

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXXII.—No. 42

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1904.

PRICE 6D

MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIII. TO THE N.Z. TABLET

Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiæ causam promovere per vias Veritatis et Pacis.
Die 4 Aprilis, 1900.

LEO XIII., P.M.

TRANSLATION.—Fortified by the Apostolic Blessing, let the Directors and Writers of the New Zealand Tablet continue to promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.
April 4, 1900.

LEO XIII., Pope.

Current Topics

Fifty Years' Progress

Situated as it is on the outer rim of the world, and remote from great centres of the world's population, New Zealand cannot show the phenomenal progress in settlement and trade that has marked the later history of new countries that are nearer to Europe. But for a young country so circumstanced its progress has been reasonably rapid. The latest advance sheets of the 'New Zealand Official Year-Book' for 1904 contain, on p. 561, an interesting 'Statistical View of Fifty Years' Progress in New Zealand—1854-1903.' The steady growth of our tight little islands is given year by year. Here are a few of the 'outside' ciphers:—

Population (exclusive of Maoris) in 1854, 32,551, in 1903 (December 31), 832,505. Occupied and cultivated holdings over one acre in extent, 11,932, in 1903, 66,092. Land (including sown grasses) under cultivation in 1857, 121,648 acres; in 1903, 13,504,001 acres. Live stock in 1858, 1,686,691 (including 1,523,324 sheep); in 1903, 21,073,402 (including 18,951,568). In 1854 New Zealand exported 1,251,116lb of wool, having a value of £70,103; in 1903 the export of this commodity had risen to 155,128,381lb, and its value represented the tidy fortune of £1,011,271. New Zealand's grain export in 1854 amounted to 93,700 bushels, of the value of £11,019; last year it was 5,362,748 bushels, valued at £533,865. The frozen meat trade was in its swaddling clothes in 1882. In that year we exported 15,244cwt, of the value of £19,330; in 1903 this great industry sent 2,378,650cwt of frozen meat to feed hungry mouths in other lands and received for the service the sum of £3,197,013. In 1854 our export of butter was represented by a few modest shipments totalling 807 cwt; last year the quantity rose to 285,106cwt. Our exports of cheese, phormium fibre (flax), gold, and kauri gum have fluctuated somewhat, but the general tendency is in each case upwards. In 1857, for instance, the gold exported was only 10,436oz, valued at £10,412; last year we poured into the lap of Europe 538,314oz of the yellow treasure and received therefor £2,037,832. The export of provisions, tallow, timber, etc., represented in 1854 a total value of £170,967, and in 1903 £2,288,327. The total value of our exports in 1854 was £320,890; in 1903 it had soared to £14,838,192. In the first-mentioned year our exports reached a total value of £891,201; last year they had risen to £12,788,675.

In 1874 we had only 209 miles of Government railways, of a kind, open and their receipts for the year amounted to a modest £21,198. Last year there were 3328 miles of Government lines open, and they brought £2,180,641 into the public exchequer. In 1866 there were in all New Zealand only 699 miles of telegraph lines, bringing in a modest revenue of £9,114; last year the mileage had risen to 7779 and the cash values of the messages (including telephones) amounted to £237,564. The average deposits in banks for the four quarters of 1857 were £343,316; in 1903 they amounted to £19,011,114. There were 715 depositors in savings-banks in 1858, and the balance to their credit on the last day of the year was £7862—a modest average of about £11 each. In 1903 there were 280,011 depositors in post-office and private savings-banks and there stood to their credit as the year was vanishing the sum of £8,132,958, showing an average of over £30 par head. Such rapid progress in settlement, commerce, transport, and communications necessarily involved a heavy public indebtedness, which rose from £836,000 in 1862 to £55,061,328 net in 1904.

A Crimeless Catholic Land

A perusal of our news columns would tend to show that there was not, after all, so much of hyperbole in the figure of speech which declared that white gloves—the sign of a blank criminal calendar—fall like snow-flakes at Irish assizes. Here is an editorial paragraph from the Dublin 'Weekly Freeman' of September 3 which will have a special interest for those who have followed our articles on the question of 'Catholics and Crime' in New Zealand:—

'The Report of the Prisons Board continues the story of the decline of Irish crime. There were only 249 convicts in the Irish prisons on January 1st, as compared with 461 on the 1st of January, 1896, and 893 on the 1st of January, 1881. There was a decrease of a hundred in the committals of all classes. The only unsatisfactory feature was the increase in the number of juveniles convicted. The number under 16 years of age went up from 135 to 192. The decrease in this class of offender had been steady and uninterrupted down to 1899, the year following Lord Cadogan's ill-judged and illegal tampering with the administration of the Industrial Schools Act in the interest of a few pounds of Treasury savings. Last year the number was higher than in 1899. But the number of juvenile criminals is also greater on account of the indefensible action of the magistracy. The Prisons Board have again to repeat their complaint that magistrates do not