

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXVIII.—No. 50.

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1900.

PRICE 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

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

MILDER
SPEECH.

THE world is a university. And mankind is ever at school. An American journalist recently discovered what he calls 'the fallacy of the Kilkenny cats.' Some day mankind will realise the fallacy of the *argumentum ad baculum*—cudgel-logic or the syllogism of brute force. And then a peace like that of Nirvana will enwrap the earth like a soft furry garment. For the greater part of the past 350 years English-speaking controversy consisted largely of litanies and responses of blistering epithets. The Parker Society's publications are a store-house of the theological invective of the Reformation and post-Reformation period. L'Estrange's *Dissenters' Sayings* is a museum of the verbal instruments of torture of two centuries ago. Some of them will not bear transcription, and the use of them by learned and unlearned divines is agreeably suggestive of the strait-waistcoat and epileptic fits. Scraps and remnants of this old theological slang still hang about pulpits here and there; they also adorn the sanctums of quite a little group of denominational newspapers. 'Romish,' 'Popish,' 'Papists,' 'Popery,' 'Romanists,' are a few of those curious survivals of the theological 'clapper-clawing' of a coarse-mannered period when in nearly every controversy the usually thin warp of argument was crossed and held together by a stout woof of fierce invective. The Pope is still occasionally referred to in our midst as Antichrist and the Man of Sin; and within the past 12 months we have several times dropped across labored volumes, written by sublime idiots with sawdust brains, who endeavor to prove, by the aid of a vast deal of puzzel-brained calculations, that Rome is the mystic Babylon of Revelations, and the Catholic Church the Scarlet Woman that St. John saw in vision on the Isle of Patmos.

The Scottish reformers held very decided views on this subject. They are expressed—not exactly in the style of the *Vere de Veres*—in the *Westminster Confession* (xxv., 6). It is there laid down that 'the Pope of Rome' is 'that Antichrist, that Man of Sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.' A few years ago the noted Scottish divine, Mr. Milligan, ground this and the Babylon theory to impalpable powder. And—according to an American exchange—the Presbytery of San Francisco, on October 10, recommended that the section of the Westminster Confession referring to the Pope as Antichrist be stricken out. This change of heart is welcome as the earnest of better things. Catholic newspapers and pulpits are not given to fling contemptuous terms at Protestant bodies. And it is high time that these should take example by our lesson in good breeding and drop once and forever such vulgar, obsolescent, and offensive theological slang as 'Romish,' 'Popish,' 'Popery,' 'Papist,' 'Romanist,' and the like. The use of such terms is merely an exhibition of discourtesy and vulgar manners. 'The scholar without good breeding,' said Chesterfield to his son, 'is a pedant, the philosopher a cynic, the soldier a brute, and every man disagreeable.'

DURING the operations of Bismarck's kulturkampf against the Church in Germany, an IRISH weekly paper published a cartoon illustrative of the situation in the German Fatherland. The Man of Blood and Iron was represented hauling away for dear life on a stout cable, the further end of which was looped around the cross-surmounted spire of a Catholic Church. To him enters the Spirit of Evil—with horns, cloven hoof, arrow-head tail, and all the other usual 'properties.' 'What are you doing?' queried the Father of Lies. 'Pulling down the Church of Rome,' said Bismarck. 'How long have you been at it?' 'Two years,' said Bismarck. 'Well,' said the king of demons, 'I have been trying to do the same thing for the past 1800 years, and have not succeeded yet.' A longer and far more ferocious kulturkampf failed to dislodge the faith from the Isle of Saints. Some time ago an Irish Protestant writer drew attention in the *English Church Times* to the wondrous recuperative energy of the Catholic Church in the Green Isle. 'In the year 1649,' said he in summing up, 'there were in the country 22 Bishops and four Archbishops. In the Cathedrals there were as usual dignities and canons; the parishes had pastors, a great number of secular priests and numerous convents of regulars. But after Cromwell had attained to supreme power all these were scattered. Over 300 were put to death, 1000 more were driven into exile. Four Bishops were killed in the Cromwellian campaign in Ireland; the others were all obliged to fly to foreign countries, except the Bishop of Kilmore, who was too feeble to be removed. In 1641 there were in Ireland 43 houses of the Dominican Order and 600 religious. Ten years after there was not a single house in their possession, and three-fourths of these religious were dead or in exile. . . . In 1657 the newly-appointed Vicar-Apostolic of Dublin, Dr. James Dempsey, wrote to the Pope of the period: "*Dublini non sunt tot Catholici quot constituerent tres Parochias*."—"There are not in Dublin Diocese Catholics enough to form three parishes." The Roman Catholic population of this diocese now is probably not under 400,000.'

SOME CATCH
NEWSPAPER
PHRASES.

THE newspaper reporter and correspondent are annalists and chroniclers rather than historians. We look to their corner of the paper for hard fidelity to fact rather than for comment or charms of style or quips of fancy. Voltaire will have it that 'originality is nothing but judicious imitation.' But some particular items of newspaper matter display a needless dreariness of stereotyped phrase which justifies La Fontaine's contemptuous reference to the 'servile race' of imitators. A long-suffering generation of newspaper readers rose at last in revolt against the varlets who spoke of the '*coup d'oeil*' of a landscape, the '*tout ensemble*' of a meeting or a dinner-table; who referred to the thief that 'burglariously entered' a dwelling; who described fire as 'the devouring element,' the sound of a fall as a 'dull thud,' or a 'sickening thud'; and who remarked that the voice of a singer at a concert 'was heard to great advantage.' That style of newspaper report is dead and buried, and nobody wants to resurrect it. But, alack and well-a-day! we have extricated ourselves from one form of verbal monotony only to stick our journalistic vamps deep in the mud of another. Nowadays, in these colonies at least, every sermon—even the most familiar

The "ANGLO SPECIAL" Cycle

Is absolutely the Best Colonial-built Cycle. B. S. A. and Co. Parts. Prices: Gent's, £21; Lady's, £22. Call and see them. THE ANGLO-NEW ZEALAND CYCLE CO., 6 PRINCES STREET.