

# THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

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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

### Just What is Wanted.

A recent letter in the *Melbourne Advocate*, from its special correspondent, Mr Michael Davitt, contains an announcement that will be received with the deepest interest by all Irishmen and friends of Ireland throughout the colonies. It is to the effect that efforts are being made by the Irish Parliamentary Party to induce Mr T. P. O'Connor, M.P., to visit the colonies as a delegate of the Party and deliver lectures in all the larger centres on behalf of the Home Rule movement. It appears that Mr. O'Connor is himself personally anxious—if he can make the necessary arrangements—to make a tour of the colonies, and strong pressure is being brought to bear to persuade him to combine pleasure and duty in the manner indicated.

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Mr. O'Connor's exceptional literary and oratorical gifts make him very specially fitted for such a mission, and there can be no doubt that wherever he went he would command an enthusiastic reception and assured success. Speaking of his qualifications as a speaker Mr. Davitt says:—

Mr. O'Connor is, beyond doubt, the first platform speaker among the Irish leaders. He is scarcely second to the best orator of the House of Commons. In debating power and ability he is ranked very high by the best judges of Parliamentary speaking, with an unrivalled fund of anecdote, wit, and repartee, which combine the best style of eloquent Irish with the solid and practical method of English oratory in the making of an all-round powerful and persuasive public speech.

We earnestly hope that Mr. O'Connor will see his way to fall in with the proposal, for we are persuaded that he will do invaluable work in helping the Party, in making converts to the cause, and in giving a fresh stimulus to Home Rule sentiment and activity in the colonies. Speaking for New Zealand, we can promise him an enthusiastic welcome and the hearty co-operation of Irishmen from one end of the Island to the other.

### 'Souperism' in Rome.

For some time past all Catholics who read the Roman news in Catholic papers have been aware that an extensive and regularly organised system of 'souperism'—i.e., making converts by bribery—is being carried on by certain Protestant sects in Rome; but it is a very difficult matter to get Protestants who live outside of Italy to admit or believe this undoubted fact. A few weeks ago some discussion on the subject took place in the columns of the *London Spectator*, the editor of which urged, in reply to the charges of souperism, that 'this accusation is always brought against those who try to make converts,' and that in this instance 'the accused societies are not specified and the accusations brought against them are vague and unsubstantiated.' The Rome correspondent of the *London Tablet* has now taken the matter up and has published a reply, which, whatever else may be said about it, is certainly not open to the charge of 'vagueness.' The society, the victims, and the history of the transactions, are all described with the minutest detail, so that the *Spectator* or anyone else who is interested can easily investigate and verify for themselves.

The society which is specially pilloried by this writer is that of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, chosen by him partly because the body it represents is the most prominent of the Protestant sects in Rome, and partly because, as he says, the methods it adopts are models of fairness compared with those adopted by some of the other proselytising bodies in Rome. This society has a handsome conventicle and hall in the Via Venti Settembre, and both conventicle and hall are, as a tribute to Garibaldi, consecrated to and named after Venti Settembre. This society, it is alleged, is constantly guilty of bribing converts, and here is a modern instance in point. We will let the correspondent tell the story in his own words:

Roberto Palazzi is a native of Nemi, who came to Rome some time ago to find the work that was lacking in his own town. He was always a decent sort of a man, and attended his religious duties fairly regularly. His wife, Maria Todini of Rocca Priore, is an excellent Catholic, and their four children, Emilia aged sixteen, Ada fifteen, Livia twelve, and Guglielmo nine, are quite as pious as the average run of Roman children. Robert found after a while that Rome was not an El Dorado—nay, about a month ago he saw starvation for himself, his wife, and his children staring him in the face. So moody and depressed did he grow, that the neighbors began to ask him what was the matter, and to one of these he confided the real state of affairs, 'Go to the Metodisti of Venti Settembre,' said his friend, 'they will give you money and work—you have only to say that you will join them.' Hunger and despair are evil counsellors, and Roberto went. He explained his case—he was out of work, he was hungry, and he wanted to become a Methodist. Had he any family? Yes; a wife and four children. What about them? Roberto, having got over the difficulty of bolting Methodism for himself, had only slight qualms about throwing his wife and children into the balance against starvation. He promised that they would all become Methodists. After this he thought he had done all that was necessary to obtain the relief he needed so badly. He did not know the strict business principles on which the American Methodists conduct their establishment. Doubtless their experience has taught them that one Roman bird in the hand is worth any amount of them in the bush. Anyway poor Roberto was informed that he would have money and work provided for him—but only when he and his whole family had made their abjuration. The delay was not pleasant to a starving man, but Palazzi returned home with the intention of hurrying up the 'conversion' of his household. His wife was horrified. She went at once to the Superiores of a religious community, and put all the facts before her. The Superiores, in turn, communicated them to a member of the Society for the Preservation of the Faith, who thoroughly investigated them and found them to be quite true. This Society is poor, and could not hold out the rich promises of the American Methodists, but the unhappy Roberto only wished to be saved from starvation. Work of some kind will be found for him, and the Methodists will wait in vain for him and his family.

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There is certainly nothing 'vague' about that story and it is only one of many similar incidents which the *Tablet* correspondent is able to record. He shows further how organised attempts are made to obtain converts *en bloc* by offering 'free education' in various technical and higher subjects of knowledge. Thus, he says, the Methodist free night schools for modern languages, especially English, used to attract quite a number of young men and boys until the Irish Christian Brothers opened similar classes close at hand and completely supplanted the Methodists. But another Methodist institution—a day and boarding school for girls—is still flourishing and the *Tablet* writer gives clear and definite proof of the practice

Hancock's "BISMARCK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S  
NEW INDUSTRY.