

## Intercolonial

His Grace Archbishop Kelly is expected to reach Sydney from Europe on January 2.

The real and personal estate of the late Mr. David Syme in Victoria has been certified for duty by the officer for probate at the sum of £929,481 6s 4d.

The Rev. Brother Brown, of St. Patrick's College, Ballarat, passed away on October 20, after a short illness. The deceased was a native of County Roscommon.

It is proposed to erect a memorial to the late Rev. Father Guilfoyle, Adm. St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat. What form it will take has not yet been decided on.

Mr. Thomas Loughlin, of Warrenheip, who built the new Church of St. John, in Kilkenny, Ireland, has been appointed one of the Pope's Chamberlains, in addition to being created a Knight of St. Gregory.

The population of the Commonwealth States is as follows:—New South Wales, 1,550,489; Victoria, 1,238,931; Queensland, 538,918; South Australia, 385,672; Western Australia, 262,309; Tasmania, 179,356; Commonwealth total, 4,155,673.

The Australian Medical Congress placed on record its deep sense of sorrow at the death of the late Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, one of the past presidents, and its recognition of the great services rendered by the deceased gentleman to the public and the profession. The resolution was moved by Professor Allen, of Melbourne University, and the seconder was Dr. John Thomson, of Brisbane, who remarked that Sir Thomas Fitzgerald's was a name to conjure with. He was the chief justice of the high court of surgery of Australia—in fact, was the high court himself.

After an absence of nearly six months (says the *Freeman's Journal*), his Lordship Dr. Olier, Bishop of Tonga, will leave Sydney early next month to return to his arduous missionary duties in the Islands. Bishop Olier's trip to Sydney was compulsory in order that he might recruit his shattered health, which had been undermined by the trials and privations endured by him in his labors amongst the islanders. He was treated at St. Vincent's Hospital on his arrival in Sydney, and has gradually recovered his usual health during his rest at Villa Maria, Hunter's Hill. His life record in the work of Christianising the savages extends over a period of twenty-eight years.

The Church has in every age held out a helping hand to science and art (says the *Melbourne Advocate*), and the great masters in painting, sculpture, and music were encouraged by her moral and material support. The presence of many men eminent in the medical and surgical professions at the Metropolitan Cathedral last Sunday recalled the fostering care of the Church in promoting research for the better treatment and the prevention of disease. Not a few of her sons have climbed to the topmost rung of the ladder in this noble art, and have given freely of their knowledge to the work of aiding sick and suffering humanity. The occasional sermon was delivered before the Medical Congressmen by the Very Rev. James O'Dwyer, S.J., who dealt in a masterly way with the relation of the Catholic Church to medical science.

Sunday, October 18, was a golden day in Temora, when the beautiful Sacred Heart Church, one of the finest country Catholic churches in Australia, was blessed and opened (says the *Catholic Press*). The building is truly striking in all its details, and it is a monument to the untiring energy and zeal of Father Fallon, the popular parish priest, who, backed up by the generosity of devoted parishioners, was enabled to carry out a great work in a remarkably short space of time. The building began on March 2, 1907, so it will be seen that no time was lost, although nearly £5000 has been expended. The ceremony was performed by the Right Rev. Dr. Gallagher, Bishop of Goulburn, assisted by the Right Rev. Dr. O'Connor, Bishop of Armidale. The occasional sermon was preached by the Very Rev. Dean Hegarty. The subscriptions to the building fund received during the day amounted to over £1000.

During the present election campaign there may be a great diversity of opinion as to the merits of candidates, but all are agreed that Hondai-Lanka tea should be elected to the highest post of honor in the household....

## Science Siftings

BY VOLT

Bird-Machines.

If, as is reported, M. Marcel Deprez, a French engineer, has discovered a method by which men can fly like birds, he has been more fortunate than his predecessors in the same field of invention. As long ago as 1872 M. Clement Ader, of Paris, spent many years and more than £25,000 in designing an artificial bird for the purpose of human flight. The bird was 54ft across, and was driven by a motor propelling-screw; but, although it is said to have flown a distance of 300 yards, nothing practical seems to have come of it. Herr Lillenthal sacrificed his life in similar experiments with a flying machine made by stretching linen over a scientifically curved wooden frame. Running down the slope of a hill against the wind, with the apparatus held in position by his arms, he was able to sail over a distance of a few hundred yards; but in his last flight in August, 1896, he fell to the ground after covering 200 yards, and fractured his spine. Messrs. E. P. Frost, R. F. Moore, and many others have experimented with 'bird-machines,' but all with unsatisfactory results.

The Bamboo.

The word bamboo suggests to most people a faithful fishing rod or a dainty fan. To the Japanese and Chinese, who are the most practical agriculturists in the world, it is as indispensable as the white pine to the American farmer. They are not only dependent upon it for much of their building material, but make their ropes, mats, kitchen utensils, and innumerable other articles out of it. There are some varieties of the bamboo plant, from the species which is woven into mats to the tall bamboo tree which the Chinaman uses for the mast of his large boat. One variety is cultivated as a vegetable and the young shoots eaten like asparagus, or they may be salted, pickled, or preserved. The rapidity of growth of the bamboo is perhaps its most wonderful characteristic. There are actual records of a bamboo growing three feet in a single day, or at the rate of one and a half inches an hour. Varieties of bamboo are found everywhere in Japan, even where there are heavy falls of snow in winter. It is a popular misconception that bamboos grow only in the tropics. Japan is a land of bamboos, and yet where these plants grow it is not so warm in winter as it is in California.

The Cactus.

The cactus is the strangest and most fascinating plant in the world. Some specimens are no larger than a thimble, while others often attain a height of 60ft., and weigh several tons. Scientists state these larger plants are as much as 2000 years old. The 'Water barrel of the desert' is the name given to the giant cactus of America, for the plant contains a fluid which is a fair substitute for water. Paper of an excellent quality is made from another variety of cactus—the yucca—while the agave species, largely grown in Mexico, supplies the Mexican with his national drink. This latter plant may be likened to a good-sized bush made up of a series of flat armored blades radiating from a central bulb. The 'honey water' is found in the innermost leaves, which roll themselves into a conical shape. A Mexican extracts the liquid by sucking it into a vessel which much resembles a pumpkin. After he has drawn as much of the fluid as possible into his pumpkin he empties it into the pigskins on the donkey's back and conveys it to the plantation brewery, where it is placed in tanks to ferment. After fermentation has taken place it is ready for sale, and is known throughout Mexico as Pulque. To the stranger this is anything but an appetising beverage; it looks very much like dirty soapy water, and its smell is most offensive.

The annual, *Cerise and Blue*, issued by the Old Boys of St. Joseph's College, Hunter's Hill, Sydney, has evidently come to stay, as the present issue, which is the third, shows all the signs of robust vitality and promise of length of years. The editors say as regards the prospects of the magazine: 'In view of the fates of other more ambitious magazines, it is with considerable sense of satisfaction that we not only still feel the solid ground beneath our feet, but also see prospects of attaining to a very respectable old age.' If the excellence of the present issue is to be taken as a standard of future ones, we have no doubt but that *Cerise and Blue* will have a green old age.

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