

The Stoke Orphanage.

We beg to acknowledge the following sums entrusted to us for the Stoke Orphanage:—

	£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged ...	62	18	0
Mr. M. Moran (Malaghans) ...	1	1	0
Mr. M. J. Fogarty (Greymouth) ...	1	0	0
A Friend (Roxburgh) ...	1	0	0
Sympathy ...	1	0	0

MARRIAGE.

MURPHY—O'KEEFE.—At St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin, by the Rev. Father Murphy, Adm., James, son of Henry Murphy, Esq., Grattencolough, County Kilkenny, Ireland, to Margaret, youngest daughter of the late John O'Keefe, Melbourne Street, South Dunedin. Home papers please copy.

IN MEMORIAM.

MUIR.—In loving memory of my dearly-beloved parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Muir, who departed this life, Mother, June 30, 1900; Father, February 17, 1902.—May their souls rest in peace. Inserted by their loving daughter.

CASEY.—In loving memory of Margaret Casey, beloved wife of William Casey, who died on the 1st July, 1900.

What lacks my heart that makes it
So weary and full of pain,
That trembling hope forsakes it
Never to come again.

Only another heart,
Tender and all mine own,
In the still grave it lies,
I weep alone.

God is all goodness, and He knows
The best lot for His own;
'Tis His decree—then let us say
'Thy will, not mine, be done.'



'To promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.'

LEO XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET.

THURSDAY, JULY 2, 1903.

'ROMANISTS' AND 'CRIMINALS'



LAST week we exploded a few dynamite cartridges in an unwarranted statement made by a non-Catholic clergyman in the columns of a Palmerston North contemporary. 'The Romanists of New Zealand,' said this wholesale enthusiast, 'have a larger percentage of criminals than the Protestants, who give their children the Bible.'

We have already shivered to pieces two fallacies that underlie this sweeping statement. Several others remain. It seems clear that our reverend critic has neither examined the subject for himself nor remembered the simple elements of logical deduction that, it is to be hoped, formed a part of his training for the sacred ministry. For his fallacies are, in their way, of as flagrant a kind as the sample given in old JOHN LILBURN'S treatise on logic: 'That creature which has two legs before, and two legs behind, and two legs on each side, has eight legs; but a fox is a creature with two legs before and two legs behind, and two legs on each side; therefore a fox has eight legs.'

The use of words of vague or ambiguous meaning affords the readiest and most welcome wriggling-ground for the man with a weak case. Hence sharp, clear, right definition of terms is the first, second, and third condition of right discussion. In the present instance the vital word is 'criminals.' Incidentally, we may remark that 'crime' is a

slipshod term. It is used in law as a loose generic term equivalent to 'offence.' But to this hour the law has been unable to fix its meaning by a definition. It is, however, as true now as it was in the days of HORACE and QUINTILIAN that received custom determines the sense of words and is the surest director of the right use or speech. And in the ordinary and accepted use of the word, a crime is a *serious* offence tending to the prejudice of the community. The same holds good with regard to the French, Italian, and Spanish terms 'crime,' 'crimine,' and 'crimen.' The word 'criminals,' now under discussion, is not, so far as we are aware, an accepted term in law. Its received meaning, however, admits of no dispute. In CRABB'S standard work, 'English Synonyms,' for instance, we read: 'Those only are denominated *criminal* who offend seriously, either against public law or private morals.' And he defines a 'criminal' as '... one who has committed some great offence against law, duty, or right.' And this grave kind of wrongdoing is precisely what general usage associates with the words 'criminals,' 'criminal classes,' 'criminal population.' CRABB, for instance, sets down mere drunkenness, not as a crime, but as a vice. Mr. JOHN MACDONNELL, who is the author of the interesting preface to the Prisons Reports for England and Wales for the year 1901, does not regard drunkenness and petty brawling as 'crimes' nor those guilty of them as 'criminals.' And Mr. HATTEY, the statistician of the Victorian Government, ranks drunkenness, assault, and large classes of indictable offences against property, good order, and the public welfare as only 'minor offences hardly amounting to crimes.' All such offences 'of inferior degree' are unknown in law as 'misdemeanors' (and in a loosely generic and improper way as 'crimes'). It is the other two divisions of evil-doing—treasons and felonies—that are 'crimes' in the true and accepted meaning of the word. And the vastly greater part of those at whom the over-enthusiastic cleric in Palmerston North flung the term 'criminals' are not criminals, but mere misdemeanants.

When the old warrior OSSIAN was in a fighting mood he called on his bard to sing him 'a song—a song with a sword in every line.' When our combative critic in Palmerston North took down his harp and sang his statistical roundelay, he managed to pack into it a fallacy for every word. We will do him the credit of supposing that his statement as to the relative number of 'Romanist criminals' is based on the statistical returns of 'law and crime.' There is no little significance in the fact that, though roundly challenged, he made no attempt to sustain his unsupported assertion by adequate, or any, proof. The false and unwarranted assumptions and other fallacies that lurk in his quoted statement are worthy of a JOURDAIN or a JUSTICE SHALLOW. Here are a few of them: (1) He tacitly draws and conveys the double-barrelled inference that the alleged higher criminality of our Catholic population is due to this—that they do not 'give their children the Bible.' (2) He confounds misdemeanants with criminals. (3) His assertion assumes that *all* the criminals in New Zealand are duly caught, ticketed, and entered up. (4) He takes it for granted that a proper and correct record is kept of the religious beliefs of all the criminals in the country. (1) To his double-barrelled fallacy we make a double-barrelled reply: (a) His inference that there is no Scripture instruction in our schools is simply opposed to fact. Bible history, etc., is a part of their curriculum, and the Catholic faith, which is instilled into the minds of our children, is the living and magnificent embodiment of the whole Word of God. (b) If his argument, as stated by him, were of any use, it would have a general application. In that case his native Scotland, would be one of the model countries of Europe, and Ireland—which gave New Zealand the overwhelmingly greater part of its Catholic population—would be a warning example of criminality to the nations of the earth. But what are the facts? Scotland is certainly not a model to the nations. It stands far ahead of Ireland in the number of its 'criminals.' In the matter of illegitimacy—an important test of the moral stamina of a people—Scotland is (as the British Registrar-General showed) three times worse than Ireland as a whole—and this although Ireland has to bear the overwhelming burden of the sins of the north-eastern and lodge-ridden corner of Ulster. In 1896 Mr. TIGHE HOR-

RIDE "ANGLO SPECIAL" CYCLES.