

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

THIRTIETH YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXX.—No 27

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, JULY 3, 1902.

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

A Contemptible Trick.

One of the meanest and most contemptible of several recent attempts to deceive the public and poison the minds of the American people against Catholics in general and the Philippine friars in particular has just been exposed in the columns of a New York paper. It is a remarkable illustration of 'how history is made' and of the difficulty—one might almost say impossibility—of completely overtaking a lie when once it has got a fair start. It appears that in 1892 one John Foreman published a book in London on 'The Philippine Islands.' The book professed to be written by a Catholic and the words used by the author were certainly such as to justify the non-Catholic public in assuming that the work was really a Catholic work. The words we refer to appeared in the preface to the volume and were as follows:

'May the love of veracity (a befitting attribute of a good Catholic) be sufficient justification for what adverse allusions may have fallen from my pen on that respectable body which has moulded the thought of generations of civilised masses and successfully brought them to embrace our most Sacred Creed.'

It will be seen therefore that Foreman distinctly claimed to belong to the same 'most Sacred Creed' as the friars themselves, and to be not only a Catholic but a good Catholic.

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It was only to be expected, after such an intimation, that the non-Catholic public would receive the work as that of a Catholic and would place special trust and reliance upon it as being written by one who was himself of the same religious faith as the persons criticised—and that is precisely what did happen. One after another accepted the book as the standard work on the Philippine question. Thus a prominent Congressman, in an interview which appeared in the *New York Post*, said 'The best book on the Philippine Islands is that by John Foreman. I think it is the most dispassionate study of the subject we have had.' And the *Chicago Interior*, after making one of the usual slanderous attacks on the friars declared that the 'facts' it referred to 'may be learned from John Foreman's "The Philippine Islands," London, 1892. Mr Foreman is a devout Catholic, and, writes after a painstaking study of the islands, their races and religious condition.' Even whole books have been built up upon the production of this self-styled Catholic. Of these, two have been specially mentioned, viz., 'The Philippine Islands,' by Ramon Rayes Lala (Continental Publishing Company, New York, 1899), and 'The Philippine Islands and Their People,' by Dean C. Worcester (Macmillan Company, New York, 1898). In the preface to the latter the author, who is a professor of Michigan University, says: 'I wish to say that I have drawn my historical facts chiefly from Mr John Foreman's excellent book, "The Philippine Islands"; and he asks his readers to bear in mind, while weighing his (Foreman's) testimony the fact that he was himself a loyal Catholic.' After a long quotation from Foreman he continues: 'It is not from any lack of similar facts within my personal knowledge that I have quoted him (Foreman) so extensively in this connection, but for the reason that his religious proclivities place him above the suspicion of

prejudice which might attach to one not an adherent of the Catholic faith.' Thus not only the rank and file but the leaders of the people—politicians, editors, and professors—all pinned their faith to the testimony of this supposed 'loyal and devout Catholic.'

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Was Foreman really a Catholic? This question has been settled beyond all doubt by the investigations of Father Joseph Sittenhauer, O.S.B. After reading the book, Father Sittenhauer easily perceived, from internal evidence, that it was not the work of a loyal Catholic. A man who referred contemptuously to the Church as the Romish Church, who constantly spoke of Catholics as adoring saints and pictures, who called works of mortification follies, who referred to the unmarried state of nuns as an unnatural life, etc., had evidently received his ideas of the Catholic faith from other than Catholic sources. Father Sittenhauer, however, was not satisfied with the evidence of Foreman's fraud to be gathered from the book itself, but wrote direct to the publishers ordering a copy of the work, and requesting them to find out and inform him whether Foreman was a Catholic. The book came duly to hand with the answer as concise as the question had been: 'The author is not a Catholic.' Thus the whole fabric of slander and calumny which had been based on this writer's supposed impartiality topples to the ground. So far as Foreman was concerned, the whole thing was a dodge to make the book sell, and sell it did, selling not only itself, but the people who swallowed the lie. Well may Father Sittenhauer ask: If such methods as Foreman's were necessary to give the cause of the anti-friars any semblance of truth, what must we think of their cause?

The Sorrows of Royalty.

The heavy trial which the Royal Family have been called upon to bear in the King's sad illness serves to show how very little after all unlimited wealth and power can do to exempt its possessors from the ordinary woes and troubles of life. The sorrows of Royalty indeed are greater and more numerous than those of ordinary humanity. We do not know if the phrase, 'As happy as a king,' ever had much meaning outside the realms of fairy-tale, but it certainly has little justification in the hard world of facts of our day. Royalty has had in all times its full share of the great and petty fly-blisters that act as irritants upon the surface of human life. In 1759—long before thrones became wobbly and royal heads began to have uncertain tenure of royal necks and shoulders—Voltaire (who probably saw the drift of events) wrote to Lord Keith:—'The more happy I am the more I pity kings.' In our days the anarchist, the lunatic, the fanatic—armed with dagger, pistol, rifle, pointed rat-tail file, or picric bomb—have made royal lives worth shorter purchase than those of Whang the miller or Hodge the ploughman, or even than that of Mr. Thomas Atkins, although he belongs to

That noble trade
That demi-gods and heroes made—
Slaughter and knocking on the head!

And Samuel Butler sings:

Ah me! What perils do environ
The man that meddles with cold iron.

Hancock's "BISMARCK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY