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

Pergant Directores et Scriptorum 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.

IT KEPT COOL. point of combustion is very low. A slight scratch, and they flare up like a phosphorus match, or (to use 'Mr. Dooley's' phrase) 'like wan iv thim round stoves in a woodman's shanty whin rosiny wood is thrun in.' A good deal of needless heat and flare was thrown out by British Ministerialist organs and by their echoes in these colonies over the reception accorded to Mr. Kruger in France and Holland. But one staunch Government newspaper, the *Spectator*, keeps an ice-bag in its office. And this is how it discoursed on the matter: 'Why in the world should the British people worry themselves over Continental receptions to Mr. Kruger? Every people sets up foreign heroes for itself, the English more especially claiming that liberty. They were wild with enthusiasm for Kossuth when official and popular Austria both thought him a demon; and were ready to set up a statue to Jeff. Davis, who Mr. Gladstone thought had "made a nation," at a time when northern Americans considered he ought to be hanged. Nothing will be done for Kruger anywhere which will compare with the wild welcome given by London to Garibaldi, who was regarded by all Catholics as a sort of anti-Christ, by all Continental Conservatives as a dangerous revolutionary, and by all sovereigns except his own as a "successful brigand."'

SOMETHING IN A NAME. THERE is something in a name, after all. Mr. Lovelight, for instance, had no objection to being 'blooded' by the old-time apothecary, but he was resolved to die rather than be phlebotomised. A pleasant American lady writer who lately toured through Ireland has discovered a fund of meaning in the warlike names that adorn her travelling map of the Green Isle. 'This,' says she, 'is the most pugnacious map I ever gazed upon. All the names seem to begin or end with "kill," "bally," "whack," or "knock"; no wonder the Irish make good soldiers!'

We wonder what national characteristic, if any, the traveller of the future will discover in such Australian names as the following: Bombola, Mullengudgery, Murriwillumba, Wooloomooloo, Jamberoo, Murrumbidgee, Muloowurtie, Wolloway, Murrurundi, Teawamut, Kongorong, Konongowootong, Goomaroo, Moorooroo, Woolgoolga, Yankalilla, Pirron Yallok, Mundoor, Taroom, Goondiwardi, Woolundunga? Mark Twain built 66 such names into a 'pome' in his *More Tramps Abroad*. 'They are good words for poetry,' he says; 'among the best I have ever seen.' 'The best word in that list,' he adds, 'and the most musical and gurgly, is Wooloomooloo. It is a place near Sydney, and is a favorite pleasure resort. It has eight O's in it.' But Mark left to the globe trotter of the future the task of finding the key to some national characteristic in his collection of fearful and wonderful Australian names.

DYING OUT. 'While the houses of worship of our separated brethren in Northern New England,' says the *Boston Pilot*, 'are so poorly attended that it has become a matter of painful discussion

among the more earnest of them, the Catholic churches can hardly be built fast enough to meet the needs of a fast increasing people. The Irish-American and the French-Canadian bid fair to possess the land in Northern New Hampshire. Recent statistics show that the population of the neighbor State, Vermont, within the past decade has increased but a little over three per cent.; and, on a study of the towns in which the increase is most apparent, it is found that they are those in which the Catholics are most numerous. Fidelity to the laws of the Church means fidelity to the laws of nature; and that which fits a man for eternal life gives him as a rule happiness and prosperity in the life that now is.' Some months ago, in connection with the latest returns of the New Zealand birth-rate, we read a somewhat similar homily to that contained in the closing sentence which we have quoted from our valued Boston contemporary. New Zealand has already set its foot on the downward path which has led to the practical extinction of the once hardy but now effete stock that populated Puritan New England.

NO GRAVE CRIME THERE. 'The journal of the Royal Statistical Society of England may not be a very exhilarating publication, but its statements are never open to dispute.' So says the *Edinburgh Catholic Herald* of November 9. 'It has,' continues our esteemed Scottish contemporary, 'made the discovery that Ireland is "erroneously thought to be a specially criminal country." Really, it finds Ireland is free from grave crime. Both England and Scotland show "an enormously greater proportion of prisoners." Further, it declares that "convicts, both male and female, show an extraordinary decrease in Ireland, and one is forced to believe that instead of the Irish being a naturally lawless, offensive people, as so many think, they are in truth naturally well behaved and law-abiding beyond most people. Whether this is due to their deep religious instincts or to other causes, it is not for me to decide.'

'During the past twenty years,' continues the *Herald*, 'it is added, juvenile crime has diminished thirty-nine per cent. This statement supplies the key to the whole. Elsewhere, especially in Britain, France, and America, juvenile crime is on the increase: in France alarmingly so. In France the schools have been laicised. Religion has been driven out. In Ireland religious teaching has increased, and is increasing. The deduction is obvious.'

'BENEVOLENT ASSIMILATION.' The 'benevolent assimilation' of the Philippines proceeds apace. But, somehow, the Filipinos are not convinced to any great extent of the benefits of the imported article which bears the label, 'American civilisation.' Here is a specimen of this canned 'civilisation': it is described by a bould sojer boy at the front in the course of a letter to his parents in Indiana:—

About the same time we came here last October there were brought here from China about 800 of the lowest type of Chinese women, and they are installed in houses, some for officers and some for private soldiers. Each inmate pays a tax of 1d. per week to the military authorities, which includes a license to sell wines and beer. The worst of it is these houses are all decorated inside and out with the Stars and Stripes, and at night the streets are a mass

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