

Intercolonial

Rev. Brother Jerome, of the Patrician Brothers, Holy Cross, Ryde, is the oldest Brother of the Order. He has been half a century a Patrician Brother, and is 79 years of age.

The Mother Rectress of the Catholic Ladies' College, East Melbourne, received several presentations on the occasion of her silver jubilee. Amongst the speakers were Senator St. Ledger and Mr. B. Hoare.

It will be news to many of our readers (says the *Sydney Freeman's Journal*) to be told that Mr. Walter Callan (private secretary to our Governor-General) is a son of the late Mr. Philip Callan, M.P. for Louth—a name well remembered in Irish politics.

The Patrician Brothers decided to celebrate the centenary of the foundation of their Order by the erection of additions to their scholastic establishment, Holy Cross College, Ryde, which were blessed and opened on Sunday, November 29, by his Eminence Cardinal Moran.

According to the report which was presented at the first annual meeting of the Sydney Catholic Mission to Seamen the following good work was accomplished during the year:—Upwards of 1350 ships had been visited, having on board 6530 Catholic sailors; over 3000 Catholic sailors had been interviewed; and 974 parcels of literature had been left on board ships.

His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne was received at the Vatican by the Holy Father during the last week in November. His Holiness expressed gratitude for the sum of £2100 received as Peter's Pence from the clergy and faithful in Melbourne. He also thanked Right Rev. Dr. Higgins, Bishop of Ballarat, for the sum of £1000, and Most Rev. Dr. Delany, Archbishop of Hobart, for a generous offering.

Very Rev. Athanasius Ryan, C.P., who at the Provincial Chapter of the Passionists, held in London last July, was appointed as Pro-Provincial in Australia, arrived at Port Adelaide recently (says the *Adelaide Southern Cross*). Father Ryan was born in the parish of Leighlin Bridge, County Carlow, Ireland. He commenced his studies for the priesthood in the famous monastery of Mount Melleray, before entering the Passionist Order. Previous to his present appointment he occupied the position of Rector in the Passionists' Retreat, Birmingham, England. Father Ryan was accompanied by Father Casimir Maguire, a native of Sydney, who entered the novitiate of the Order in Worcestershire eight years ago.

All over the Commonwealth and New Zealand (says the *Catholic Press*) the Christian Brothers have been working for forty years. There are 200 of them educating 8000 pupils in 45 distinct establishments, and they are notably successful. Their college in Perth produced two Rhodes scholars, while Nudgee, Queensland, produced another. Nor is there any paucity of applications from young men for admission to the Order. In truth, more applied than could be taken in—at least, the accommodation problem was paramount until a short time back. Mount Sion, at Lewisham, the central house for Australasia, was strained to shelter a limited number of novices, so a new novitiate and training college became an imperative necessity. It was opened at Strathfield on December 1 by his Eminence the Cardinal. The property, with house thereon, cost £4728, but a new wing had to be added, and alterations made, so that when everything is paid £12,500 will have been spent.

There was a genuine Catholic and triumphant ring about the speeches delivered at the annual meeting of the Australian Catholic Truth Society held in the Cathedral Hall on November 28, under the presidency of the Very Rev. Dean Phelan, V.G. (says the *Advocate*). Speaker after speaker rose in his place and eulogised the great work being done for the faith by this admirable organisation. Summarised, the speeches indicated the leading planks in its platform: 1. To spread the light amongst non-Catholics and Protestants. 2. To confirm Catholics in their belief. We use the terms 'non-Catholic' and 'Protestant' because, though they are sometimes employed to designate those outside the Church, they are not identical. By non-Catholics are meant those not belonging to any particular religion, and who have open minds; Protestants include the members of the various religious denominations.

'Catholic Marriages.' The book of the hour. Single copies, 1s posted; 12 copies and over, 8d each, purchaser to pay carriage. Apply Manager, 'Tablet,' Dunedin.

Science Siftings

BY 'VOLT'

Coldness of Ice.

It seems strange to think that some ice is colder than other ice. The term 'ice cold' always seems to signify a definite temperature. All water under similar conditions freezes at a certain definite temperature. But when the thermometer falls below that it continues to affect the ice, making it harder and colder. The test has been made by placing a piece of ice from the north and a piece of ice formed in the south near a stove together. The former took much longer to melt than the latter.

Carbon the Main Constituent of Plant and Animal.

The all-pervading element of life is carbon. It is the element in nature on which the life of every living thing, whether plant or animal, depends. The work we do, indeed, every movement we make, is the result of energy stored up in the organism, the energy being proportionate to the amount of carbon consumed. In its free state, carbon forms charcoal, coke, black lead, and diamond. In its combined state it is a necessary part of the flesh, blood, bone, and muscle. Carbon is the main constituent of plants, its percentage in wood exceeding that of the other elements of which wood is built; and it is also the constant component of the atmosphere, where it exists as carbonic acid gas. There is practically no limit to its sway. It is found in the stars and in almost every sample of water. The earth's crust contains vast quantities of it in chalk, limestone, and marble. Such diverse substances as explosives, dyes, fuel, foods, liquors, clothes, drugs, and printer's ink; the evil smells that arise from putrefaction and the odors of the most fragrant perfumes are all compounds of carbon, the element of life. The compounds of carbon number at least 60,000, the cause of their multiplicity being found in a peculiar property of carbon itself. Its atom is a wanderer. While other atoms usually are unwilling to combine even with those of their own kind, the carbon atom journeys far afield, uniting not only with itself, but other elements in endless different proportions.

Some Queer Trees.

The breadfruit tree of Ceylon is very remarkable. Its fruit is baked and eaten as we eat bread, and is equally good and nutritious. In Barbatu, South America, is a tree which, by piercing the trunk, produces milk, with which the inhabitants feed their children. In the interior of Africa is a tree which produces excellent butter. It resembles the American oak, and its fruit from which the butter is prepared, is not unlike the olive. Park, the great traveller, declared that the butter surpassed any made in England from cow's milk. At Sierra Leone is the cream fruit tree, the fruit of which is quite agreeable in taste. At Table Bay, near the Cape of Good Hope, is a small tree the berries of which make excellent candles. It is also found in the Azores. The vegetable tallow tree also grows in Sumatra, in Algeria, and in China. In the island of Chusan large quantities of oil and tallow are extracted from its fruit, which is gathered in November or December, when the tree has lost all its leaves. The bark of a tree in China produces a beautiful soap. Trees of the sapindus or soap berry order also grow in the north of Africa. They are amazingly prolific, and their fruit contains about 38 per cent. of saponin.

An Island in the Air.

Three miles south of the Mesa Encantada, in Mexico, is a splendid specimen of fantastic erosion—an 'island' in the air, a rock with overhanging sides nearly 400 feet high, 70 acres in area on the fairly level top, indented with countless great bays, notched with dizzy chasms. The greater part of the island overhangs the sea like a huge mushroom, and on the top stands a town which for artistic charm, ethnological interest, and romantic history has no peer. This little town of Ancoma is one of the most perfect types of the prehistoric pueblo architecture. Most of the houses remain of the type invented when every house must be a fort. One climbed a ladder to his first floor and pulled up the ladder at night, living on the second and third floors and using the ground floor as a cellar. Against enemies armed only with bows and arrows this was a fair defence. Comfort had to be sacrificed to safety. Nothing except the eagle sought such inaccessible eyries as these victims of their own civilisation. Because they were farmers instead of freebooters, because they had homes instead of being vagrants they were easy to find, and they were the prey of a hundred nomad tribes. With inconceivable labor this island town in the air was built and fortified. It was reached only by a mere trail of toe holes up the stem of the 'mushroom.' The age of the island is not known, except that it was already old in 1540, when the first explorer visited it and wrote an account of its wonders.