

COMMONWEALTH NOTES

NEW SOUTH WALES.

A pamphlet has just been issued (says the *Catholic Press*) which deserves public attention. It is signed by the principals of the King's School, Sydney Grammar School, Newington College, St. Ignatius' College, St. Joseph's College, Sydney Church of England Grammar School, and the Scots' College. "It may appear to some," says this pamphlet, "that education is the business of the State, and that there is no call for the intervention of any other agency. In reply to this, we have to say, first, that our schools existed before the Government undertook the work, and that it is doubtful whether it would have been undertaken without that example; secondly, that certain bodies represented by us feel a conscientious compulsion to do their share on religious grounds; thirdly, that the character of our schools offers a type of education necessary in Australia, and that the public has recognised the value of our work by entrusting to us the children in such large numbers; and fourthly, that, if our schools were closed to-morrow, a huge burden would immediately be thrown upon the State for the acquiring and maintenance of our schools to accommodate the boys whom we are teaching."

A fire broke out at St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, on Christmas afternoon. It was confined to a portion of the building just below the roof. Fire Brigade Headquarters received the call at 1.45 p.m., and engines were despatched from there, Darlinghurst, and Circular Quay. Chief Officer Sparkes controlled operations. The fire, though of a minor nature, proved stubborn, as its position necessitated the fight being carried on from the Cathedral tower and the removal of a number of the roofing slates. Chemical extinguishers proved most effective.

The Right Rev. Louis Raucaz, S.M., Bishop of Thelepte and Vicar-Apostolic of the South Solomons Islands, was consecrated at Villa Maria Church, Hunter's Hill, on Monday, the 27th ult. The ceremony commenced at 9 a.m., in the presence of a large congregation. His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate was the consecrating prelate. He was assisted by the Right Rev. Dr. C. M. Chanrion, S.M. (Vicar-Apostolic of New Caledonia), Right Rev. Dr. M. O'Farrell (Bishop of Bathurst), and Right Rev. Monsignor Ormond (Private Secretary to the Delegation). His Grace the Archbishop of Sydney occupied a special throne in the sanctuary, and was attended by Rev. Fathers P. Piquet, S.M., and V. Thierry, S.M. Among the clergy present were Very Rev. Father J. B. Chevrouil, S.M. (Provincial of the Marist Fathers), Rev. Fathers F. Laurent, S.M., E. Courtais, S.M., J. Rausche, S.M., Halbwache, S.M., J. L. Rigard, S.M., A. Carsenac, S.M., and J. Hualt, S.M. Right Rev. Dr. L. Raucaz was born in Savoy, France, and is now 41 years of age. He was ordained priest in 1903 at the Marist Scholasticate, Montbel, France, and came to the South Sea Missions at the end of the same year. He has been working since then in the Solomons Group. Bishop Raucaz succeeds Right Rev. Dr. E. Bertreux, S.M., who died on January 4, 1919. The diocese embraces a number of islands, with a population of some 6000 Catholics in seven stations, in which, in addition to the churches, there are five conventual institutions in charge of the Sisters of the Third Order of Mary. Right Rev. Dr. C. M. Chanrion, who came for the consecration, arrived in Sydney on Sunday week by the St. Joseph, and is staying at Villa Maria.

VICTORIA.

In the list of institutions to which the Victorian Treasurer has given a grant is St. Vincent's Hospital, £4500. From the half-yearly distribution of the Felton bequest the boys' orphanages and girls' orphanages, South Melbourne, receive £20 each, Little Sisters of the Poor, £15; St. Vincent's Hospital, £100; St. Vincent de Paul Society, £15.

The Very Rev. Father J. Barry, Adm., despatched the following cable to his Grace Archbishop Mannix

on behalf of the clergy and laity: "Archbishop Mannix, Nazareth House, Hammersmith.—Clergy and laity of Melbourne send your Grace heartfelt Christmas and New Year greetings.—Father Barry." The following cable, in reply, was received from his Grace by the Very Rev. John Barry, Adm., on December 20:—"Ireland's thanks and mine for Irish Convention's inspiring message, also for greetings from priests and people. Christmas blessings upon you all.—Archbishop Mannix."

In January, 1914, a fund, now amounting to £625, was opened in Melbourne for the purpose of sending a delegate to the opening of the Irish Parliament, which was expected to follow the passing of the Home Rule Act of that year. The late Dr. N. M. O'Donnell, who was chairman of the Home Rule movement for the previous 21 years, was chosen as such delegate. The fund was largely a personal tribute to his services in the Home Rule cause. Now that the present dual Parliament measure automatically repeals the 1914 Act, and that there is little prospect of a Parliament being granted to Ireland which would satisfy four-fifths of its people, the two surviving trustees of the fund are anxious to terminate their responsibility. The trustees suggest that the fund should be devoted to the endowment of a Dr. N. M. O'Donnell Scholarship at Newman College, as an incentive to the study of Irish history, or preferably the Gaelic language, of which Dr. O'Donnell was the best Australian authority.

WEST AUSTRALIA.

The Mother Superior of the Little Sisters of the Poor desires to thank all those kind friends who have helped the Sisters in providing for the dear old people who are under their care. Nearly 40 persons (says the *W.A. Record*) are already in the Home. They are full of thankfulness to the many who through the Sisters are helping to make the closing days of life as happy as possible. The capacity of the Home is taxed to its utmost, and the Sisters express sorrow at having to refuse to take many who have applied for admission. Two extra Sisters were to arrive about Christmas time, and it is their wish that before long the zealous workers for God's aged poor will see the building of their permanent Home begun on the magnificent site overlooking Monger's Lake.

Rangiora

(From our own correspondent.)

January 10.

The great Feast of Christmas was observed with due solemnity in every church in the parish. Not only in Rangiora, but also at Oxford, Summerhill, Lobburn, and Kaiapoi there was a genuine ring of gladness. It was truly edifying to see the great numbers approach the Holy Table in the various churches.

Messrs. James O'Connor and Martin Walsh, recent arrivals "all the road from Galway," are full of hopes for Ireland's future. We trust that the strong pulse of faith and love of "Dark Rosaleen" which they inherit will in no way diminish in a foreign land. The former had a thrilling experience one evening last week, when he lost his way in the Ngapara woods. His presence of mind helped him to become a pathfinder. Some time afterwards he discovered the home-stead of Mr. J. Kennedy, who gladly rendered every assistance, motoring Mr. O'Connor to his destination.

Misses Josephine Kennedy and Margaret Fitzsimmons are thoroughly enjoying their holiday in the midst of rural sights and sounds and little trips to the silvery sea.

The choir, still improving, is worthy of the best traditions of Rangiora. On this occasion one may be permitted to congratulate those who are in charge of it on the magnificent rendering of rather difficult Masses during the Christmas festivities.

The picnic on Boxing Day was somewhat spoiled by the heavy rain. The Waikuku beach was forsaken at an early hour in the afternoon, and an enjoyable evening was spent in the Rangiora *Aula Maxima*. Very many thanks are due to Mr. George Brady, who made every sacrifice in the interests of the holiday seekers.