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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

'Passive Resistance'

The Nonconformist conscience counts for a good deal in the political life of Great Britain. It has a very emphatic way with it. Just now it is in revolt against the new English Education Act. It apparently has not clear-cut notions as to the motive causes of the present rebellion against the Act. But the revolt is not, on that account, the less energetic. The new policy is one of 'passive resistance.' It was announced in the pulpit of the City Temple (London) on March 14 by the Rev. R. J. Campbell, who is the successor of the late Dr. Parker, and the recognised head of the Nonconformists in England. He declared that he 'would tender payment of that portion of the rates which was not to be devoted to sectarian purposes'; and then he added that 'the collector would have to seize his hall-clock and other chattels for the balance.' He concluded his discourse by defying the Government to send him to prison. His audience, which numbered some three thousand persons, thereupon rose in a body and for several minutes filled the City Temple with round upon round of vibrating applause. It was the pinning on of the cross of the new crusade.

A cable message in last Saturday's daily papers goes to show that the new Nonconformist policy bears the promise of a strenuous life for the British rate-collector. Says the cable man: 'The indignation of a mob at Hastings (Sussex), which found expression in yells and missiles, prevented a London auctioneer from selling furniture belonging to a man who had resisted the payment of the school tax under the new Education Act. The auctioneer fled through a back window of the house, the police protecting him.' The policy of passive resistance taken up by the Rev. Mr. Campbell and the English Nonconformists has the general support of their confreres in New Zealand. Their position is neither very intelligent nor very intelligible. (1) Their resistance is directed, not against the Board (or State) schools, but against what are called the voluntary (or parochial) schools, which were built, equipped, and manned by the Anglican, Catholic, and other religious bodies. (2) There is no foundation for the contention that a portion of the rates is 'devoted to sectarian purposes.' The payments provided for the voluntary schools are made solely and exclusively for the purely secular instruction imparted in them, and duly certified by the Government inspectors as being at least up to the standard of the Board schools. The religious instruction given in these schools is at the charge, not of the State, but of the particular denomination to which the schools belong. By a curious inconsistency, the

New Zealand supporters of the 'passive resistance' policy of the English Nonconformists are among the most active in the agitation to upset our present secular system of public instruction, make it strictly sectarian and Unitarian, and create a new State creed and have it crammed day by day into the young idea at the expense of the taxpayers of the Colony. This is the sort of consistency that was preached by Emerson, who had the most acrobatic mind ever, perhaps, given to a writer, and took back-springs and double-somersaults with the ease and serenity of an Arab tumbler in a circus. 'Speak what you think to-day,' said he, 'in words as hard as cannon-balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day.'

Again: (3) The English Nonconformists have the Board (or undenominational) schools open to them on conditions that meet with the requirements of their conscience. (4) They have, thus far, omitted to give the practical test of the sincerity of their convictions by providing their own schools. (5) Anglicans, Catholics, and others have, on the contrary, built and equipped schools at enormous expense, and, moreover, pay their quota towards the erection and maintenance of the Board schools, which the Nonconformist conscience accepts without demur. New Zealand Catholics have given, and are every day giving, the most practical proof of the reality of their conscientious objections to our present godless system of State instruction. But if they adopted an attitude of 'passive resistance' to the tax-collector, the friends of 'law and order' and 'civil and religious liberty,' who recently passed resolutions in support of the English Nonconformist policy, would probably denounce us as rebels and recommend us to arrange for quarters in the worse, or better, land.

A Blow that Failed

What is the matter with the Yellow Agony? The King has been to Rome, visited the 'Man of Sin,' had an interview of great cordiality with him, and yet 'the cold chain of silence' hangs over the Voice of the Lodge. The brethren pumped vitriol over King Edward when, as Prince of Wales, he visited 'the head of the Popish Church in Rome' and when, at various recent periods, he dared to 'dally with the dragon'—that is, to give evidence of a fair and friendly feeling towards his 'Popish' subjects or Catholic institutions. The present Queen was also treated to furious abuse and open threats by 'the accredited organ of the Loyal Orange Institution' in Australia for having, in company with her son, paid a visit to the Personification of the Devil in the Vatican. In 1888, 1893, and at other dates, the late Queen Victoria was hotly denounced on the anniversaries of 'the glorious, pious, and immortal memory' for having interchanged courtesies with 'her own and

Hancock's "BISMARCK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY