

## THE SISTERS OF NAZARETH.

(From our Christchurch correspondent.)

As a community of Sisters of Nazareth are expected in Christchurch within the next few weeks for the purpose of establishing a home for the aged, infirm, and incurable a few particulars regarding the Order may be of interest to readers of the 'Tablet.' The whole service of the house is fulfilled by these educated ladies—the cooking, the washing and ironing, the making and mending, the personal care of the inmates, nursing the sick, and the tending of the frequent deathbeds. A pamphlet written some years ago by the Very Rev. Dr. J. B. McManamy gives eloquent testimony of the noble work accomplished by the Sisters of Nazareth wherever they are located, with especial reference to his own city of Ballarat.

It was on April 10, 1851, that Cardinal Wiseman, acting with Victorine Larmenier (in religion Mother Basil), realising the urgent necessity and the wide field for the kind of work to be carried on by them on behalf of the poor, founded the Order of the Sisters of Nazareth. It is thus one of the youngest of the Sisterhoods in the Church; yet in a sense it is old enough, for it is another branch of the great Augustinian family. Of Cardinal Wiseman there is no need to speak here, for his great work stands out prominently, and his life is written in golden letters in the modern Catholic history of England. Suffice to say that the founding of the Order of the Sisters of Nazareth will ever remain a memorial of his zeal and foresight. The chief object of the Order is to provide a home for the aged and infantine destitute poor. Like all great undertakings, it had a small beginning, and untold difficulties in its establishment and development were encountered and surmounted. A little over fifty years have gone by since then, but like the grain of mustard seed the Order of Nazareth has grown into a mighty tree and has spread its branches over the United Kingdom, and even South Africa. Beginning in 1851 at Hammersmith, London, with three Sisters it now has upwards of 30 houses and, according to a late estimate, 500 Sisters.

In 1888 the late Bishop of Ballarat, on the occasion of his visit ad limina, applied to the Mother-General at Hammersmith for a community of the Nazareth Nuns for Australia. The result was that six of the Sisters accompanied the Bishop on his return, and on November 10 of that year Nazareth House, Ballarat, was founded. This is the number of Sisters we are promised to found a branch of the Order in Christchurch. With reference to the foundation in Ballarat, a valuable property had already been purchased by the Bishop at a cost of £3300, and this he presented to the Sisters on their arrival. The accommodation was, however, too limited for the number of applicants, and the erection of a larger building was at once begun, and completed in 1891. Applications were numerous, and the house was soon filled. A new wing was therefore added in 1894, at a cost of £4000, to the defraying of which a generous bequest by the late Mr Martin Loughlin of £2500 helped considerably. Altogether Nazareth House, Ballarat, has cost some £16,000, and since its foundation has sheltered considerably over 200 aged people and 300 children. According to an estimate of some years ago there were then 280 inmates cared for by a community of 16 Sisters, all from the mother house, London. Besides the branch house of the Order at Ballarat there are houses in England at Cardiff, Southend, Oxford, Northampton, Southsea, Middlesbrough, Cheltenham, Lenton, Box Hill, Isleworth, Great Crosby, and Lancaster; in Scotland at Aberdeen, Kilmarnock, and Glasgow; in Ireland at Ballyvafeigh and Derry; in South Africa at Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, Capetown, Johannesburg, and Durban.

The noble work of the Sisters during the late war in South Africa is of such recent history that reference thereto is needless, suffice to say that their heroic self-sacrifice and devoted attention to the wounded, dying, and disease-stricken combatants, Briton and Boer alike, received grateful recognition from generals in the field as well as from those in the highest positions at Home. Royalty included. These trying times, however, caused not only severe pecuniary loss, but also entailed a considerable thinning out in their ranks by death, and a temporary, although serious, interference with their ordinary pursuits. So great, indeed, have been the demands on the mother-house for replenishing the depleted communities that the much desired foundation in Christchurch has been so long delayed.

The property acquired by his Lordship the Bishop for the Nazareth House in Christchurch is a large residence comprising probably 14 rooms, and situated at the corner of Fitzgerald Avenue and Ferry Road, within five minutes' walk of the Cathedral. The build-

ing stands on spacious grounds well laid out and cultivated, and recently put in thorough order. The new electric tram system runs along the two street frontages. The Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company's 'Ionic,' by which vessel the Sisters are coming to New Zealand, is expected to arrive at the end of the present month or early in the New Year, by which time it is hoped everything will be in order for the Sisters to take immediate possession of their new home.

## Funeral of the Late Mrs. Holley, Leeston.

(From our Christchurch correspondent.)

Mrs. Mary Holley, wife of Mr. William Holley, of Leeston, passed away at Wellington at the age of 73 years. The deceased lady, who was on a visit to her daughter, Mrs. O. McManaway, left home in her usual state of health. With characteristic fervor she completed the devotions of the jubilee on last Saturday week, and shortly afterwards being overtaken with illness she died on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The remains were brought home for interment, and at Leeston on Monday, December 12, a solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Father Holley, S.M. His Lordship Bishop Grimes presided, and at the conclusion of the Mass addressed the very large congregation. Nine years ago, said his Lordship, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, a very interesting ceremony took place in the Pro-Cathedral—the ordination of him had just offered up the adorable Sacrifice of the Mass. That he (the Bishop) felt sure was a happy day for the family, particularly for the mother, as she made the sacrifice of her son to the service of the altar. By a singular coincidence she, for whom they had assembled to mourn, had died on the very anniversary of that great day. It must indeed be a source of great comfort to the bereaved family to have one of the number privileged to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the eternal repose of the soul of his dear departed mother. Continuing, his Lordship said that from the first time he had known the Holley family he had learned to esteem the noble character and great gentleness of the deceased. She was a truly model mother, who had done much to train up her children in a truly Christian manner. But mindful of her manifold virtues, they must always remember the great holiness which God requires in us. They had assembled, Bishop, priests, and people, to join their fervent prayers with those of the priest at the altar in offering up supplication on her behalf. His Lordship, attended by the Rev. Fathers Marnane and Goggan, gave the Absolution. The cantors of the Mass were the Rev. Fathers Richards and O'Connell. Immediately after the conclusion of the ceremonies the funeral cortege, composed of people from all parts of the district, proceeded to the Catholic cemetery, the Dead March from 'Saul' being played by the church organist as the body was borne from the sacred edifice. The Rev. Father Holley, assisted by the visiting clergy, officiated at the graveside. The funeral procession was extremely lengthy, among the mourners being many from this city. Messages of condolence were received by the family from far and wide, especially from members of the clergy, who found it impossible to be present.—R.I.P.

Some time ago Messrs. Hallenstein Bros., of the New Zealand Clothing Factory, got up a children's rhyming competition, the subject being the well-known 'H.B.' brand. Several thousand children competed, and out of the rhymes sent in the firm selected a number and published them in booklet form. If the samples of rhyme in the little book are the genuine work of the writers it is evident that verse making will in time become a very promising industry...

The result of the outbreak of disease amongst potatoes in the Auckland district is the issue of a Gazette Supplement declaring early blight (*Alternaria solani*) and potato rot, or Irish potato blight (*Phytophthora infestans*), to be diseases within the meaning of the Orchard and Garden Pests Act. This Act provides that the Governor may from time to time, by Order-in-Council gazetted, prohibit the bringing into any specified portion of New Zealand from any other portion of New Zealand of any specified plant, etc., which in his opinion is diseased, or is likely to spread disease. The act is a very comprehensive one, and if its regulations are enforced now that the diseases mentioned have been gazetted into the Act, the shipment of Auckland potatoes may be entirely suppressed for a time.