

INTERCOLONIAL.

The new Victorian Parliament contains 13 Catholic members out of a total of 95.

It is said that two-thirds of the members returned to the new Victorian Parliament have declared against Bible lessons in the State schools.

The Rev. Father Duff, so well known on the fields in the early days of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, and now attached to the Diocese of Perth, has written an original dramatic oratorio, 'The Two Worlds,' which will be produced at the Perth Theatre Royal.

The Victorian Government was defeated last week on a no-confidence motion tabled by Sir G. Turner, which was carried by 51 votes to 42. Mr. McLean handed to the Lieutenant-Governor the resignation of himself and his colleagues, and Sir G. Turner has formed a Ministry.

In the New South Wales Assembly on Wednesday the Old Age Pensions Bill was read a second time on the voices. Mr. Ashton said it was stated by leading philanthropists in New Zealand that one of the principal effects of the scheme was to enrich the publicans. In committee, Sir W. J. Lyne promised to insert a clause providing for relief between the ages of 60 and 65 years, if it was proved that the person was unable to earn a living.

The death of the Rev. Father D. A. Harnett, pastor of Cooma, which occurred on Friday, November 2, came as a great shock to his many friends in New South Wales. The deceased priest was only 42 years of age and was brother of the Rev. T. Harnett, of Bega. He was born in County Kerry, Ireland, in 1858, ordained priest in All Hallows' College in 1882, and arrived in Sydney the same year. In Mittagong, Bowral, Moss Vale, and Menangle he left enduring monuments of his zeal and devotion to his duty in the shape of churches, and at Moss Vale he built a comfortable and commodious presbytery. From all those parishes he carried away on his departure from them substantial tokens of the esteem and respect in which he was held amongst his people. The ministers of all denominations in Cooma called at the presbytery and tendered to Father T. Harnett, parish priest, Bega, their sincere sympathy. Mr. Royle and Mr. Mouatt, of the Railway Department, who knew Father Harnett for years, offered to his afflicted brother the sympathy of the Presbyterian congregation.

Many people implicitly believe that the secular Press is a great public educator. Here is how the two big Melbourne dailies dealt with Mr. G. H. Reid's speech in the Town Hall on freetrade.—Said the *Argus*: 'A great orator. . . the unsparing exposure, the searching criticism, the cutting sarcasm, the brilliant humor, the eloquent advocacy.' The estimate of the address by the *Age* was: 'Mr. G. Reid, whom Nature evidently intended for a Cheap Jack, held his freetrade meeting in the Town Hall last night, and was volatile as usual. He amused his audience, as he always does, but flattery itself cannot affirm that he instructed them. His forte is certain audacity of statement that refuses to be tied by any such trifles as accuracy, and his feebleness resides permanently in his facts.' After examining some of Mr. Reid's statements the *Age* adds: 'An instance like this proves that no man can take Mr. Reid seriously. His exaggerations and falsifications reach the grotesque. They enable us to see why Sir William Lyne, in Sydney, averred that Mr. Reid's "reckless use of figures has no parallel in the political history of the colony." . . . This is not controversy. It is low class trickery. It smells of the back office of the Old Bailey practitioner, and it puts the man who descends to it out of the category of statesmen, and ranks him with the low comedian of the stage or the mountebank of the market place.' How is the average reader to know which of these estimates is the correct one? If he were to depend for his education on the public Press of Victoria as to the merits or demerits of freetrade his ideas would be sadly mixed.

On Wednesday morning (says the *Catholic Press*, November 10) the Catholic community was startled to hear of the demise of the Very Rev. Father Vincent Grogan, C.P., the parish priest of Marrickville. No man was better known throughout Australia than the deceased priest, and no missionary exerted more influence in his day than Father Vincent. His personality was gracious, simple, and charming, and among all denominations he was a favorite. To meet him was to love him, and of no man could it be more truly said that if he met an enemy he would part with a friend. The late Father Vincent was born in Rhode, Ireland, in the year 1837. At an early age he evinced a vocation for the priesthood, and was educated at Carlow College, and was finally ordained when he was 27 years of age. After spending three years on the secular mission he joined the Passionist Order at Broadway, Worcestershire, England, and for a few years was on the mission in various offices, during which, throughout England and Ireland, he achieved results so wonderful, and received so many distinguished converts into the Church, that even recently the leading Catholic papers of England have referred to his work again and again as extraordinary, and stimulative of the highest zeal on the part of the new generation of missionary priests. So great was Father Vincent's success and so conspicuous were his judgment and zeal that it was not long before he was elected Provincial of the Anglo-Iberian province, an office which he held for nine years. He came to Australia as Visitor-General in 1891, and in the following year took charge of the Australian mission, which office he held until the beginning of this year, when he was compelled to relinquish it in consequence of ill-health. During his term in Australia Father Vincent gave missions in most of the towns in New South Wales, Tasmania, New Zealand and Queensland, and can be considered one of the greatest evangelists that those colonies have known. His was a household name, and his gentle, kindly spirit drew him to all who met him. He was an ideal priest and a true friend, one of the dearly loved type that suffered so much and did so much in the more arduous days of our young nation.

THE BOER WAR.

NOTES AND POINTS OF INTEREST TO CATHOLIC READERS

MAFEKING SISTERS AT WINDSOR.

A cable message received last week states that the Queen received two of the leading Mafeking nuns at Windsor prior to their return to South Africa.

GOOD COLONISTS.

A recent traveller in South Africa tells of Benedictine nuns who have undertaken not only to build their house, but even to manufacture the material. These devoted women have already made over 100,000 bricks with their own hands.

THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR A TASMANIAN.

Private J. H. Bisbee, of the Tasmanian Bushmen, has been awarded the Victoria Cross for rescuing a wounded officer under a heavy fire at Warm Baths.

WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

The following is an extract from a letter written by a Dominican Sister from Maritzburg, Natal, under date August 1:—'Our life in all its phases, viewed as a whole, is indeed a strange one to modern eyes, and according to modern ideas is a very hard, rough one. It is stripped of the refined asceticism—the æstheticism, if I may use the word—of religious life under monastic roofs and amid conventional surroundings; it is crude and simple in its few wants and fewer helps, and its rough exterior, primitive as that of "raw natives" who are yet far removed from the wants of civilisation. Just picture to yourself Sisters bringing necessary supplies, bread and "mealie" meal, our staple food, from the station in bags, carried on their shoulders; others with aprons filled with potatoes and cabbages, when the good Trappist Fathers send their generous gifts. Sometimes in emergencies, the mantle has to be taken off, filled with sundries, and then slung over the shoulder! And at other times you would see your Sisters yoked, or in African language "inspanned," to a railway truck heavily laden with articles of food, and toiling uphill, aided by others who push on the unweildy conveyance! I myself have taken part in all, and found not a little inward amusement at the grotesquely ridiculous side of our strange life, while, of course, feeling not a little comforted by the remembrance of our holy Father's simple, humble, laborious mode of travelling. The downhill journey the Sisters call "the Rosary," as they inwardly recite that prayer on the way; but the uphill one, heavily laden, they style "the Way of the Cross." And in truth it is extremely trying, and taxes severely physical endurance. But it is part and parcel of our lot, the inevitable consequence of our refugee fate, and so we murmur not, but bear it with cheerful hearts, smiling at all that is strange, rough, and unpleasant.

'By profession we are dead to the world, and so are free from the thralldom of human respect and can journey on the road to eternity content to travel in whatever fashion the exigencies of circumstance may require or compel, always secure in the shelter and protection of the providence of God, strengthened, refreshed, and consoled by loving resignation to His Divine Will. But what a contrast there is between our refugee life and the daily life of our British Sisters! If they could but see ours, how great would be their astonishment! And no wonder, when the Kaffirs seem unable to express their surprise by word and look and gesture, as they stand gazing at us in open-mouthed amazement. But the Dominican life is a mixed and very varied one, and strong as well as delicate colors are required to paint it; and so a panel faithfully depicting our life would make an appropriate companion to that of real conventual life, and form with it a true Dominican family portrait, and soon, very soon, we shall be at home in St. Dominic's Convent. Our holy Father had four of his daughters there by midday on his Feast, and we all hope to find ourselves there on the Feast of the Rosary. We hope against hope, for there is extreme difficulty in procuring passes because of the still unsettled state of the country. And yet, though we cannot return home, the Government has ceased to give us any means of support—has not done so for two months. And so we live on the charity of the people of Maritzburg, for though we teach daily and work hard in many ways, we cannot help much to our maintenance.

'From the first of our refugee life we have striven to earn something by painting and plain and ornamental needlework, but I need not tell you such works are not remunerative, and so the bread of dependence and charity had to be partaken of with gratitude to the donors. Indeed, we shall ever gratefully remember the people of Maritzburg, and shall never cease to bless God for His mercy to us in our homeless life. From everyone we have met we have received, in some degree, kindness and courtesy, and this has considerably softened and brightened our lot. And so God will sustain us to the end of this season of tribulation, and at His feet in loving trust we place our burden of care. Just now we are very critically situated—or rather, this is the third month in such a situation. We cannot return, and yet Government will neither afford us any further aid nor give us any compensation money, which we urgently need to commence the work of repair and erection at Newcastle. If we had sufficient for the absolutely necessary works, we could, when allowed to return, begin to do something towards self-support. Months ago we learnt that our chapel, old convent, and boys' school here were burnt by the Boers, the new convent looted, and the girls' school used as a Kaffir hospital. So the doctors declared that ceiling and flooring boards and all plastering should be removed before the building would be fit to live in. So you can form a pretty accurate idea of our present position and future prospects, the contrasts between then and now; but you must always think of us as bright and hopeful and happy under every circumstance.'