

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

THIRTY-FIRST YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXXI.—No. 31

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, JULY 30, 1903.

PRION 6D

MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIII. TO THE N.Z. TABLET.

Pergant Directores et Scriptorum 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

The Christchurch 'Star.'

If the Christchurch 'Star' enjoys a bad pre-eminence it ought to be in the seventh heaven just now. It holds the evil distinction of being the solitary newspaper—secular or religious—in New Zealand that has disgraced the respectable profession of journalism by dancing an editorial can-can of bigotry by the bier of the good old Pontiff who has gone to his rest. The decenter side of our human nature—even of Hottentot human nature—is in full accord with the old Dantean proverb: 'Oltre la tomba non va ira nemica'—'the ire of enemy passeth not the tomb.' And we can well understand the disgust with which people who wear clean linen, or who value the decent amenities of life, regarded the venomous outbreak of editorial bigotry which the Christchurch 'Star' of the 21st inst. published in connection with the demise of the late Pontiff. The 'Star' editor treated his readers to cheap and nasty sneers about Pius IX. busying himself over-much with 'theological quibbles about the Virgin.' In the course of the same article there appears what is, without comparison, the most virulent and gratuitously offensive paragraph that has appeared in the editorial columns of any secular paper in New Zealand for many a year. It runs as follows:—

'Papacy has much ill to be responsible for. It cut a swathe through the Middle Ages, more sanguinary, more marked with the curse of fire and sword than that of the hordes of Attila or the followers of the Arabian prophet. In its wake followed superstition, blasphemy, rebellion against the Almighty. But Papacy is no longer what it was at that time. The world has changed, and the Roman Catholic Church has changed too. It will never become just what it was at the time when the Pope divided the American continents between Spain and Portugal, giving to each one half, as if it had been an orange to give to two good children.'

An article that appeared in our editorial columns some two months ago, and still, perhaps, in the memory of many of our readers, furnishes an instructive evidence of the amazing degree of ignorance which could have penned such a wild and woolly paragraph. It is followed by another that, if less offensive, is not less misleading—where it states that the Catholic Church 'now has commenced' to recommend the reading of the Scriptures, and that this is 'the best proof of the changed conditions' that prevail within her fold. It is clear that the schoolmaster has not been abroad to much purpose in the editorial rooms of the Christchurch 'Star,' and that 'Our Great National System of Education' has not

been as successful as was expected in expelling ignorance. The paragraph quoted above bears a suspicious resemblance to the vitriolised waterspouts of roaring oratory that have been associated with rowdy celebrations of 'the glorious, pious, and immortal memory' of the little Dutchman. For people who like that sort of thing it is just the sort of thing they like. But if that is a fair sample of the sort of stuff the Christchurch 'Star' serves up to its readers, local Catholics will have very little manliness or public spirit or regard for the faith and feelings of their families if they ever let so much as one of its envenomed columns appear within their homes.

He talked Down to Them

Sane people as little dream of going to an Orange anniversary for fact regarding the Catholic Church as to a mud-puddle for cut diamonds or to a goat for wool. For history you get hysteria there, for reason abuse, and the incense of its worship is assafoetida. A famous English barrister found it necessary, though somewhat difficult, to talk down to the meagre intellectual level of the average jury. And in the same way an educated and otherwise fair-minded man may, by strenuous endeavor, reach down to the depths of the slip-slop that is deemed appropriate to the celebration of 'the glorious twelfth.' This may account for some of the serious—even absurd—lapses from historical truth that marked an Orange discourse recently delivered by an Anglican dignitary in Christchurch. Among other things, he slogged the Catholic Church with slung-shot for her alleged neglect of the Bible in pre-Reformation days. Surely it is time for men whose position demands a decent meed of scholarship to leave such idle and exploded legends to Orange lodges and itinerant imposters of the sham ex-priest order. The whole voice of Protestant scholarship is in open revolt against the statement of the Anglican dignitary referred to. Let one or two eminent names suffice here. Dr. Maitland in his 'Dark Ages' (p. 507) says:—

'The writings of the Dark Ages are, if I may use the expression, made of the Scriptures. I do not mean that the writers constantly quoted the Scriptures and appealed to them as authorities on all occasions, as other writers have done since their day; though they did this, and it is a strong proof of their familiarity with them; but I mean that they thought and spoke and wrote the thoughts and words and phrases of the Bible, and that they did this constantly and habitually as the natural mode of expressing themselves. They did it, too, not exclusively in theological or ecclesiastical matters, but in histories, biographies, familiar letters, legal instruments, and documents of every description.'

Hancock's "BISMARK" LAGER BEER

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY