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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 Age of Cheek

When a representative Catholic steps, on challenge, into the arena of newspaper controversy, this is his practically invariable experience: a crowd of non-Catholic writers, dissatisfied with the manner in which their end of the discussion is handled, sally forth, with much ado and hullabaloo, to aid their failing champion. This customary compliment has been paid in generous measure to the dialectic skill and historical knowledge displayed by Dean Burke in his replies to the unprovoked and unseemly challenge of the Anglican Bishop of Dunedin. A number of lay and clerical combatants came to the aid of his Lordship. By far the greater part of them, however, were dealing with a subject that was far too big for the weight of their brains. But they sailed into the strife, nevertheless, with the serene and reckless conceit which comes of mental rawness and shallow reading, and they added not a little to the gaiety of the discussion by the sort of crude fancies which they poured into it. Josh Billings says that ignorance is bliss when it is a question of sawing wood. Its chief value in controversy is the healthy amusement which it furnishes to those who have got to the root of the subject under discussion. In a way, too, it serves to show up a curious characteristic of our age to which the 'New World' refers as follows in a recent issue:—

'It is, indeed, one of the most remarkable phases of twentieth century culture that a number of persons are writing who have lamentably small knowledge of the topics they attempt to discuss. Here people are writing about science who scarcely know the difference between a perihelion and a parallax. Other scribes are writing about religion, and settling the meaning of Scripture, who do not know the difference between a Hebrew verb and the inscription on a Chinese opium jar. Some one has called the present the age of steel. Really, is it not in truth the Age of Cheek?'

In Fair Fiji

Sir G. W. Des Voeux has had a tolerably wide experience of colonial rule. He was Magistrate of British Guiana in 1863-1869, Administrator and Colonial Secretary of St. Lucia from 1869 to 1880, Governor of the stormy Bahamas for a time in the last-named year, Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner of the Western

Pacific from 1880 to 1885, Governor of Newfoundland in 1886, and of Hong-Kong from 1887 to 1891. The London correspondent of the Melbourne 'Advocate' conveys the intelligence that Sir George has just issued his reminiscences in two bulky, but entertaining volumes. His Fiji experiences have a special interest just now, in view of the recent spasms of controversy that shook those isles reef and palm. 'He has some severe things to say of the Wesleyan missionaries,' says the 'Advocate' correspondent. 'His relations with them (he remarks) were strained from the start. They caused him "much embarrassment and unnecessary correspondence."' After having described some of the annoyances to which they subjected him, this Protestant ex-Governor pays the following warm tribute to the Marist missionaries in Fiji: 'I am bound to say that the conduct of the Roman Catholic missionaries was in marked contrast with that of their Wesleyan rivals, and that they were invariably loyal in both spirit and action, while their apostolic poverty and the extreme simplicity of their lives entitled them to special respect.'

Changed Times

We are happily far from the days when altars were overthrown all over England, when sacred vestments were destroyed or turned to common or base uses, and when the fate of the 'massing priest' was the torture chamber, a short ride on a tumbrel, a brief interview with the common hangman, and the impaling of his quartered remains, as a traitor, upon the Tower. The Church of England has undergone many a change since those fierce old days. Ever since the days of the Oxford movement our High Church friends have been paying the once hated creed the flattery of imitation. They have been quietly assimilating Catholic doctrines and principles. They have been imitating our ritual, erecting 'altars,' adopting vestments, incense, lighted candles, etc., performing a ceremony which they call the 'Mass,' and although avowedly members of a merely national Church, have even come to boldly lay claim to a share in the title of 'Catholic' or universal, which, by right and by the fact of common usage, belongs only to that great and divinely founded organisation which has its centre in the See of St. Peter. This new view of the Church is confined to a small but devout and growing body in the Anglican Church. It has no basis in history, and is interesting chiefly by reason of its abandonment of some of the fundamental principles of the Reformation, its vehement objection to the official and once-loved title of 'Protestant,' and the manner in which it has led, and is



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