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DEATH

SHEEDY.—On the 14th inst., at his residence, Brian Boru Hotel, Greymouth, Daniel Sheedy, native of County Cork, Ireland; aged 71 years. Deeply regretted.—R.I.P.

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.



THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 1909.

THE NAVAL SCARE



It should be possible to be duly impressed with the gravity of the situation created by the revelations made during the naval debate in the House of Commons without losing one's mental balance or slipping over into hysterics. When an editor solemnly assures his readers that the fact of New Zealand's offering a battleship is the one thing which 'will check a German combination,' and 'will persuade the greatest military Power in Europe that the sea is English and English must remain,' he shows that his patriotism is of the shallow, effervescing order. And when a politician wires frantically to his Premier 'urging him to call Parliament together to consider the matter,' he simply advertises the fact that he has lost his head. 'Fear,' said Dr. Johnson, 'is implanted in us as a preservative from evil; but its duty, like that of other passions, is not to overbear reason, but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannise in the imagination; to raise phantoms of horror, or to beset life with supernumerary distresses.' There has been no declaration of war, no outbreak of hostilities; there is no actual crisis; and there is no need therefore at this stage to 'beset life with supernumerary distresses.'

At the same time it may be freely admitted that there is solid ground for the general attitude taken by the House of Commons on this question, and that there is real need for England to wake up in this matter of naval defence. It is the sober truth to say that, in this matter, England has been living in a fool's paradise; and her naval position to-day is such that if she received from Germany a sudden declaration of war, followed by immediate action, the situation would be one of grave peril. There are two respects in which the navy—the first, second, and third line of the Empire's defence—exhibits weakness: (1) It is not up to the requisite standard of power; and (2) as at present constituted and arranged, it is in itself seriously inefficient. With regard to the first point, it has been generally agreed that, in order to maintain her supremacy at sea, England must keep her navy up to what is known as the two-power standard. And this has been defined by Mr. Asquith as meaning that England must have a pre-

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