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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

The Seventh.

We tender our sincere sympathy to the relatives of the New Zealanders, and especially of those of the household of the faith, who were killed or wounded in the recent disaster to the Seventh Contingent.

History Repeated.

History, like the fashion in skirts and mantles and head-gear, has a habit of repeating itself. For some time past news from the seat of war in South Africa has occasionally recorded the use, by the Boers, of goaded cattle in storming positions or in breaking through wire entanglements or living cordons. Such a stratagem led to the lamented death of so many young New Zealanders a few days ago. It is an old, and by no means ineffectual *ruse de guerre*. A somewhat similar piece of military strategy is recorded in Roman history. In Ireland it was set in operation as far back as the twelfth century, when Strongbow and his mailclad Anglo-Normans invaded the country, on conquest bent. Six centuries later the idea was acted upon, at the suggestion of Father John Murphy, by the Irish insurgents of 1798 in their attack upon the town of Enniscorthy. A herd of cattle was driven at a furious pace by a picked body of agile pikemen against the strong position held by the king's troops at the Duffry Gate. It was a furious onset. The maddened cattle struck the soldiers with the impact of a thundering regiment of heavy cavalry and threw their ranks into confusion. In an instant the pikemen were among them, slaying with the most terrible weapon that had up to that time been used at close quarters in war, and the troops were in full flight.

Bayonet and musket-ball both failed to stop the maddened charge of the horned and riderless 'cavalry' of the insurgents of 1798. The hollow square, with its 'breakers' foam' of bayonets, was, till the appearance of the magazine rifle, considered an unailing protection against charging cavalry, although it failed in the case of some of the British squares at Waterloo. Once during the Peninsula war (it was, we think, at Fuentes d'Onoro), a battalion of British infantry, extended in line, beat off a cavalry charge. In the Franco-German war, during the 'sweeping movements' that ended in Sedan, a splendidly disciplined line of Prussian infantry, in skirmishing order, drove off with *schnellfeuer* or rapid volleying from their needle-guns three separate waves of rushing horsemen. It was, we think, the first time in military history that such a feat was performed, and it excited the unbounded admiration of 'Fighting' Phil Sheridan, who witnessed it from his place among the Prussian headquarters staff. The magazine rifle has made regular cavalry charges against unbroken ranks of armed men, even in South Africa, a thing of the past. And the recent experience of the Seventh New Zealanders in South Africa has gone to show that it can even stop the more furious rush of maddened cattle.

Moving Romewards.

The 'Romeward movement' seems to be quietly percolating through Anglicanism to the other denominations. Within

the past fortnight the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand reported, in effect, that he had recently witnessed a number of what we may call 'ritualistic' ceremonies among his co-religionists in British Columbia that filled him with rank surprise. But that is not all. 'A Boston newspaper,' says the *Ave Maria*, 'notes the growing desire among all religious bodies in this country "to give greater dignity to public worship." Surplined choirs, it tells us, are rapidly becoming popular with Methodists and Lutherans; sectarian churches adhere more faithfully to the traditional styles of ecclesiastical architecture; and "many churches keep Lent that never kept it before." But it is not in this country alone that the change has been noted. For some years the growth of "ritualistic practices" in Germany has been a standing grievance of Dr. Adolph Harnack; in England the use of incense and lights has long incensed the lights of old-fashioned Protestantism; and even in Scotland (Archbishop Eyre, of Glasgow, informs us) "the Presbyterians are developing Catholic ideas and practices." Statues of the saints have been set up in the empty niches of St. Giles—empty since the days when John Knox thundered against Rome in that very cathedral—and a stone altar has replaced the old Communion-table. The "four bare walls and a preaching-tub" are no longer thought sufficient furnishing for the kirk, according to the *Glasgow Observer*; and the "kist o' whussles," as Knox called the organ, is restored to its old place of honor.'

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Well, the prodigals are evidently getting tired of the husks of religion and are working their way back to their Father's House again.

Exit Cordite.

The War Office is probably the best abused institution in the British Isles. And the common lack of sympathy with it arises from the fact that it deserves most of the censure that it gets. Some dyspeptic writer once said that it would take a hangman to get a young Briton to study. It would probably take a regiment of hangmen to keep the War Office up to date. Moore makes a poetic youth say to a maiden among the roses of an old-fashioned garden:

If we could do with this world of ours
What thou dost with thy garden bowers,
Reject the weeds and keep the flowers,
What a heav'n on earth we'd make it!

Judicious weeding—wise acceptance and rejection—do not, however, seem to have, at any time during the past hundred years, characterised the conduct of the War Office. For instance, it rejected sights for cannon till compelled to adopt them by the superior shooting of the Americans in 1812; it continued to use smooth-bore artillery muskets long after the other Powers had adopted rifled weapons; it turned up its lordly nose at the breech-loader, and kept the muzzle-loader in the hands of Mr. Atkins long after every nation, great and little, in Europe had abandoned it; it rejected the Vickers-Maxim gun (the deadly 'pom-pom') and a number of other improved weapons that are now in use in France and other countries; and, among other follies of this capricious and sleepy-headed coterie of ancients, it hugged its stock of reeky black powder, and when forced to hustle a bit and put the smokeless variety in

Hancock's "BISMARCK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY.