

THE NEW ZEALAND TABLET

THIRTIETH YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXX.—No 40

DUNEDIN: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1902.

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

An Undesirable Immigrant.

There are few things in this world that excite such a feeling of loathing and disgust in the minds of ordinary right-thinking people as a shameless and degraded woman. There seems to be a consensus of opinion amongst all who have had a wide experience of the world that when a woman really goes to the bad, she becomes thoroughly, hopelessly, irredeemably bad, and clean-minded people shrink from contact with her as they would from the deadly plague or the loathsome leprosy. The feeling of repugnance is intensified when the abandoned creature is so bereft of every particle of womanly shame as to publicly parade her depravity by delivering lectures and circulating literature which only minister to the prurency and lowest passions of those who hear and read them and which are in their essential nature and effects indecent and obscene. To this class belongs the ordinary specimen of the bogus 'ex-nun' lecturer. The type is fortunately not a common one, but the few specimens that have appeared before the public have so closely resembled each other in their character and career that it is easy to give a general description of the genus. As a rule the self-styled 'ex-nun' lecturer has never even been a Catholic, much less a nun. She is usually, like Maria Monk, an out-and-out bad woman, who has been an inmate of some Catholic reformatory for fallen and incorrigible girls. It is there that she has first come in contact with Catholic nuns, it is there she has gained the only knowledge and experience she has ever had of the daily round of life in a convent. It is of course only a smattering of the mere external routine of the nuns' life that she has thus been able to acquire but it is enough to enable her to deceive and delude credulous Protestants into the belief that she is able to speak from actual experience as a nun, and accordingly she comes out as 'the eloquent and brilliant ex-Romanist' to deliver—with admission at so much per head—thrilling lectures on 'Convent Life Exposed,' and on the 'secrets and horrors of the Confessional.' It is a miserable sordid story of debased and degraded womanhood, but it is the almost invariable history of the life and character of the self-styled 'ex-nun.'

*

There was a time when there was a mint of money in this anti-Catholic lecturing business, but those palmy days have gone forever. The obviously interested motives, the unreliability of the evidence, and the immorality of the lives of these money-grubbing no-Popery scavengers have been so thoroughly and completely exposed of late that no respectable member of society would be seen going near their gatherings. In New Zealand in particular, and especially since the recent Slattery exposure and fiasco, the game of fooling the Protestant public is completely 'played out,' and it is safe to assert that the creature who has secretly and silently descended on Dunedin, and whose disgustingly suggestive handbills are being distributed throughout the city, will meet with a very frosty reception and will depart from amongst us very little richer—except in experience—for her visit to our shores. In a 'special notice' in her bills this woman 'desires to call the attention of the citizens of this city to the fact that there may possibly appear

in the local papers libellous articles against her character and work.' So far as we are concerned, the creature need not be alarmed. Josh Billings, in one of his natural history essays, remarks that 'The pole-cat is so called because it is not convenient to touch it with anything but a pole, and the longer the pole the more convenient.' From our point of view, these odious 'ex-nun' lecturers come under precisely the same category. So far as our taste and inclination go, it is certainly not convenient to touch these lecturers with anything but a pole, and we have no pole long enough to enable us to even begin to approach them with any regard to our feeling of comfort and decency.

The Doctrine of Hell.

In the course of a Protestant mission on a large scale which has just been concluded in Christchurch the Rev. Dr. Torrey, who was conducting the mission, happened to intimate that he was fully convinced there was a hell, that its torments were everlasting, and that the fire with which the wicked are there punished is a material fire. The statement was at once vehemently challenged and a vigorous controversy in the papers took place, in which the doctrine of everlasting punishment, and especially of punishment by a material fire, was somewhat fiercely assailed. So far as we know the Catholic Church was not specially referred to in the correspondence, but to have remained silent while a belief which is included in the defined articles of faith was being publicly attacked would have been disloyal to truth, and accordingly Father Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M., Vicar-General of Christchurch, thought it well to deliver a special lecture by way of explanation and vindication of the Catholic doctrine on the subject. The lecture, which appears in full in the *Press*, shows the great learning, wide research, and comprehensive grasp of the subject which characterise all Father Le Menant's productions. After showing the universality, even amongst pagan peoples, of a belief in a place of future punishment for the wicked, the lecturer proceeds to state the teaching of the Church, carefully distinguishing what is of faith about hell and what rests on tradition and the opinion of learned theologians and doctors. 'The Church,' says Father Le Menant, 'has defined only two things concerning hell, namely (1) That there is a hell for the punishment of the wicked, and (2) That hell is eternal, and its torments, whatever their nature may be, will never come to an end.' 'Other questions,' he adds, 'Where is hell situated? What is the nature of the pains of hell? What are we to understand by the fire of hell? Is it material or not? These and other such questions have never been defined by the Church, and are to be studied by the arguments of the Fathers and learned doctors, and the traditions of the early Christians; but they form no part of the Catholic faith, and may be examined and judged by the strength of the arguments which are brought forward to elucidate them.' That the fire of hell is a material fire—though, of course, entirely different from earthly fire—is, he explains, 'the most common and almost certain opinion' in the Church; that it is a mere metaphorical fire 'we are not forbidden to believe, but this is by far the least probable opinion.' The Rev. Father then goes on to draw out at length the arguments, both from the Scriptures and from Tradition, which conclusively establish the defined teaching of the Church as to the terrible fate of the finally impenitent.

Hancock's "BISMARCK" LAGER BEER.

NEW ZEALAND'S
NEW INDUSTRY.