that it will make it do any better. And both the Eddyites and their brothers and sisters, the 'psychotherapists,' seem to draw the line at broken bones and missing eyes, and bunions and corns and warts and freckles and a large and varied assortment of the other ills that flesh is heir to.

Just over ten years ago, for instance, a pair of faith-healers (or psychotherapists, as we must, it appears, now call them) called upon Dr. Henson, a popular Baptist minister of Chicago. Like Polyphemus and Lord Wolseley and sundry other great personages of myth and history, Dr. Henson has only one good eye. The other was 'lost or mislaid, stolen or strayed.' Dr. Henson's visitors were of his own faith. They were also firm believers in the Eddyite cult, and it had occurred to them that their pastor would be greatly improved if the empty socket were filled with an eye like unto the other. The object of their visit was to see him about the replacing of the missing orbit. 'We have been praying for you,' said they, 'that you may have two perfect eyes, and have now come to pray with you. Will you not ask the Lord right here and now to give you a new eye?' Dr. Henson promptly made reply—and that reply rather took his visitors aback. 'What kind of teeth have you?' he asked the visiting brother. 'Why—why, that's a strange question,' stammered the good man, 'but I don't mind telling you that my teeth are mostly false.' 'What kind of teeth do you use, sister?' he asked the lady healer. 'Same kind,' she frankly admitted. 'Well, good friends,' added Dr. Henson, 'you go and ask God to grow some new teeth in your mouths. According to your theory, He will do it without delay. When you get your teeth, come around, and we'll see what can be done about that new eye.' But the healers, or 'psychotherapists,' came not. Dr. Henson still looks down on his big congregation with one eye. And we have reason to think that his 'psychotherapeutic' visitors are still grinding their hominy and their buckwheat cakes with artificial molars. We hardly think the new brigade of Christchurch healers will have better success with missing orbits, or lost teeth, or shivered 'timbers,' or that their methods will have a more persuasive power with the bacillus of tuberculosis, or of typhoid, or of plague, or of chicken-pox or swine-fever.

### Our Loafers

If we are to believe Mark Twain, we are all naturally lazy—born tired, perhaps. But most people stand up and fight the indolence in their nature, and (after, perhaps, many a round) floor it with a knock-out blow. They are thereafter steam-engines of acquired activity, of smaller or greater horse-power. And these are the people who, in the great forge of life, shape the destinies of nations and of men. Others give in from the start. These are the laggards of our schools, the loafers of our streets, the able-bodied parasites that laze on public charity and sot their lives away in ignoble idleness or vice. Many of them never reach even the easy pretence of toil and effort of Black,

whom Mark Twain found one summer morning at Hannibal, on the banks of the Mississippi, sprawling under a tree, idly listening to the songs of the birds and watching the steamers as they puffed up and down the waters of North America's mightiest river. 'What are you here for?' queried Twain. 'I'm here,' Black replied, 'for to pile them bales on the wharf.' 'Oh! And now you are resting, are you?' 'No, I ain't resting, because I ain't tired. I'm just waiting for the sun to sink down behind that there hill, so's I kin knock off work.'

Many able-bodied fellows are, like Black, happiest when idle. And indefinite inactivity has not, upon them, the effect which idleness had once upon a time upon a man who (as Chesterfield says) hanged himself for sheer weariness of putting on and pulling off his shoes and stockings every day. Like a black tribe in Darkest Africa, described by Stanley, they hold that constant labor kills a man but strengthens a woman. So they leave the support of their families to their wives, or throw them upon public charity, without the shame or the remorse that serves as a spur to action. This class is a tribulation to our agencies, both public and private, for the distribution of charity. Mr. Gallaway (Dunedin) presses for the formation of labor colonies, where those idlers shall be compelled to toil. The city of Richmond (Virginia) has, we think, a municipal farm where 'soaks' and 'bums' and loafers are sent to till the soil, raise crops, fell trees and chop them into firewood for sale to the civic householders, and, generally, to learn in toil and sweat the error of their ways. The practical Hollanders have a still more emphatic way of dealing with the tramp and loafer problem. There are in that model country of windmills and sluggish canals, six State model farms, occupying a total area of six thousand acres. Able-bodied men applying for public relief are sent to one or other of these farms. They are trained in agricultural pursuits, and, if their progress is satisfactory, they are afforded an opportunity of renting small holdings for themselves. Able-bodied vagrants and ne'er-do-weels are sent to a penal labor colony. They are compelled to work, however strong may be their disinclination to honest toil. A single term of experience in the penal labor colony is usually more than enough for even the hardened vagrant. By these two methods Holland has almost extinguished the race of her able-bodied paupers. A goodly measure of success could hardly fail to be achieved by a similar plan of dealing with the married loafer who is so sore a trial to the charitable organisations of this Dominion.

### The Crinoline Again?

The London *Graphic* threatens a long-suffering world with an early revival of the crinoline. It publishes a recent portrait of a Parisian fayre ladye circled round about by the fortress of silk-covered steel that made such hideous caricatures of the fashionable womanhood of half a century ago. And (we are told) the autocrats that rule the world of fashion are contemplating the early re-introduction of this expansive and expensive mode.

'After fashions have had their day,' says the Philosopher of the Sandwich Islands, 'then is the time to despise them.' All the world wondered how English womanhood ever tolerated that early crinoline, the monstrous, drum-shaped, whalebone structure of the Elizabethan period, the fardingale. *Pepys's Diary* records the wide-eyed astonishment with which, on May 30, 1662, the English Court witnessed these extraordinary pieces of feminine architecture upon the newly arrived Queen Catherine of Braganza and the ladies who composed her suite. Then, as now, Paris set the fashion to Europe. The fardingale, however, fell into disfavor. But that was after it had had its day—then (on the philosopher's dictum) the world could afford to pelt it with scorn. The year 1711 saw it revived—but modified somewhat in the direction of the crinoline of the fifties and sixties. During the last half of the eighteenth century the great, hooped, balloon-skirts reached extraordinary dimensions. The darkest hour is that before the dawn, and the utter extravagance of the eighteenth century crinoline (as we may call it by anticipation) led to its abandonment in private life. But it continued as a court dress till the days of George IV. The despised fashion became again a thing of beauty during and after the