

The Stoke Orphanage.

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

	£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged ...	82	13	6
Mr. E. O'Neill (Dunedin) ...	1	0	0
Mr. T. Fox (Crown Hotel, Dunedin) ...	1	0	0
Mr. F. W. Hart (Naseby) ...	1	0	0
Miss Ryan (Hyde) ...	1	0	0

We shall be glad to receive, acknowledge, and forward further subscriptions entrusted to us for this great and sorely-trying charity.

EDITOR, 'N.Z. TABLET,'
DUNEDIN.

Rev. G. Mahony, Nelson, thankfully acknowledges the following further donations.

Mr. Maurice O'Connor (Wellington), £30; Very Rev. Dean Binfield (Meane), £12; Hon. Sir J. G. Ward (Wellington), £5 5s; Very Rev. Eather Grogan, S.M. (Napier), £3 3s; Mrs. Sullivan (Wellington), £3; Very Rev. Father Costello (Marton), £2 2s; the late Father Bogus (Ross), per Sister Ignatius, £1 1s; Mrs. Hooper (New Plymouth), £1 1s; Mr. E. Magner (Mania), £1 1s; Mr. Patrick Ryan (Wellington), £1 1s; Mr. E. H. Dean (Wellington), £1 1s; Rev. Father Herbert (Greymouth), £1 1s; Mr. W. B. Candell (Nelson), £1; Proceeds of Catholic Social, Nelson, £16.

To be continued.

DEATHS.

O'CONNOR.—On July 22, 1903, Bridget, the dearly-beloved wife of Dennis O'Connor, Awamoa Creek, Oamaru, and native of County Kerry, Ireland.—R.I.P.

FITZGERALD.—On July 16, 1903, at her residence, Wakanui, Bridget Fitzgerald, the beloved wife of David Fitzgerald, of Wakanui, Ashburton; aged 45.—R.I.P.



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

LEO XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1903.

CITIES AND DEGENERATION

BYRON was a child of the free, open air. To him high mountains were a feeling and 'the hum of human cities torture' But to the bewigged and elephantine Johnson country life was duller than 'the fat weed that rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf.' 'No wise man,' said he, 'will go live in the country unless he has something to do which can be better done in the country.' Yet he had wit enough to see and say that the decay of the old time military spirit of the English nobility of his day was due to the fact that its members had 'gone into the city to look for a fortune.' The modern movement citywards thus began at one end of the social scale. It seized upon the other after the spinning-jenny, the 'mule,' the power-loom, and the steam-engine had wrought the great industrial revolution in England. During the past sixty years urban population has moved four times as fast as rural in Great Britain. The same process is at work to an alarming extent in all industrial countries, in others, as in Australia, in a real but lesser degree. And it is fast providing some of the knottiest problems that have ever racked the brains of statesmen.

One of the problems created by this migration of the rural population to cities is that of physical degeneration. A London surgeon is credited with the statement that the London-bred unit tends to die out after the

third generation. Dr. Andrew Wilson, a noted physician, is not prepared to either affirm or deny this statement, but he is emphatically of the opinion that the conditions of city life are unfavorable to the building up of a robust frame. An uneasy interest attaches just now to one phase of this subject—that of national defence. It was brought to the front in a striking way during the South African war by the number of 'Brodricks,' or weedy and ill-developed city youths who served in the army, and whose lack of stamina made them the despair of the military authorities and a clog upon the operations of the campaign. At the present time the subject of the physical degeneracy of the industrial population in Great Britain is engaging the anxious attention of the War Office and the Imperial Parliament. Improving the condition of the city masses will serve as a palliative. Holland's plan of taking the poor from the cities and planting them in country places is a move—though only a small, tentative, and dilettante one—in the right direction. The true remedy is the least likely of adoption. It would mean a reversal of the settled policy of three generations of British statesmen and the changing of England back again to a mainly agricultural country, as it was in the days when it supplied such splendid fighting material to the armies of Marlborough and Wellington.

The peasant, and not the city-bred man, is the backbone of the army.

'But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.'

The decline—or, rather, the ruin—of agricultural pursuits in England and the rush of its population from country to city, have naturally had a withering effect upon the stamina and fighting value of the unit supplied by it to the defences of the Empire. The army's best recruiting grounds in the day of need will ever be the mainly agricultural portions of the Empire—Ireland, Scotland, Canada, and the Australasian Colonies. Scotland, according to Mulhall, furnishes four soldiers per thousand inhabitants, England five, and Ireland six. But year by year Ireland's fighting strength and defensive value are being drained away by a steady flow of emigration which has been caused by the blighting curse of an intolerable land system, and which is transferring to other flags the brain and brawn that, under happier auspices, would be available for the defence of the Empire.

'Oh! the fightin' races don't die out,
If they seldom die in bed.'

Better days are near at hand. And with peace and prosperity at their doors and 'Castle rule' rooted out of the land, the people will speedily forget their long-enduring wrongs, and the waste places will, we hope, again be densely peopled with the strong, moral, and vigorous stock whose indomitable grit and endurance have shown themselves upon a thousand battlefields.

LOOK OUT FOR NEXT ISSUE!

Four Page Supplement. Full Page Portrait of New Pope. Should be in every Catholic Home. Order early.

Notes

Anti-Treating and Other 'Antis'

The Anti-Treating League—to which we have from time to time directed attention in our editorial columns—is progressing at a merry pace in Ireland. This movement to combat one of the vilest and most dangerous of our drinking customs, has come to stay, and it only remains to hope for its spread from the Green Isle into every English-speaking land. The annual report of 1902 is before us, and among other interesting matter it contains a letter from an American priest who, while