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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 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

A Crimeless People

Bishop Olier has lately been on a visit to the successful Marist Catholic missions on Wallis Island. Describing what he saw, Dr. Olier says: 'There is no gaol, no police, the ten Commandments of God and the six missionaries being sufficient to keep the King and his subjects right. They are indeed a happy people.'

Could the happy and crimeless Catholic islanders of Wallis be induced to send a few missionaries to bear the light of the Gospel to the multitudes of the 'superior race' that have cut adrift from the safe moorings of faith and Christian morality in these countries?

A Quackhead 'Remedy'

Your physician and surgeon can broadly define the limits of their art—the boundaries of the services that knife and cautery and prescription can do for suffering man. But no disease that flesh is heir to can 'baffle' the vociferous quack that drops his h's, and speaks with ungrammatical lips, and knows about as much of human anatomy as does a medicine-man among the red-skinned Cherokees. In an analogous way, your easy-chair journalistic quack has his Pink Pill or Black Draught or Cure-all Tabloid ready in his vest pocket for the instant ending of every political and social evil. The latest 'remedy' for all the ills of 'holy Ireland, where the grass grows green' has been copied into one of our New Zealand contemporaries from the prescription of an editorial quackhead in 'famous London town': Wealth and prosperity are promised to Irish 'Romanists' if they will only forsake the faith of their fathers and embrace some one or other of the myriad Protean forms of religion that are known by the general designation of Protestantism!

This prescription is advanced as an absolutely new and original addition to the British political Pharmacopæia. But, worshipful good masters, it is as old as the days of Queen Elizabeth and the Sixth Edward. It was embodied in the Acts of Parliament of every reign from the days of Bluebeard the Eighth to those of the last George. For three hundred years successive British Administrations endeavored—but in vain—to force the Pill down the throat of Erin at the point of the bayonet. And for three centuries proselytising associations sprained jawbone and hand to make soup-and-blanket 'cobverts' of ne'er-do-wells and of the

starving poor who were stricken with the periodical famines that were artificially produced in the country by a system of rule that snapped its fingers at every principle of political economy. Here is how 'conviction' grew upon a village loafer who joined the ranks of

'That sanctified troop,
Whose souls have been chastened by flannel and soup,'

and 'a full and complete suit of second-hand clothes' from the Reverend Oliver Stiggins:—

'I felt at the moment the breeches went on,
That half of my ancient religion was gone;
Much was done by a vest buttoned up to the throat,
But the grand hit of all was a rusty black coat.

'The hat was convincing, as one might expect,
The necktie itself had a certain effect;
Then to pluck away error right out from the roots,
He covered my "croobs" with a new pair of boots.'

The newborn 'conviction' almost invariably went the way of Bob Acres' courage. It oozed out at the fingertips when the soup had done its work, or the flannels had frayed, or better times had come. That was no fancy sketch which represented the starved father of ten starved children kneeling 'afar off' in his parish church in Black Forty-seven and bidding a tearful good-bye to his Hidden God 'till the hunger is over.' But the worst woes of Ireland are those which came upon her from the 'cross-channel creed. And Patrick has a longer memory than the London quackhead gives him credit for.

'We have long memories,' said the distinguished Irish-American priest, Father Yorke, at the recent Augustinian jubilee in Galway. 'Did not Henry II. come to "civilise" us, and Cromwell to "save our souls"? Hence, even though they be sincere—and sincere they well may be—friendship and good intentions cannot permit us to let pass uncontradicted a doctrine that is false in fact and erroneous in philosophy. If we are looking for the real causes of Ireland's backwardness in things material, it is not hard to find them. How could we have money when the fruits of the land were confiscated twice a year for centuries by a worthless foreign garrison that never gave anything in return for the millions they exacted? How could we have progress when we are saddled with an antiquated Executive, the most stupid and most expensive, not alone in Christendom, but in the dominions of the Grand Turk? How could we have manufactures when our industries were deliberately destroyed by Government for the benefit of foreign-