

We stand for civilised usage in war. Our little local Tomwell opposes it. We see, with unfeigned regret, a loss of personal and national honor and the brand of a great disgrace in this deplorable petticoat campaign, against which so many of our colonial troops have entered such manly protests. And because we give frank and outspoken expression to this view, 'Civis' scrambles upon his barrel-end and shrieks aloud that our comment—which he has failed to refute or set aside—is merely a rabid exhibition of 'hatred against all things British!' It is really about time that 'Civis's' friends should begin look after him.

Consistency is a jewel. But with 'Civis' it is apparently too precious a jewel for everyday use. We have before us a pile of letters from the front that have appeared in both the *Dunedin* daily papers, and in a great many other papers published in other parts of New Zealand, and in England, and elsewhere. 'Civis' is welcome to see these if he choose. A considerable number of them contain the most damaging statements regarding officers and men of the British army in South Africa—statements far more serious than our fair and legitimate comment on the admitted fact of the harsh treatment of the Boer women. Some of these were published in the *Dunedin* dailies. Reputations are damaged by the news, as well the editorial, columns. And if 'Civis' were consistent he ought to have had one New Zealand editor or another on the gridiron pretty nearly every week for the past twelve months. But 'Civis,' like another great man—Nelson, to wit—has a convenient blind eye for his friends. To the N.Z. TABLET he has acted the part of Rabelais' wrinkled and withered witches. On the particular point at issue between us he has not made the pretence of reasoning. So much of his 'Note' as refers directly to it is merely a virulent personal attack—eked out by two serious and palpable misstatements in matters of fact which are a poisoning of the wells: another violation, by the way, of the usages of civilised warfare. 'Civis' distinctly conveys the impression that we assailed the *personal courage* of the British army officer and soldier—English, Scottish, and Irish. This is one of the journalistic 'ways that are dark' and 'tricks that are vain' for which 'Civis' is 'peculiar.' The impression is wholly false. No fuller and more frequent editorial tributes to their personal grit have appeared in any New Zealand paper than in the columns of the N.Z. TABLET. But we have condemned the admitted incapacity (not the native 'stupidity'—as 'Civis' also suggests) of many British officers—which is quite a different thing. And some of these have been relegated to the private life which they are better fitted to adorn than they are to lead brave men upon the field of battle. 'Civis's' remark that our words would, in stated circumstances, 'inevitably provoke a breach of the peace' sounds remarkably like the advice: 'Don't nail his ears to the pump!' At the last elections 'Civis' appealed to the bigot to aid his party. He must blame himself if people will interpret his screamy 'Note' of last Saturday as, in effect, an invocation to the hoodlum. 'Civis's' attempt to benefit his favorite political party by calling up the red devil of sectarian passion resulted not merely in the defeat, but in the complete and disastrous rout, of every candidate whose cause he advocated. We recall with unfeigned pleasure the fact that we rib-roasted 'Civis' to such good purpose then. The defeated candidates and their friends probably criss-crossed with their own particular rawhides the weals left by our cat-o'-nine-tails. And poor Yorick's wounds are probably rankling still. The whole tone and temper of the treatment of our remarks by 'Civis,' and all the attendant circumstances of the case, give at least a strong color to the suspicion that there is a connection between his disastrous electioneering campaign and his latest personal onslaught on the editor of the N.Z. TABLET. 'Civis's' ways are by no means mended. And it seems about as hard for him to conduct even a journalistic campaign according to the usages of civilised literary warfare as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.

Witches Oil cures pains and aches, neuralgia, headache, sciatica rheumatism. Price, 2s 6d. Try it.—\*.\*

Tussicura, the wonderful cough remedy—sold by all chemists and grocers.—\*.\*

Insure your crops by purchasing McCormick machinery. The best in the world. Costliest to build, best to buy, and easiest in the field.—\*.\*

The enormous output of McCormick machines defies the mental grasp of man. If the machines they manufacture were to issue from the gate of their works (the largest in the world), the spectators would see throughout the working day a McCormick machine emerging at full gallop every thirty seconds.—\*.\*

The Grand Prix was the highest award obtainable at the Paris Exhibition, and the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, of Chicago, secured this coveted honor, and not only this but they obtained more special prizes than all other competitors. Such a tribute to the worth of the McCormick machines is proof positive of their excellence. Messrs. Morrow, Bassett and Co., Christchurch, Ashburton, and Dunedin, are the agents for the Company's manufactures in New Zealand.—\*.\*

## IN THE WAKE OF THE RISING SUN.

(By 'VIATOR'.)

Damascus, December 12, 1900.

EARLY in the afternoon we are steaming away from Muallaka, down a broad, fertile valley, between Lebanon and Anti-Libanus, past the rock tombs of Cain and Abel—so they say!—across slopes thickly planted with apricot, walnut, and apple trees, through plains well watered by brimming streams churning their volume in their haste to the level, down the sides of many hills till after a four hours run, the minarets of Damascus rise clear and masterly from the clustering houses at their base. In heavy rain—a boon to the country—we drive from the station to the Bessaroni Hotel—a hostelry not easily excelled in the East for all these conveniences that minimise the discomforts and fatigues of travel. And now what am I to say of Damascus, the oldest city still extant in the world, the centre seat of Oriental life and manners, unchanged save in little from the dawn of history, still presenting to the traveller from the West all those traits and colors and customs and institutions deep-bedded in impregnable tradition, absolutely indifferent to, and verily contemptuous of, the conventions that make for civilization and culture, as they are understood and accepted?

### DAMASCUS.

To attempt a description of this city of Damascus, to give even an outline of the countless points of interest, to muse ever so faintly on the memories wrapped in its history, to attempt an analysis ever so hasty and superficial of the mental pictures that crossed as in kinematograph, were foolhardy for the writer, for the reader unnecessarily prolix in a journal of notes undigested, uncorroborated, at random written. Here at any rate in Damascus—the 'Pearl of the East,' the 'Terrestrial Paradise' of Moslem and Arabic writers, you get the true flavor of the East, undiluted, unimpaired, unaltered—for ever, and for ever, and for ever.' Here the Frankish costume is not known—they look at you as you pass as a curiosity—*digito monstrant*. The Oriental, in flowing robes and rich colors, reigns alone and supreme. While cities East and West have risen and fallen with the 'rise and fall' of Empires, Damascus is still what it was, and *Semper eadem*. Founded before Baalbek and Palmyra it outlives them both. While Babylon is a heap in the desert, Tyre a ruin on the lonely shore, ancient Rome a study in stone, Damascus still proudly rears its head, same as it was in the days of Isaiah and David and Darius and the Ptolemies and St. Paul, the centre and head of Syria. Like all Eastern cities it is walled in, and at various points there are gates formidable of approach, with soldiers on duty thereat, unkempt and untrimmed, but booted and spurred, after the manner of the unspeakable Turk. We went along the famous 'street called Straight,' mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles in connection with St. Paul, traversing a large section of the city and partly covered in arcade-like, affording room for vendors and buyers, and water-carriers, and fruit-sellers, and long, lithe Bedouins, and Moslem women with white yashmak or black veil or kerchief in hideous colors giving them an eerie, ghoulish look, and children and dogs, masterless dogs, and simple donkeys and donkeys in droves, and strings of solemn camels, all in glorious confusion in the 'street called Straight.' From time immemorial the Arabs call Damascus the

### 'GARDEN OF PARADISE.'

If Paradise be a garden growing the most delicious fruits, where eternal sun prevails, through whose grounds run 'streams of living water,' the ideal is nearly reached. It was pretty, at a distance—in December, but in early spring-time when blossoms fleck the air in many hues, and the green vine climbs from tree to tree, and budding branches rise over a soil of velvet green, it is, I can well believe, a scene of unrivalled beauty. Two rivers flow through the city, the Pharphar and the Barada and many streams trickle from the hills to swell the volume of water below. The population, it is said, is difficult to estimate, but may be set down at 250,000 of whom 100,000 are Moslems. Schismatic Greeks number about 70,000 and Catholics up to 45,000.

Good work is being done here by the Jesuits, the Lazarists, the Franciscans, and the secular clergy in church and school, but the adamantine convictions of the Moslems, their solidarity, their power of caste and clan, their ineradicable traditions, habits, customs, erect barriers of the insuperable order—humanly speaking. The place is pointed out 'nigh to Damascus' where 'a light from heaven shined round about' St. Paul, then a persecutor; and likewise the house of Judas 'in the street that is called Straight' where 'one named Saul of Tarsus' was taken when he was stricken blind; also the house of the disciple Ananias now converted into a church who 'putting hands on Saul that he might receive his sight' changed him into 'a vessel of election to carry My name before the gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.' And immediately there fell from his eyes, as it were, scales, and he received his sight; and rising up he was baptised' Round the city walls is shown the place venerated by tradition where St. Paul was let down in a basket. 'The Jews consulted together to kill him, and they watched the gates day and night that they might kill him. . . . But the disciples taking him in the night, conveyed him away by the wall, letting him down in a basket' (Acts of the Apostles, chap. IX.). Near the tombs, at the N.E. corner of the city wall—a tumbledown building now occupied by lepers, is shown as the house of Naaman, the Syrian, healed by the prophet Elieus, after bathing 'seven times in the Jordan.' Further on a tomb enclosed in a mausoleum and overhung with lamps and offerings marks the last resting place, so 'tis said, and is so held in high honor of 'true believers,' of a daughter of Mahomet.

During our stay in Damascus I had the privilege of saying Mass each morning at the Jesuits' Church, built over the house occupied by St. John Damascene. Born in the seventh century of