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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 Provincial Seminary.

The Provincial Seminary of New Zealand—Holy Cross College, Mosgiel—has reached the close of its second scholastic year. It is now well under way, and the report which the Right Rev. Rector, Bishop Verdon, was enabled to send to the remaining members of the episcopate in the Province is a record of quiet, but steady and satisfactory progress. Since the seminary was opened nineteen months ago, on the feast of the Holy Cross, 1900, twenty two students, representing every diocese in New Zealand, have entered. One of these went to complete his studies in Manly, another to the Eternal City. And in the bracing climate of Mosgiel the health of all these aspirants to the ecclesiastical state has been reported as being all that could be desired. It is anticipated that the next scholastic year will open with a substantial increase in the number of the students.

Catholic Public Servants.

In the contest for the Caversham seat, there has been revived, for partisan purposes, and in a peculiarly bitter and offensive form, the lately organised Orange cry as to the alleged 'stuffing' of the public service with an overwhelmingly large percentage of those unspeakable 'Romanists.' Local public offices having been singled out for a special *anathema maranatha*, we made it our business to inquire minutely into the real facts of the matter, so far as they are concerned, and with results that are stated elsewhere in our present issue. We are, as far as our opportunities permit, pursuing the inquiry into every branch of the public service; and, as this legend is likely to be heard of in the near future in other parts of New Zealand, we shall be grateful to all of our clerical and lay friends who will be good enough to aid us in our investigation by forwarding to us information as to the total and relative numbers, position, and pay, of Catholic public servants in their towns, cities, or districts.

Interesting Figures.

The figures that appear in the recently-published report on the Catholic primary schools in the archdiocese of Melbourne present somewhat of the impressive appearance of a regiment of troops upon parade. These schools number 107, and within their walls no fewer than 20,301 children are taught—in Montaigne's words—not merely how to decline virtue or explain the derivation of the word, but to embrace what it signifies, and to know what prudence is in its real essence, and not merely to spell and pronounce it. The number of teachers engaged in the primary schools of the archdiocese is 476, of whom 199 belong to religious Orders. Independently of salaries, a total sum of £12,694 was expended upon the schools during the year. As much as £10,869 of this amount was for the erection of six new schools. Through the munificence of the Archbishop of Melbourne, Miss Bell, a highly-skilled exper organiser from the Cambridge Training College has been appointed to keep the Catholic schools of the archdiocese abreast of the most recent developments in the work of education. Without such periodical

external aid,' says the report, 'it would be impossible to keep our teachers acquainted with what is going on in the great intellectual centres of the world. Methods which not many years ago were regarded as excellent are now looked on as antiquated. In the general advance of scientific knowledge no branch has received more deep thought and successful development than that which deals with primary education.' The same expert organiser was some years ago introduced into Tasmania by the Right Rev. Dr. Delany. Result: the methods of instruction in the Catholic primary and secondary schools were revolutionised and their pupils scored, in open competition against the State establishments, a series of sweeping victories that set the tight little island agog. Our New Zealand schools would do well to do likewise. There is no royal road to learning. But scientific and up-to-date pedagogic methods point the shortest cut at present known to 'git intellect' into children—as Artemus Ward would say—and enable teachers and pupils to 'get there' on ball bearings. As to results already achieved and financial and other sacrifices undergone, we are strongly of opinion that we in this Colony are content to keep our light too carefully covered under a bushel from the gaze of the general public.

Our Colonial Speech.

We rather suspect that the fashion of dialect stories—we do not take count of the cruder and more restricted vogue of coon and coster songs—has had some effect in forming a certain prevailing taste, which even educated people have acquired, of dotting their conversation with provincialisms, slang, and other solecisms of speech. One of the mysteries of colonial speech is the admixture of so many cockneyisms in unexpected places. We have met them in districts remote, unfriended, solitary, slow, and in circumstances that it would be about as difficult to explain as to solve the mystery of the live toad in the heart of solid rock. Professor Morris, of the Melbourne University, grappled with the puzzle some years ago, and with a more or less qualified success. During the discussion of the subject a correspondent told all abay't hay'w (how), at a dance, a lidy asked one of her guests to tike the kike (cake) first and have the gripes (grapes) afterwards. Such language, flowing from beautiful lips, recalls the creepy fairy tale of the intolerably lovely maiden from whose mouth, when she opened it, there issued forth a procession of frogs and toads. Possibly those cockneyisms, like Dogberry's reading and writing, come by nature.

A writer in the Wellington *Times* has walked cautiously round about the cockney problem, sniffed gently at it, and found its present proportions in New Zealand small, but its potentialities dangerous. He warns the public that, unless educational authorities are careful, whole districts in the Colony will become infected with cockneyisms as they are with Californian thistles. 'An Irishman,' says he, 'does not say "gripes" for "grapes," nor a Scot, nor an educated Englishman. The monstrosity is cockney, pure cockney, and so far as our colony is concerned will be found flourishing either where cockneys predominate or where the teacher chances to have acquired the "langwidge." Even such ethereal beings as school inspectors have been heard to speak of the West Indiar Islands. But to say that this is colonial is a calumny. It is not any more colonial than the Edinburgh accent is Scotch or

BROPHY & Co. having had 20 years' experience of the district are in a position to give reliable information as to the Grazing and Dairying capabilities of Property in the Manawatu and surrounding districts.