

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

'To promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.'

LEO XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 1902.

THE KING'S TITLES.



FASHIONS change like leaves on the bough. So wrote DANTE, six long centuries ago, in his great masterpiece, the *Divina Commedia*. The ceremony which takes place in Westminster Abbey on Saturday reminds us that the words of the divine bard are true not alone of ruffs and hats and mantles and skirts, but of royal titles as well. The expansion of the Empire and growth and importance of the British realms beyond the seas gave rise, last year, to an important addition to the royal titles. The slow and gradual rise of the Empire is illustrated in a curious way by that of the style of Royalty. EGBERT and other Saxon kings were known by the simple appellation of Bretwalda or Ruler of the Britons. ALFRED the Great was styled 'Basileus' (the Greek word for King) and 'Governor of the Christians of Britain.' EDGAR was called 'Monarch of Britain,' HENRY II. 'King of Britain,' and JOHN 'Rex Britanniarum' or 'King of the Britons.' On November 5, 1800—after the Act of Union had been passed 'by force and fraud'—the following royal style was arranged and took effect from January 1, 1801: 'GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and of the United Church of England and Ireland, on Earth the Supreme Head.' By virtue of an Act of Parliament passed in 1876, the late Queen VICTORIA was, on January 1, 1877, proclaimed Empress of India at a durbar held at Delhi. And last year another Act of Parliament conferred upon the present Sovereign the following sonorous title: 'EDWARD VII., by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of all the British Dominions beyond the Sea, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.'

The mode of addressing royalty has also passed 'down the ringing grooves of change.' HENRY IV., for instance, was addressed by his subjects as 'Your Grace'; HENRY VI. as 'Excellent Grace'; EDWARD IV. as 'Most High and Mighty Prince'; HENRY VII. was termed 'Highness.' The terms of respect demanded of his subjects by HENRY VIII. rose with his pretensions from the modest 'Your Grace' of the early days of his reign to 'Your Majesty' at a later period. This mode of address was used towards him by FRANCIS I. of France at their interview on the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. HENRY eagerly assimilated it, and he was the first English Sovereign to be called 'Your Majesty.' JAMES I. added thereto the prefix 'Sacred' or 'Most Excellent,' and this combination is in use to the present day.

For Catholics the most curious and interesting title of English royalty is that of 'Defender of the Faith.' The title was conferred by one Pope and confirmed by another as a reward for HENRY's defence of the seven Sacraments against the attacks of the reformer LUTHER, who was then in the forefront of the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century. 'HENRY himself,' says LINGARD, 'was anxious to enter the lists against the German [LUTHER]; nor did [Cardinal] WOLSEY discourage the attempt, under the idea that pride no less than conviction would afterwards bind the royal polemic to the support of the ancient creed. That the treatise in defence of the seven Sacraments, which

the King published, was his own composition, is forcibly asserted by himself; that it was planned, revised, and improved by the superior judgment of the Cardinal and the Bishop of Rochester, was the opinion of the public. CLARKE, dean of Windsor, carried the royal production to Rome, and in a full Consistory submitted it to the inspection and approbation of the Pontiff, with an assurance that as his master had refuted the errors of LUTHER with his pen, so was he ready to oppose the disciples of the heresiarch with his sword, and to array against them the whole strength of his kingdom.

'CLEMENT,' continues LINGARD, 'accepted the present with many expressions of admiration and gratitude; but HENRY looked for something more pleasing to his vanity than mere acknowledgments. The kings of France had long been distinguished by the appellation of "Most Christian," those of Spain by that of "Catholic." When LOUIS XII. set up the schismatical Synod of Pisa, it was contended that he had forfeited his right to the former of these titles; and JULIUS II. transferred it to HENRY, but with the understanding that the transfer should be kept secret till the services of the King might justify in the eyes of men the partiality of the Pontiff. After the victory of Guinegate HENRY demanded the publication of the grant; but JULIUS was dead; LEO declared himself ignorant of the transaction; and means were found to pacify the King with the promise of some other, but equivalent, distinction. WOLSEY had lately recalled the subject to the attention of the papal court; and CLARKE, when he presented the King's work, demanded for him the title of "Defender of the Faith." This new denomination experienced some opposition; but it could not be refused with decency; and LEO conferred it by a formal BULL on HENRY, who procured a confirmation of the grant from the successor of LEO, CLEMENT VII.'

The title '*Fidei Defensor*' or 'Defender of the Faith' was conferred on HENRY VIII. personally, and on him alone. It was said to be '*tibi perpetuum et proprium*,' and was not to descend to his successors. When HENRY VIII. cut himself off from the centre of Catholic life and unity, the Pope deprived him of the title conferred upon him by his predecessors. But HENRY was not disposed to lose a scrap of the titles attached to the crown. He therefore procured the passing of 'An Act for the Ratification of the King's Majesty's Style,' which insisted upon his being described both in Latin and in the vulgar tongue as 'Defender of the Faith.' During the brief restoration of Catholic worship in England this Act of HENRY VIII. was 'repealed, made frustrate, void, and of no effect' by 1 and 2 PHILIP and MARY, c. 8, sec. 20. Yet, strangely enough, the title was, none the less, retained by PHILIP and MARY. It was formally restored by an Act passed in the first year of the reign of Queen ELIZABETH, which revived the 'rights, jurisdictions, and preeminences appertaining to the Imperial Crown.' This relic of 'Popery' (*Fidei Defensor*—Defender of the Faith) appears in the abbreviated forms 'F.D.' or 'Fid. Def.' to this day on every coin of the realm. So treasured is it, too, that the two-shilling piece of 1849 had to be recalled, melted down, and re-coined simply because the letters 'F.D.' were omitted. The coin is rare and highly valued among collectors, and is known among them as 'the godless florin.' And to this hour, from the bronze farthing to the £5 gold piece, every minted coin that circulates among us recalls the days when the English people were joined in faith with the centre of Catholic unity, and presents the curious spectacle of the retention of a title which was granted for the defence of doctrines which, since the days of WILLIAM III., British Sovereigns have been compelled, at their accession, to denounce as 'superstitious and idolatrous.'

It is alleged that a Chinaman residing in the Alexandra district is suffering from leprosy.

THE troopship *Orient* with over 1100 officers and men from South Africa, arrived off Port Chalmers on Tuesday morning for the purpose of transhipping the Otago and Southland troops. The returning troopers were brought up to Dunedin in two small steamers, arriving at the wharf about 2.30 p.m., where they were received by the Mayor, and later on entertained at a garden party in the Triangle.

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