

## Intercolonial

The Redemptorist Fathers have received a cablegram announcing the death of the Rev. Father Marron, a member of their congregation, which took place at the Monastery, Limerick, at the early age of 33.

A memorial pulpit to the late Rev. T. Cahill, S.J., has been unveiled in St. Ignatius' Church, Richmond. The rev. gentleman had attained his 81st year, for 33 of which he labored in the Order of which he was a distinguished member.

The death of Mrs. Margaret Ryan, mother of Mr. J. Tigh Ryan (editor of the *Catholic Press*), and of Sister Mary Aquinas, of St. Joseph's Convent, Rozelle, took place at her residence, Richmond Villa, Homebush road, Strathfield, on August 10, at the age of 70 years.

Mr. Andrew Orr, who died at Ballarat recently at 87, was one of the oldest journalists in Australia. Born at Coleraine, Ireland, he corresponded for *The Nation* when it was edited by Charles Gavan Duffy. He arrived in Ballarat in 1857, and worked as a digger for some years. Then he entered journalism, and published a book of his verse.

At a recent meeting of the executive committee of St. Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, dissatisfaction was expressed at the amount (£25) granted to the institution by the City Council when allocating the charitable vote. If the Melbourne Hospital receives £270, the St. Vincent's Hospital, it was contended, should receive about one-third of this amount. It was pointed out that during the past year 1770 in-patients and 12,500 out-patients received treatment. The meeting decided to make application to the City Council for an increased grant.

Right Rev. Mgr. O'Haran states that Cardinal Moran has been invited by the Archbishop of Westminster to attend the Eucharistic Congress, which is to be held in Westminster from September 13 to 19. His Eminence would have been pleased to have been able to accede to that request, but his home duties in Australia have rendered a visit to Europe impossible this year. Very probably Sydney will be represented at the congress by Archbishop Kelly, Coadjutor of Sydney, who is in Europe at the present time.

The Very Rev. Father E. Bertreux, S.M., Prefect-Apostolic of the Solomon Islands, has returned to Sydney from France. The Very Rev. Father Bertreux has labored for over thirty years in missionary work in the islands, and for a considerable time he has suffered very much from cataract of the eyes. He visited Nantes and underwent five operations at the hands of an eminent specialist, with the result that his sight is now thoroughly recovered. It might be mentioned that the operations were conducted without anæsthetic.

Speaking at the opening of a new presbytery at Botany a few Sundays ago, his Eminence Cardinal Moran touched upon the visit of the American fleet to Australia and the absolute necessity of Australia profiting by the lessons the visit furnished. He said that that day the American fleet had touched on the shores of Australasia, and their thoughts would go back to the great American Republic beyond the Pacific, and they would ask what were the practical lessons of the visit of the American fleet to their shores. When the American nation declared its independence in the year 1776 all the home countries declared that it was a mushroom State; that was the word used in the newspapers of England, but now, after a century and a quarter, the United States had grown into a first-rate Power—one of the greatest Powers of the world, not only controlling the American continent, but its influence had spread to the old world, and had marked an interest in political matters which divided the great States of Europe and Asia. Of themselves in Australia it had been said that it augured well for their security when a great fleet had come across the Pacific as friends and brothers and ready to defend the interests of Australia if such defence were needed. It was a great matter to be able to refer to those friends beyond the Pacific, but they must bear in mind that if enemies were to assail Australia those enemies were much nearer than the fleet beyond the Pacific, and they could inflict a terrible blow before the fleet beyond the Pacific would be within reach. The one great practical lesson given by the visit of the American fleet was the necessity of having an Australian fleet, because a fleet of their own could alone protect and guard their shores. It would be well to bear that in mind.

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## Science Siftings

BY VOLT

What the Banana Yields.

The banana furnishes us with ink, with handkerchiefs, with wax, with blacking, with oil, with flour, with window cord, with brushes.' The speaker, a banana planter from Jamaica, paused and smiled. 'You don't believe me, do you?' he said. 'Yet truly the banana tree is a wonderful thing. The juice being rich in tannin, furnishes a good indelible ink and a good shoe polish. The stems yield a fine quality of hemp, and from this hemp there are made lace handkerchiefs, cords and ropes of all kinds, mats and brushes. The oil is used in gilding. Of banana flour, the flour ground from the dried fruit, there is no use speaking—you are too familiar with it.'

Miles and Miles.

'Will we never drop miles for kilometres?' said a mathematician. 'Miles are very confusing. A kilometre the world over is a kilometre, but a mile in America is 1700 yards, while in Sweden it is 11,703 yards, and in China it is 629 yards. The Bohemians go in for a long mile. So do the Danes, the Hungarians, the Poles, the Swiss. If you walk three miles a day among those people you have done pretty well; you have covered about fifteen of your own miles. There are, in fact, thirty-seven kinds of miles. It would take eighteen of the shortest to equal one of the longest. The rest vary in size between those two extremes. Doesn't the world, then, need one measure, the kilo, that it may use without confusion? Consider: A train that goes 168 miles an hour in China would go only nine miles an hour in Sweden.'

Manufactured Gems.

Chemists have long tried to manufacture precious stones in their laboratories, but have only succeeded in producing one—the ruby—on a commercially paying basis. Hydrofluoric acid has no effect on the new sapphires. The imitation, however, has a specific gravity considerably lower than that of the real sapphire and is softer than it. Another difference is that while the natural stone refracts different colors brilliantly from different surfaces, the imitations do this only slightly, or not at all. Sapphires and rubies are the same in their constituents except as to coloring. Cobalt gives the red color to the artificial ruby, and the experimenters have been trying to get blue stones by using chrome. But the process which produced rubies has failed to yield sapphires. The foreign manufacturers have refused to say how the new imitations are made.

Animal Language.

A sound or gesture made by an animal under any mental or emotional impression and calling out a similar one in another animal is an element of language. When the rabbit quickly beats the ground, its fellow rabbits know that there is danger somewhere, and they take action accordingly. That is rabbit language. When the hunter imitates the rabbit and thus conveys the same ideas, he is 'speaking' the rabbit language for the time being. Many animals use signs, which, of course, are understood through the eyes. The ants converse by touching antennae and feet. Many insects rub the elytra. This is animal language in its simplest form. It expresses but few ideas. But there are animals which are capable of modulating their 'voices.' Even the common rabbits, which seem to be mute, are constantly making sounds, which a little observation will soon discover to be ever changing in volume, modulation, etc. Much of this method of communication changes when the animal is brought into civilisation from the wild state. The wild dog, for instance, barks very little when in freedom. How the household dog barks and is able to express himself is well known.

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