

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

THIRTY-THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXXIII.—No. 36

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1905.

PRION 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

Peace!

Russia and Japan have proclaimed a new Truce of God. They have agreed to return dripping sword to dangling scabbard, and after their long encounter can sit and get back their breath, and patch up, as best they may, the physical and financial gashes through which their blood and treasure have so freely poured. For both Jap and Russ it is a peace with honor. Russia won at the last a diplomatic victory that neutralised to some extent the generally anticipated results of the splendid conquests achieved by Japanese skill and daring by flood and field. To France, in 1871, one of the most galling conditions of defeat was the vast war indemnity of five milliards of francs (about £200,000,000) with which the Man of Blood and Iron meant to crush his fallen foe into the very dust and keep him there. The cession of Alsace and Lorraine was vitriol thrown upon the open wound. Payment of the indemnity—the greatest ever exacted for a war—was to be extended over four years. German garrisons were to remain on the soil of France till the last franc was paid. But, with unexampled patriotism, the people emptied their private hoards into the coffers of the Treasury, and in a little over two years—in July, 1873—the last Prussian helmet disappeared beyond the country's eastern border. Russia has, happily, escaped the payment of the indemnity, the demand for which threatened, up to the last moment, to rupture the peace negotiations. After the Congress of 1878 Disraeli held that the peace then concluded would be a lasting one. And why? 'Because,' said he, 'I see that every one of the Powers is benefited by the peace, and no one is humiliated.' For the same reasons we venture the hope that the Russo-Japanese peace of 1905 will long endure.

That Nibelungen 'Milliard'

Some three years ago we switched the electric arc upon the legend of the 'milliard of francs' (about £40,000,000) which (as M. Waldeck-Rousseau declared at Toulouse) would fall into the fob of the workers of France on the suppression of the religious Orders in that lodge-ridden and ill-starred country. The bait held out by the French Premier was substantially the same as Henry VIII. and the Scottish Reformers dangled before the public eye to attract 'rice-converts' to their new-fangled faiths over three centuries ago. But in the case of M. Waldeck-Rousseau, the promise was a pie-crust one. It was made to be broken. For (as a French correspondent writes) 'it was founded upon

figures which did not truly represent the property of the religious. But the deception did its work.' The religious associations were suppressed, their property seized, and everything, down to the pots and pans and pokers and tongs, was sold and confiscated. And now those who clamored for the 'milliard' want to finger the coins. They are singing a doleful variant of 'The Highland Laddie'—'Oh! where, and oh! where is the convent milliard gone?' This is the burden of an article in the June number of the 'Revue Maconnique.' 'We are still,' says this Masonic organ, 'far from the famous milliard which the liquidation of the property of the monks was to give to workmen's pensions. The Treasury has already advanced a million and a half (about £60,000) for the processes which have been entered into, and there is no assurance that it will be able to recoup itself for what it has paid, to say nothing of what will still be necessary for the same purpose.'

And so endeth the story of the French monastic millions! It is the modern version of the mythical hoard of gold and precious stones that is sung in the nineteenth canto of the great barbaric drama of the North, the Nibelungen Lied. Moore sang of such another milliard when he damned the Wicklow gold-mines with this sarcastic stanza:—

'Has love to that soul, so tender,
Been like the Lagenian mine,
Where sparkles of golden splendor
All over the surface shine?
But if in pursuit we go deeper,
Allured by the gleam that shone,
Ah! false as the dream of the sleeper,
Like love, the bright ore is gone.'

The 'sparkles of golden splendor' that shone all over the surface of the Wicklow mine were the showy but valueless minerals such as catch the untrained and expectant eye of the newly-imported miner in Australia and New Zealand. They are known by the homely and descriptive title of 'new-chum gold.' For this cheap and doubly fraudulent bribe, numbers of gullible French workers acquiesced in the regime of persecution, plunder, and proscription inaugurated by M. Waldeck-Rousseau and conducted with such cynical heartlessness by M. Combes. The gulled workers have had their reward. And we cannot honestly say that we 'weep with them tear for tear.'

A Merited Defeat

According to the 'New York Herald's' Chicago correspondent, a certain woman in Porkopolis—one Mrs. Warren Williams—was recently leaning up against the gates of death. Her malady was a complication of

BROPHY & CO.

Having had over 20 years' experience of the district, are in a position to give valuable information as to the Grazing and Dairying capabilities of Property in the Manawatu and surrounding districts.