

# **THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET**

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PRIME 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

### Stoke Orphanage

We direct, by request, the attention of our readers in the diocese of Dunedin to the circular by the Right Rev. Dr. Verdon which appears elsewhere in this issue. It is unnecessary for us to add a word to what his Lordship has urged in favor of the claims of the Stoke Orphanage and Industrial School to the general support of the Catholic body. We may, however, avail ourselves of the opportunity of repeating a little homily and leaving it to our readers of the Dunedin diocese to point the moral for themselves. The story runneth thus. When Jonathan Swift was Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, he once preached in that famed old Cathedral a charity sermon in aid of the poor of the parish. The mordant satirist—himself as sensitive as a barometer—had, later on, the mortification to hear that his sermon was, by general consent, voted decidedly too long. A few Sundays later he had occasion to preach another charity sermon in the same place. This gave him his opportunity, and he made his second discourse as brief and pointed as the most fastidious of his hearers could well desire. The sermon ran as follows:—

“He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay him.” Proverbs, nineteenth chapter, seventeenth verse. Dearly beloved brethren: I am instructed by my text that “he that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay him.” Now, beloved brethren, if you like the terms and approve the security, down with the dust! The Dean descended from the pulpit. His sermon had struck home, and a record collection was the result. Our readers may themselves draw the moral that lies on the surface of this story. But if we may add one by way of ‘rider,’ it would be this: that the needs and claims of New Zealand’s Catholic orphan boys at Stoke do not require one word more of urging than is contained in the brief circular just issued by the Bishop of Dunedin.

### Sunday Trams

Auckland is still, as we write, enjoying as best it can the protracted pangs of the revived dispute over the running of Sunday trams. It may interest our readers in that fair city to learn that, in 1899, the Dunedin Presbytery and Ministers’ Association lodged a protest

against the running of tram cars on ‘the Sabbath day.’ Of course they did not mean the Sabbath (Saturday), but Sunday. The directors of the various tram companies serenely pointed out to the reverend protestants that most of the traffic on Sundays consisted of people going to and coming from the churches. One company alone (then known as the Dunedin Tramways Co.) carried 700 people every Sunday to various Protestant churches in the city. A prominent member of the Mornington Company pointed out to the dark-robed deputationists that the remedy was in their reverences’ own hands—they had only to impress upon their people the moral turpitude of riding to church on tram cars. This (he pointed out) would, if taken to heart, at once strangle off the Sunday traffic by reducing it to such insignificant dimensions that it would not pay. It is, by the way, broadly hinted that many of the most ardent clerical Sabbatarians ride or drive from place to place on the Lord’s Day in connection with their ecclesiastical duties, and there are few among them, we ween, that would be content to preach their Sunday discourses on diet so comfortless and unstimulating as Saturday’s cauld kail and brose.

All this reminds us of the worthy old dame who was greatly scandalised at seeing the late Queen Victoria driving to church from Balmoral on what our Presbyterian friends call the Sabbath day. ‘But,’ objected a loyal subject in defence, ‘did not the Lord and His Apostles pluck ears of wheat and shell them on the Sabbath day?’ ‘Aweel, they did,’ said the stern old dame, ‘but I think no better o’ ’em for that.’ There is a good deal of this brand of ‘theology’ loose in New Zealand,

### Sunday Legislation

In our issue of last week we pointed out how the law of Sunday rest arose in the early Church as a protection for the law of Sunday worship. We may here briefly supplement the remarks made regarding the Sunday legislation of Constantine, Theodosius, and Charlemagne by some brief references to British laws on the subject. Legislation against unnecessary Sunday labor was in force in England from an early date. Laws were promulgated by King Ina of the West Saxons about the year 693; by Alfred in 876; by Edgar in 958; by Canute in 1028-1035; and with greater strictness after the Conquest, as, for instance, by Edmund III. in 1345; by Richard II. in 1388; by Edward IV. in 1464; by Henry VI. All these laws allowed necessary servile work to be done. The holding of markets, fairs, wool-shows, etc.,



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