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PRION 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.

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., P.M.

LEO XIII, Pope

Current Topics

A Timely Move

We are firm believers in the gospel of pegging away. Some weeks ago, for instance, we returned, for the eleventh time, to what is in more senses than one an evergreen topic: the spasms and antics of that unregenerate barbarian, the stage Irishman. We are glad to see that the central council of the Hibernian Society has got the jabbering idiot by the ear. A resolution on the subject was moved by Mr. Beehan, of Auckland, at the recent H.A.C.B.S. conference in Sydney. It was unanimously passed, and the report of the assembled delegates contains the following remarks in point:

'We might also consider whether we could not do something to banish at least from our Catholic concerts and other entertainments that monstrous travesty on our race known as the "Stage Irishman." We are glad that owing to the sturdy action of the American Hibernians such vulgar, insulting caricaturing of our countrymen is no longer tolerated on the American stage; and surely in Australia, where the Irish element of the population is proportionately more numerous, the same result could be accomplished.'

Hear, hear! It now only remains for the Society, having begun the crusade, to see it through, and not let their first fervor in the cause die out and be hung up

'Like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery.'

We think that they can safely count for cordial co-operation on the part of the promoters of Catholic concerts and entertainments. And that will afford a good leverage for further operations against the rough-and-tumble caricature of a faithful and much-tried Catholic people.

More Bible-burning

Bigotry has neither a head to think nor a heart to feel. It is as fickle as a turnstile and takes its rare naps with one eye open. It was alert and rampant—with fang ready to gnaw and claw to strike—when two or three soiled and delapidated Wesleyan New Testaments were respectfully cremated in Fiji recently by some European Sisters, along with a case of worn-out and tattered Catholic prayer-books. It must have been taking forty winks and have had its closed optic turned towards Fullarton, in South Australia, some two years ago, when Archbishop O'Reilly, in the presence of a number of Protestant working-men, gave orders for the burning of a Protestant Bible.

Archbishop O'Reilly himself told the story recently in the course of an address at the opening of a Catholic

school in his diocese. 'Some two years or so ago,' said he, 'the property at Fullarton, on which the Refuge is now located, was acquired by the good Sisters of St. Joseph. On the ground stood a large rambling building, once used as a jam factory. Old and disused buildings have a well-known knack of accumulating rubbish. The Fullarton jam factory furnished no exception to the rule. While the debris was being cleared away, I happened one day to be standing by. I am a lover of books, and those who love books will realise how natural it was for me, when I noticed a book among the rubbish, to stoop and pick it up. It was—I should say, rather, it once had been—a Bible. The cover was completely gone, half in tatters. Many leaves, whole staves in fact, were missing. The sheets remaining were dog-eared, frayed, and all over stained. The volume had hopelessly gone beyond the sphere of usability. Its soiled pages no one was ever likely to peruse. It was a Bible—a Protestant version of the Bible certainly, but still a Bible, or at least a mutilated copy thereof. It claimed respect. I called a Sister and gave the volume into her keeping. "The rubbish-tip," I said, "is no place, Sister, for these pages. Kindly see that the book is destroyed by fire."'

The tattered rags of what had once been a Bible of a kind were decently cremated in accordance with what is (as we have recently shown in our editorial columns) Protestant, as well as Jewish and Catholic, usage. 'My action,' said the Archbishop, 'drew no comment, excited no observation. My motives were too plain to arouse sectional feelings. The story is now for the first time told by myself. Until the Fiji affair, indeed, was reported, I had totally forgotten the incident. Those who were witnesses of my action had evidently forgotten it too. But I can realise with some feeling of trepidation—for I am but human, and do not love the harsh judgment of my fellows—what excitement might have been created, what prejudice might have been raised against the Catholic Archbishop and the Catholic community of Adelaide, if only the incident, in an incomplete form, had been noised abroad, and Australian cablegrammers were as alert and as enterprising as the cablegrammers of Fiji.'

One man may steal a sheep, while another may not look over the fence. A Protestant and a Jew cremate tattered Bibles as a matter of course. Let a Catholic do the same thing, and he will find himself caught up in the mad whirl of typhoons and tornadoes of the 'outraged sentiment' of denominations to whom the Bible is losing, or has lost, its significance as the Inspired Word of God. The Archbishop of Adelaide had a narrow escape. But the ludicrous ending of the hurricane of feeling that circled around the recent incident in Fiji is likely to protect us for some time from talk about Bible-burning.

Hancock's "BISMARK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY.