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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.

WHAT'S THIS? The *Otago Daily Times* of February 6 publishes the substance of a statement made to the *Balclutha Free Press* by a returned trooper to the effect that during the fierce big-little struggle in South Africa 'there were times when the class of warfare waged was somewhat barbarous. Prisoners were not desired,' said the returned warrior, 'and consequently the men were ordered not to hamper themselves with them unless a departure from that course would involve cold-blooded slaughter.' There is an ugly look about this 'barbarous' order that is strongly suggestive of a proclamation of 'no quarter.' Such an order is contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the Declaration of St. Petersburg, which was formulated and published as far back as 1818, and which prohibited proclamations of 'no quarter,' as well as the use of poisoned weapons and explosive bullets. We thought we had, in the matter of humanity, set up a barrier as high as Mount Cook between modern warfare with civilised peoples and the conditions that prevailed when General Monk captured Dundee, when the British stormed Badajos and San Sebastian, and when, in 1862, the Serbian troops raised such a red pandemonium in the streets of Belgrade. War at its best and briefest is a hideous game. When it is long drawn out, the brute within the fighting man frequently breaks through conventions, as his elbows and knees do through his army clothes. The later events of this wretched campaign, as reported in the columns of the secular Press, go far to show that international legislation is even yet scarcely a sufficiently strong and active living force to restrain combatants from the grosser forms of violence which add so many a bitter drop to the full cup of the horrors of modern warfare.

The Franco-German war began with a relatively high spirit of chivalry on both sides. But it soon led to the not infrequent shooting or hanging of prisoners by the irregular Franc-tireurs, and of unoffending peasants by the Germans; and its atrocities culminated in the fearful blood-orge of the enraged human animals in military uniform who shot and burned non-combatants of both sexes in the streets and houses of Bazeilles. Thus far many a savage incident has spotted as with a leprosy almost every campaign of what is termed 'civilised' warfare. Much has been done by international codes in the direction of humanising the armed conflicts of peoples. But much yet remains to be done—for instance, to compel more civilised warfare against barbarian peoples; to prevent the bombardment of seaports for requisitions; and to prohibit the wanton burning of farm-houses and villages, such as the Germans were guilty of in their campaign in France in 1870, the British and American blue-jackets in Samoa in 1898, and the British forces in South Africa during the present war.

NEXT St. Patrick's day will probably witness, at sundry so-called 'national' concerts through this afflicted land, the antics, howls, jumps, and epileptic spasms of the usual stage Irishman. We are reminded of the annual resurrection of this strange freak by the query of a correspondent from a northern mining town who wants to know

the origin of the legend which has so long associated the 'dhudeen,' or short pipe, with the hatband of the 'boy' from the Emerald Isle. We frankly confess our inability to account for the legend. Outside of stageland and the realm of caricature the combination seems to be about as unknown as the green stockings and the crownless 'caubeen' of the 'Irishman in costume,' and his fearful and wonderful 'brogue,' which has never been a spoken tongue on any part of mother earth from Chiua to Peru. Few persons are better acquainted with the various types of Irishman from Antrim to Cape Clear and from Dublin to Aran of the Saints than the well known writer Michael MacDonagh. And in his *Irish Life and Character* he says of them: 'I never yet met a countryman who, even in his most frolicsome moments, carried his pipe in the band of his hat.'

We rather suspect that the custom—if, indeed, it ever was a custom in any corner of the earth—of making the hat a pipe-holder came originally, like sauer-kraut and pock-marked philosophy, from Germany. Heine, for instance, tells us of the great scholar and critic, Boxbornius, who died at Leyden in 1653—long before the 'little tube of mighty power' came into common use in Ireland—that 'in smoking he wore a hat with a broad brim, in the forehead of which he had a hole, through which the pipe was stuck, that it might not hinder his studies.' The great Anglican Bishop Burnet (1643-1715) adopted a somewhat similar plan. Like the late Mr. Spurgeon, he 'smoked to the glory of God' and let his critics rave. The manufactured 'great plant' in use in Burnet's day was a full-bodied variety like the negro-head of a later time, which, according to Dickens, was powerful enough to 'quell an elephant in six whiffs.' But Bishop Burnet sucked away contentedly at the venomous stuff hour after hour as he turned out the manuscript of his histories and of the other voluminous works that came from his pen. A biographer writes of him: 'In order to combine the two operations (of writing and smoking) with perfect comfort to himself, he would bore a hole through the broad brim of his large hat, and, putting the stem of his long pipe through it, puff and write, and write and puff, with learned gravity.'

In his *Fitsboodle Papers* Thackeray makes a passing reference to the partnership between pipe and hat at the close of the following remarks on the universality of the smoking habit in his day: 'Look over the world and see that your adversary [tobacco] has overcome it. Germany has been puffing for three score years. France smokes to a man. Do you think you can keep the enemy out of England? Pshaw! Look at his progress. Ask the club-houses. I, for my part, do not despair to see a bishop lolling out of the Athenæum with a cheeroot in his mouth, or, at any rate, a pipe stuck in his shovel hat.'

THE LATE QUEEN ON THE IRISH PEOPLE. The late Queen was one of the many who, on coming to Ireland, were disillusioned of the idea that the natives of the Green Isle were uncouth-looking barbarians with apish faces, pug noses, and ear-to-ear mouths—the 'sepulchres of untold hogsheads of whiskey'—and that the men had a wild whirloo ever on their lips, knobby shillelahs in

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