

FEATURES OF THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

Leader—Ireland, p. 29; Notes—Favorite Books; Translations; A Saint's Masterpiece, p. 30. Topics—Germany; Rumania; Russia; Bible in Schools; America and Turkey; The Sistine Choir, pp. 18-19. Complete Story, p. 9; Catholic Irish in America, p. 13; "Unplanned and Undesired," p. 23; Faithful Irish Exiles, p. 25.

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

Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiae 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.



THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 1923.

IRELAND



THE cables about Ireland are more hopeful than they have been for a long time. The resistance to the Free State Government has crumbled to pieces during the past few months, and even the most unreasonable among his friends have not been able to persuade de Valera from declaring that further armed resistance is futile. He is still the nominal leader of the enemies of the Government, and although it may be expected that Mary MacSwiney and some of the militant girls and boys will be displeased with his attitude, it seems certain that the rank and file of the forces will rejoice at his decision. It will probably take some time to quell the sporadic disturbances which inevitably follow war of all kinds. There are certainly roving bands throughout the country which will not yield with a good grace, considering that many among them were inspired by no higher ideals than their own interest. It was to such marauders that George Russell referred when he reminded de Valera that his name was associated in the minds of many people with the lechers and thieves who availed themselves of the disturbance in order to defy the Government. But in the course of time law and order will deal with these, and public opinion will sooner or later provide an effective weapon against them.

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There is no use in saying now that it is a pity that the hopeless fight was carried on so long after it was admitted by those who waged it that the Irish people were on the side of the Government. There is no use lamenting over the senseless and criminal destruction of public and private property, which has left the country to face the future with a terrible financial burden on its shoulders. These things, and so many other things that are better forgotten, belong to the past. Ireland must now face the future and endeavor to make up for the leeway of centuries as well as that of the past two years. What is wanted most is a spirit of reconciliation and a revival of the patriotism inspired by the Gaelic League and almost lost during the recent turmoil. "A.E." lamented recently that so great damage had been already done to the soul of the nation: that the minds of the young were so saturated with terrible images; and that the beauty and the poetry and the nobility of the old movement had so far receded. Others have been saddened by the thought that so much promise of reconstruction and development was stricken

almost at its birth, and that in an economical sense the country had gone back hundreds of years in a short time. We know that the vital inspiration of men like Griffith and Pearse will be missed at present, and that it will be hard to find others to carry on the torch of Gaelic civilisation as gloriously as they carried it. And many of those who worked with them and are still alive are advanced in years and perhaps not a little weary of it all. Hyde is no longer a young man; Sigerson is very old; Moran is still a fighting force, but he has walked the *mezzo cammino* for some years; "A.E." is an inspiration always but he is a poet rather than a worker; many of the ladies who did so much for Irish culture in the past have been silenced by the events of contemporary history and their voices may have become weary. There will be a younger generation, but will it be equal to the elder? Will its spirit have been distorted and crippled and made ineffectual by the images of terror which "A.E." laments? Let us hope not. We have one good reason for hope which "A.E." has not. He is not a Catholic, and he knows from the outside only the wonderful reviving and quickening force of Catholicism. He sees Gaelic culture only from the student's and the enthusiast's point of view. He does not feel its vital unity with Catholic thought and inspiration, and we hardly think he can understand the possibilities that a fervent Catholic revival entails. For our part, we hope against hope to see the shadows of the past receding in the light of a new dawn, and we believe that what will speed the dawn as nothing else can will be a return to religion and a repentance for past errors and hatreds. When the hearts of the people turn to one another again in charity and love, the old inspirations will be reborn. The language will assume its rightful place; Irish music and Irish dances will banish the gloom of the dark days; and once more the work of reconstruction will be taken up and carried forth with courage and serenity.

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We believe in the greatness of Ireland's destiny. A country that has survived so many trials and preserved through them all her faith, her hope, and her national spirit, is surely intended in the ways of Providence to play a great part in the uplifting of the world. Ireland will enter as a young nation into a world where all the peoples are old and weary, where mercantilism and materialism have corrupted ideals and overthrown the foundations of Christian morality. Once before Ireland held aloft for all Europe the lamp of learning, and drew to her shores men from all countries who were eager for the learning they could find in the ancient schools of Muckross, Ardagh, Clonmacnoise, and Bangor. And her pupils went forth and brought with them strong and pure Christian principles which leavened society all over Europe and helped to make the Middle Ages the era of sanity and of culture and of peace, the era which saw the great cathedrals of Gisors and Chartres and Rheims built by the guildsmen, and heard the deathless harmony of the *Divina Comedia* sounding by the Arno and the Tiber. Ireland, in spite of all her faults, is still the only truly Christian country in the world to-day; and there is no telling what influence she may not be destined to have in the years to come if the present peace is the harbinger of a lasting reconciliation among those who lately opposed one another so bitterly. We are all one in believing that the Treaty wrung from England was far from perfect, and we are all one in believing in the truth of that message that flames from Parnell's statue in O'Connell Street: *No man may set bounds to the march of a nation!* By ways of peace and justice, by fraternal union and unselfish co-operation the Irish Nation will advance on the road upon which she has set her feet, and, in God's good time, our highest hopes for her will see their fulfilment. No man asks the friends of de Valera to give up their hopes of perfect freedom. Free Staters and Republicans love Ireland too well for that. In the wisdom begotten of the errors of the past the old cause will go on until it triumphs completely.

Maireann an cois coir go deó!