

In the first five counties mentioned above, the people who go to confession predominate; in the remaining four, non-Catholics. In the five counties in which the Catholics are in a majority the rate of illegitimacy, according to the census returns of 1891, was 4.9 per cent. In the four counties in which non-Catholics predominate the rate is 10.4 per cent. These figures will take a good deal of strenuous explanation.

The noted Presbyterian clergyman, Dr. Watson, (better known by his pen-name, 'Ian MacLaren') said to an American interviewer a few years ago that among the admirable qualities of the Irish people 'is that moral purity which is one of the glories of the Catholic Church in Ireland.' And the *Times* of November 16, 1872, reports that virulent enemy of Irish Catholics, James Anthony Froude, as having said in the course of his fifth lecture in New York: 'In the last hundred years, at least, impurity has been almost unknown in Ireland. This absence of vulgar crime and this exceptional delicacy and modesty of character were due, to their everlasting honor, to the influence of the Catholic clergy.'

THE following cable message appeared in the daily papers of last Friday:—'In the House of Commons Mr Brodrick stated that the Boer women detained in British camps, whose husbands were on commando, were on reduced rations, but that the other women were on full rations.'

It is scarcely necessary to point out the lurid significance of this callously brutal declaration of war policy. In circumstances such as those referred to by Mr Brodrick, the rations for each family are served out to its head—in this case the Boer *wrouw* or house-mother. Boer women, therefore, and their families—daughters included—after having been compelled to witness the wholesale burning of their homes, and the looting or destruction of their property, are subjected to systematic, deliberate, and unnecessary starvation in the midst of military camps scattered over wide areas of South Africa. Briefly and in plain terms, these hapless Boer females, whose husbands, brothers or sons are out on commando are practically placed between the alternatives of slow starvation or selling themselves to degradation and infamy. That is just what it comes to. In all the history of what is termed—too often by courtesy

—'civilised' warfare, we have never stumbled across a more cool and calculating piece of villainy than is exposed in this openly avowed campaign of starvation against helpless and unoffending women and girls. War is a rough and evil game. It often compels a resort to stern repressive measures. But this woman-hunting and woman-starving cannot be justified by any plea of military necessity or even of political policy. Another evil feature of this sad business is this:—That the newspapers which picked the quivering ether with shrill cries of indignation at the alleged flogging of a Kaffir by a Boer have not one word of protest—nor even of comment on this new and shocking phase of military barbarism. There was a time when the honor of a British officer was something to swear by. The wearers of the gold lace were, in this respect, an example to their men. But in the later phases of this farcical War of the Thousand Surrenders, so much of military honor as is meant for everyday use seems to have centred chiefly in the rank and file. From the ranks, at least—and especially from the ranks of the colonial troops—there has come many a manly protest against the petticoat campaign into which the war, on the British side, has of late degenerated.

It was an evil day for the honor and fair fame of the British army when its officers in South Africa began to devote to the slow torture of helpless females the brain power which was insufficient to cope successfully with a few armed farmers in the field. Conquered peoples are slow to forgive or forget a policy of persecution or of outrage against their women. The brutalities of the Orange yeomanry, of the Hessians, and of the 'Ancient Britons' in Ireland in 1797-9 are still told with burning indignation by thousands of firesides in Leinster and Ulster. And the story of the burning farmsteads of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and of the systematic starvation of Boer women in British camps will, in all probability, make many a pulse quicken and many an eye flash in Boer homesteads in South Africa in a hundred years to come. Quite apart from its moral and humanitarian aspects, such treatment of women and children is distinctly bad policy. This capitalists' war has brought many an evil in its train. But not the least of these is the enduring legacy of undying racial hate which for generations to come will be a thorn in the side of British administration in South Africa.

LENTEN CIRCULAR BY THE BISHOP OF AUCKLAND.

GEORGE MICHAEL, by the Grace of God, and the favour of the Holy Apostolic See, Bishop of Auckland, to the clergy, secular and regular, and to the laity of the said diocese, health and benediction in the Lord.

The accompanying circular is issued for your instruction and guidance, in the hope that it will be hung up in the houses or our parishioners. With very great pleasure we furnish you with the simple statement of facts, showing the work and progress that have been wrought in our diocese during the year 1900.

In matters of education, we have succeeded in persuading the Board of Education to allow their inspectors to examine the pupils of our schools. The present year will be a fair test of the efficiency of our teachers, and will prevent many parents from holding out the excuse, that the want of authorised certificates for their children was a bar to their progress in mercantile pursuits.

Six Sisters of Mercy were professed, increasing the permanent staff of teachers for their school. The Sisters of St. Joseph have opened a school at Paeroa, and have taken over the school St. Benedict's, the total increase of teachers numbering ten for these schools. We regret to state that owing to the sparse Catholic population of Pukekohe, the Sisters of the Mission have been compelled to close the school there.

A new school has been erected at Paeroa, the school at St. Benedict's is being considerably enlarged, and a new convent site purchased there by the Sisters of St. Joseph. A very fine convent has been erected by the Sisters of Mercy at Gisborne, the Convent of Mercy at Ponsonby renovated, and important additions are being made at our Orphanages. To carry out the religious principles of our schools, the Catholic Readers, approved of by the Australasian Hierarchy, have been introduced.

The Sisters of Mercy, who have with great success engaged in work at the Coromandel Hospital, have started a Convalescent Home at Mt Eden, to enable them to carry out one of the special objects of their Order, in caring for the sick and infirm.

New churches have been built at Te Koporu, Patutahi, and the Upper Township, Coromandel. The church at Puhoi has been enlarged, and the churches at Helensville and the Wade removed to more central positions.

Land and property have been secured at St. Patrick's and Gisborne, and very great improvements have been made in the Opotiki, Gisborne, Kihikihi, and Parnell districts.

From the following table you will note that a fair reduction of the debt on the diocese has been made:—

Indebtedness as from Jan. 1, 1900		Jan. 1, 1901, these debts reduced to	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Cathedral ...	1050 0 0	1000 0 0	
Ponsonby ...	1100 0 0	1050 0 0	
St. Benedict's ...	5528 0 0	4910 0 0	
Parnell ...	187 4 0	150 18 6	
Onehunga ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Otahuhu ...	50 0 0	0 0 0	
Panmure ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Pukekohe ...	152 14 0	152 14 0	
Hamilton ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Kihikihi ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	

Indebtedness as from Jan. 1, 1901.		Jan. 1, 1901, these debts reduced to	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Te Aroha ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Paeroa ...	112 5 10	39 15 8	
Thames ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Coromandel ...	120 0 0	98 12 6	
Tauranga ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Opotiki ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Gisborne ...	158 12 0	0 0 0	
Puhoi ...	0 0 0	0 0 0	
Whangarei ...	100 0 0	50 0 0	
	<u>£8538 15 10</u>	<u>£7452 0 8</u>	

Further debts were contracted in the following districts by improvements and additions, or by purchase of property, but in many cases these debts have been reduced. To the best of our knowledge they are as follows:—

	Debt.		Reduction.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Cathedral, property ...	480	0 0	0	0 0
St. Benedict's, fence ...	113	12 0	113	12 0
Onehunga ...	18	4 0	18	4 0
Otahuhu, improvements ...	40	0 0	40	0 0
Panmure and Howick ...	93	0 1	60	17 2
Kihikihi ...	203	15 1	203	15 1
Gisborne ...	949	1 8	275	4 6
Puhoi ...	249	12 3	150	0 0
Helensville ...	230	0 0	212	0 0
	<u>£2377</u>	<u>5 1</u>	<u>£1073</u>	<u>12 9</u>

Various sums of money are in hand for contemplated improvements at Onehunga, and at Otahuhu and Kihikihi districts.

We have much pleasure in placing on record the charitable offerings, left in favor of our schools and institutions by the late Mr. C. Clarke, Mr. Arrowsmith, and Miss Brennan. May these benefactors already have received an everlasting reward.

We hope during the year to increase our staff of priests, and carry on the spiritual work of the diocese more effectively. We trust that the parishioners will show their appreciation of their services by a becoming support.

During the year the Sacrament of Confirmation has been administered to 460 candidates.

As his Holiness has graciously extended the time of jubilee of the Holy Year till the end of June, we have arranged with the Passionist and Dominican Fathers to give a series of missions throughout the diocese. These will assuredly bring many blessings upon us. May God inspire us with heroic zeal to fulfil His law, and with unbounded charity towards our neighbor.

Given from our residence at Ponsonby, on the 10th day of February, and appointed to be read in all the churches and chapels of the diocese on Quinquagesima Sunday, February 17th, 1901.

✠ GEO. M. LENIHAN,
Bishop of Auckland.