

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXXIV.—No. 2

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 1906.

PRICE 60

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

Bible-in-Schools

The New Zealand Educational Institute represents the great bulk of the State school teachers of this Colony. During the past week, the sessions of its annual meeting were held in Invercargill. One of its resolutions 'shivers the timbers' of the scheme for introducing a sectarian version of the Bible, at the public expense, into the State schools of New Zealand. The resolution in question runneth thus: 'That the New Zealand Educational Institute, whilst acknowledging the importance and necessity of Bible instruction for the children of our schools, strenuously protests against the proposal that the primary school teachers of New Zealand shall be asked to give Bible instruction during school hours.'

Air ye listenin', Dr. Gibb?

Army Veterans

Far off in our gosling days we knew a veteran who brought back from the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny a limp, a blind eye, and tuppence a day—or thereabouts. He seems, however, to have fared better, in the matter of pension, than the aged warrior of the Crimea who 'passed, in his checks' last week in Southland. And his position was even more enviable than that of the hundred and forty hungry ex-fighters of the late South African war who recently, in a single day, in London, besought work or bread from the National Association for the Employment of Soldiers. The army authorities will do nothing for these military unfortunates beyond the bestowal of some cheap advice to seek that grave of decent poverty, the 'work-us.' But 'twas ever thus: An old Irish ballad tells the fate of many a gallant fighter that helped to carry the flag of Empire round the world:—

'At the side of the road, near the bridge of Drumcondra,

Was Murrough O'Monaghan stationed to beg;

He brought from the war; as his share of the plunder,

A crack on the crown and the loss of a leg.'

The man in 'the thin red line' is feted and huzzaed when there's trouble in the air, and a straight-seeing eye and a hard-hitting right arm are needed. But in the piping times of peace he is to the British bourgeoisie what the negro is to the good American—a 'fix'd statue on the pedestal of Scorn.' Well, this is one way of 'popularising' the army.

Lunacies of Wealth

'Nonsense!' said Neuchatel in Disraeli's 'Endymion,' 'great wealth is a great blessing to a man who knows what to do with it.' But there are so many that do not know what to do with the shekels that fortune or inheritance has placed in their hands. Some wealthy Americans and Parisians, for instance, are given to foolish, useless, and even grotesque ways of parting with portions of their wealth—mere debaucheries of senseless extravagance that recall the days when Lucullus and his guests dined on peacocks' brains and nightingales' tongues and other barbarous and fantastic luxuries in the gorgeous villas of Tusculum and Neapolis. One of the latest crazes is the extravagant adornment of poodles and other fancy creatures of the dog-kind. Among the sordid decadents the Japanese poodle and the 'Dandie Dinmont' and the fierce 'bull' too often usurp the place that happy childhood fills in the Christian home; and the petted brutes are tricked out in costly furs and fine laces and golden gewgaws and collars studded with rubies and brilliants. They are the Beau Brummels of the canine tribe. The dog-tailor, the dog-modiste, the dog-barber, and the dog-jeweller now take a place among the recognised institutions of a growing section of the childless wealthy lower orders. And a few blocks away from this garish and insane splendor, the pinched children of the slums cry for a crust of bread. Those stale degenerates give a point to the 'Foolish Dictionary's' definition of 'family': 'Originally a wife and several children, a matter of pride to the possessor. Now obsolete among the careful, or confined to the wife, a bull-pup, and a canary bird.' In New Zealand there are, alack! many who imitate the northern decadents in their greater crime. The cult of the prattling infancy declines amain among our advocates of race suicide. The worship of the bull-pup will follow in due course.

Worth Remembering

Some thirty years or more after he had left Cambridge University, Chesterfield looked back with sore regret upon the errors and follies of his younger days. He (metaphorically) struck his breast as he made the following confession to his son, for the latter's guidance and warning: 'When I first went to the University, I drank and smoked, notwithstanding the aversion I had to wine and tobacco, only because I thought it genteel, and that it made me look a man.' One sometimes gets good advice from a queer quarter—we remember that Zola once wisely cautioned an inquiring