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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

Repression in Germany.

The following cable, which appeared in last week's messages in the daily papers, furnishes a striking illustration of the measures of repression constantly adopted against the Press in Germany:—'The editor of the *Potsdamer Zeitung* has been sentenced to two months' imprisonment and the publisher heavily fined for incorrectly stating that the Kaiser had reprimanded two lieutenants for threatening to fight duels.' Absurd and outrageous as this appears to us, it is only a typical instance of the irritating and tyrannical prosecutions to which the members of the Fourth Estate in Germany are continually subjected. It is only a few years ago that a still more severe sentence for a similarly trivial offence was passed on Dr. Förster on the same ridiculous charge of *lèse-majesté*. The Emperor had delivered a speech on the occasion of the anniversary of Sedan, in which he had stigmatised the Social Democrats as a rabble, and Dr. Förster, as editor of an ethical magazine, had in most temperate language and without any personal allusion to his Majesty, condemned the speech as calculated to impede the reunion of classes which will one day 'bring peace into the exalted regions where princes are throned in solitude.' For this article Dr. Förster was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in a fortress, the Judge who condemned him declaring that he made the sentence light on account of 'Dr. Förster's youth, unblemished character, high aspirations, and independence of all political ties!' To such a length has the Royal sensitiveness been carried that the Emperor on one occasion expressed his annoyance at the 'disloyalty' of a critic who had written 'his Majesty' instead of 'His Majesty.' It would seem as if kings and emperors are so accustomed to being addressed with deference, and even flattery, that criticism, even when respectful in form, tends to create in them at once a suspicion of the loyalty of the critic. 'He cannot be loyal,' the Emperor reasons with himself, 'or he would never criticise me'; and so he gets excited and permits these odious prosecutions for even respectable criticism on the pretext that the writers are guilty of *lèse-majesté* or high treason. It does not seem to occur to the Emperor or his statesmen that if there is a Press at all it must be critical, and that the critics who set an example by being respectful deserve official approval rather than condemnation.

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Precisely the same policy of repression is pursued in Germany with regard to the freedom of political speech and political agitation. Some time ago a decree was issued dissolving all the Central Committees and organisations of the Social Democratic Party in Berlin and forbidding their re-establishment under any name and for any apparent purpose. Is it very much as if, in this country, the various Labor Unions or Workmen's Political Societies were ordered to disperse under pain of imprisonment and were forbidden to recombine under any name or for any purpose. Even the beer-shops and restaurants are dogged by detectives, and conversation—at least so far as any reference to the Kaiser is concerned—has to be carried on in a very guarded way. When we ourselves were in Berlin a couple of years ago we

found that the habitués of the restaurants had hit upon a device for dodging the police by referring to the Kaiser under a fictitious name. Thus a conversation beginning with 'Have you heard about Smith's latest bit of buffoonery?' would be allowed to pass as perfectly harmless, the police being quite unconscious that the 'Smith' referred to was no other than the Kaiser himself. We had often wondered how an intellectual people like the Germans could put up with such tyranny, and on one occasion we put the question plainly to a university man in Berlin. His answer was that the Germans hated that sort of thing as heartily as the British could do, but that they had no remedy. They could protest in Parliament, but beyond that they could not go. If they attempted to give practical effect to their desires, the aid of the military would be invoked, and as the army is completely under the Kaiser's personal control, his will is, in the last resort, absolutely supreme. The policy of repression is manifestly foolish and demoralising, and is altogether unworthy of an enlightened nation. So long as *lèse majesté* plays such an important part in the government of the country, it is little wonder that Germany should prove a fertile breeding ground for the wildest anarchism.

Catholicity in N.S. Wales.

Nothing succeeds like success. A little while ago the good name of the Church in New South Wales was under a cloud and the followers and friends of the old Faith were called upon to go through a period of keenest trial. In good time their patience and faith were rewarded; the enemies of the Church were not only baffled but disgraced; and by the good providence of God the vile scheme, that had been concocted to ruin Dean O'Haran, and through him to strike a deadly blow at Australian Catholicity, was brought utterly to nought. The natural consequence has followed. A strong reaction has set in, and the Church now occupies a surer and higher place in public favor and esteem than ever she did before. This is clearly evidenced by the public expressions of non-Catholic sentiment, which were recently made on the occasion of the departure of Cardinal Moran and Dean O'Haran for Rome. The unanimity with which the daily papers of Sydney combine to heap eulogiums on the Cardinal as the representative of the Church is quite touching.

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The *Morning Herald*, in a long leader on the Cardinal, writes as follows: 'Cardinal Moran is, if we may without disrespect employ some words from Mr. Kipling, a "first-class fighting man," he is a militant churchman, and in him his co-religionists have found a leader of courage, force and talent.' And again the *Herald* says: 'As the historian of his Church, as its first Cardinal in these regions, as a most zealous Archbishop for many years, Cardinal Moran has accumulated claims upon the Roman Catholics of Australia which they ought to honor, and which they do honor.' The *Daily Telegraph*—which has been very rarely friendly to Catholics—also devotes a leader to the departure of the Cardinal, and the following brief extracts will serve to show the cordially-appreciative spirit in which it is written:—'The approaching departure of Cardinal Moran will remove from the public life of this State one of its most prominent personalities. During the many years of his sojourn in New South Wales it may be doubted whether