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

Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiae 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

The Christchurch Exhibition

Elsewhere in our columns of this date we publish a letter from one who occupies a position of honor and responsibility among the Catholic educators of New Zealand. The writer (who, for the present, does not wish to have his name appear) urges the desirability of 'a worthy and representative display' of the work of our Catholic schools at the forthcoming Christchurch Exhibition. We retain a bright and pleasant recollection of the commanding success achieved by the Catholic schools of Victoria over all competitors at the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1888; and we feel confident that our educational institutes in New Zealand would, given due time for preparation, win golden opinions by the splendid display which they could make of the training of mind and hand and eye which they impart. We commend our correspondent's letter to the kindly notice of all those 'a qui de droit.'

Two Orange 'Yarns'

The Rev. Wools-Rutledge is apostle or prophet or minister of the Lord to a small conventicle situated somewhere in or about Melbourne. His mental equipment best fits him to blush unseen in friendly obscurity. But he happens to have delusions about 'Papists' and the public service, and he sees 'Romish' plots, and 'conspiracies' and political 'trickling'—like Macbeth's phantom dagger—in the air of Australia. And this mental and visual quality, together with a fine faculty for wild and thumping assertion, makes the reverend pastor's mouth a decided acquisition to the platform of an organisation whose first 'obligation' binds members to keep 'Papists' out of public life. He is therefore in considerable demand among the Orange fraternity whenever particularly vociferous whoops are desired, and he assiduously draws 'the holy red herring' across the political track whenever opportunity offers, but especially when the circling year brings around the dog-days of July and the 'glorious, pious, and immortal' Twelfth. A year and a half ago, or thereabouts, he unfolded one of his pepper-and-brimstone 'discoveries' to a delighted assembly of saffron sashes in Melbourne. It was a painful yarn and ran in substance as follows: There was in New South Wales (his 'finds' are generally made far afield) a man who while he remained a Methodist, failed with dismal iteration to secure an appointment in the public service of that State. The disappointed applicant then turned

'Papist,' and he was forthwith jerked into a comfortable position at a salary of £400 a year. The press—justifying its title—'pressed' the parson for the name of the canny ex-Methodist, whose religion, like Artemus Ward's politics, was of 'a exceeding accommodatin' character.' Australian Catholic journalists clamored for the one detail which would have enabled the public to test the truth of the Wools-Rutledge tale. But not a detail would he give. His mouth, hitherto so open and voluble, closed like a slammed door. His lips were sewed over it. And he became dumb just when speech was most demanded of him. He had, no doubt, cogent reasons for keeping his story from the keen edge of the public dissecting-knife. He called his former Methodist co-religionist X—the unknown quantity in algebra. And X he still remains—an impalpable and shapeless shadow without a local habitation and a name. Which led a Sydney contemporary to suggest that, in the opinion of many, the reverend enthusiast of the Melbourne Orange lodge 'discovers' his imaginary Methodists as he goes along.

On July 10—the latest local celebration in honor of the little Boer monarch—the same reverend Grand Pandrum announced another of his hair-raising 'discoveries' to the Picinnies and the Jobillies and the Gatyulies of the lodge that sat with open mouths within the radius of his voice to hear the latest portentous 'abomination' of 'Rome.' It was in sundry respects an improvement on the ex-Methodist snake-yarn that had been hosed with such an ice-cool stream of journalistic ridicule in 1904. This time the story was about another man—not a Methodist—who was unable to obtain employment in the public service of New South Wales 'until he joined the Roman Catholic Church.' Immediately after his secession to Rome (and, inferentially, because of it) the neo-convert was landed into a cosy position at a cool thousand a year! The official quotations for soup-converts in the Mother State seem to have gone up in quite a remarkable way since the impalpable Mr. X. got hoisted into 'Popery' at £400 a year in the year of grace 1904. Once more the fiery-eyed orator declined to name names. Wild horses would not draw even X or Y or Z out of him. But, a week or two ago, in some unguarded moment, it turned out that his latest story of rice-conversion referred to Mr. Hall the Acting Government Statistician of New South Wales. And then the murder was out. People had at last something more tangible than the shadowy Mr. X, of a place called by the Scots Kennagphair, which lies three leagues past Amauros, or the Vanishing Point—in plain English, Nowhere.

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