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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

The Catholic Truth Society.

It is gratifying to note from the report presented at the annual meeting, just held, of the English Catholic Truth Society that this important institution has had an excellent year's work and is, in every direction, making steady and continuous progress. During the year the membership has considerably increased, a sound financial position has been maintained, and there has been a steady increase in the number of the publications issued by the Society. Amongst the works which are announced as being soon to be issued by the Society are two which appear to us to be of special interest and worthy of special mention. The first is a cheap volume, brought up to date, of Encyclicals dealing with Social questions, which is to be republished under the title of 'The Pope and the People.' There are few questions so important and yet so difficult as the social questions that are everywhere exercising men's minds at the present time, and every intelligent Catholic should welcome a work which gives in a cheap and handy form a clear and authoritative statement of the Church's attitude on such questions. The other work, which is to be issued almost immediately, is the first volume of a publication entitled 'The Antidote,' the object of which is to bring together from current literature the corrections of mis-statements, the exposure of falsehoods, and the clearing up of misunderstandings which appear from time to time in various publications of the day. Everyone who has taken any interest in controversy must have noticed that there are certain forms of misrepresentation and mis-statement as to Catholic doctrine and practice that are constantly recurring, and 'The Antidote' should prove invaluable as furnishing both clergy and laity with a ready means of promptly and effectively replying to the sort of running fire thus kept up against the Church.

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Besides increasing the number of its publications the Society has also enlarged both the area and the scope of its operations. The area has been extended in late years by the establishment of similar societies in Scotland and Ireland, and of quite a number of branches in America, and all these offshoots of the parent Society are reported to be making excellent progress. It will be remembered also that at the great Australasian Catholic Congress held recently in Sydney a resolution was formally and unanimously adopted to the effect that the time had now arrived for starting a branch of the Society within the Commonwealth. The scope of the Society's usefulness has been enlarged in two directions. In the first place, the need of books for the Catholic blind, especially those in workhouses and infirmaries, has been receiving attention, and a start has been made with the formation of a lending library of Catholic books written in Braille for the benefit of the blind. In the second place the Society has made a new departure by preparing and supplying sets of slides for magic lanterns with suitable lectures to accompany the views. Thus there is a set giving interesting views of Rome, another set on the Jubilee, and another set of about 80 slides illustrating Italian religious art, and the demand for these shows that this departure is proving extremely popular and attractive. Alto-

gether, it is clearly evident from the present and preceding reports that the career of the Catholic Truth Society is one of ever-increasing usefulness, and both for the quantity and the quality of the work it is doing it deserves the cordial support of all who have the best interests of the Church at heart.

The Catholic Bishops and the Education Bill.

Whilst there is considerable difference of opinion amongst English Catholics as to the precise way in which some of the minor provisions of the new Bill will work out in actual practice, the view commonly taken is, as expressed in our leader of last week, one of general and cordial satisfaction with the measure. It is true, as we have already pointed out, that the permissive clause, leaving it optional with the local authority whether they will assume control of the school or not, will, if it is allowed to remain, be a very serious blot on the Bill. It is true also that the removal of some of the Catholic grievances under the new measure is counterbalanced by a very special and unwarranted concession to the Nonconformists. The Bill provides, as we pointed out last week, that in future wherever there are a reasonable number of Catholic children (say thirty), the Catholics of the district will be free to build a school at their own expense, and then to have it regarded as a public elementary school, for the maintenance of which the local authority will be responsible. A similar provision applies to Nonconformists, but with a very important difference. If a sufficient number of Nonconformist parents in a parish where the only school is a Church of England school declare that it is unsuitable for their children, they may, with the permission of the local authority and consent of the Department, call for a separate school to be built at the cost of the ratepayers. In other words, the Catholics must build their own schools; the Nonconformists will have theirs built for them. It is probable, however, that owing to their internal divisions the Nonconformists will not take advantage of this clause to any great extent, and, in any case, Catholics will be generous enough not to quarrel over allowing them the benefit of this concession. Altogether the Bill is, for the Catholics, a great step in advance, and they will accept it in the fair and reasonable spirit in which it appears to have been framed. The attitude of the Church has been officially expressed in the following resolutions passed by the Cardinal-Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Westminster at the annual Low Week meeting.

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The Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Westminster having examined the Education Bill recently presented to Parliament, without at present going into details, commend it in general as a measure deserving the cordial support of the country.

By co-ordinating Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education it offers in outline a comprehensive national system, sufficiently elastic to allow of healthy variety and of expansion in all its branches.

While placing the syllabus of elementary secular instruction, with choice of subjects, under direct local popular control, and meeting the cost of teaching the same out of public money, the Bill also recognises the sacred right of parents to secure a religious education for their children, though it does this by means of a financial compromise. By this compromise the representatives of such parents are to provide the sites, school-

Hancock's "BISMARCK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY