

COMMONWEALTH NOTES

NEW SOUTH WALES.

The Apostolic Delegate (Archbishop Cattaneo), writing to the Minister for Health in New South Wales, says that he has every reason to believe that the Ministerial order with reference to religious services will be observed by his clergy. At the same time he proceeds:

"I must strongly insist on, and beg of you, to bring before the Cabinet the necessity of considering and finding some means which—all due precautions being taken—will succeed in satisfying the highest and noblest sentiment of the people, religion. This is all the more necessary in order that the people may not be tempted to believe, even though erroneously, that the Government does not fully appreciate not only the importance, but even the absolute need, of turning to God by public worship, especially in the time of stress or suffering."

The magnificent Cathedral of St. Carthage, the architectural pride of Lismore, indeed, of the whole North Coast of New South Wales, is to be consecrated by his Excellency the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Cattaneo, on August 15 next. First opened and blessed between eleven and twelve years ago, St. Carthage's was built from the plans of Mr. Wardell, the designer of St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, and was erected by Messrs. Wardell and Denning, under the direction of the pioneer of religion on the North Coast, the late Dr. Doyle, first Bishop of Lismore. When he was appointed as Dr. Doyle's successor, his Lordship Dr. Carroll, present Bishop of Lismore, took over the large debt still due on the cathedral. To-day he has not only liquidated the debt, but has completed and paid for, among other additions to the building, a tower to house a splendid peal of bells, whose tone is not equalled in many places in the Commonwealth; an organ loft, and a majestic pipe organ which also has few superiors in this country; a pulpit tastefully suited to the architectural style of the cathedral interior; a high altar of supremely chaste design and artistic workmanship in Australian white marble; a Sacred Heart altar and our Lady's altar, both of colored marble and in beautiful contrast to the pure white of the impressive high altar. In addition, there are three sanctuaries, each enclosed by marble railings, with walls appropriately decorated; and the side sanctuaries are floored with rich mosaic which is invariably an object of delight to the artistic visitor. All the minor accessories, such as holy water fountains and baptismal enclosure with railings and marble basin, have been added within recent years. The extensive building has also been fully equipped with electric light in addition to the original gas lighting. In a word, the cathedral is now worthily complete and ready for consecration. Next August's ceremony might have taken place earlier, but his Lordship the Bishop, recognising this supreme occasion in the history of Lismore diocese, which extends from Cape Danger, on the borders of Queensland, to Port Macquarie, and embraces what is known as the Northern Rivers district of New South Wales, and also wishing that his people from all these rivers should partake of the celebrations, without any disturbing influence, waited until the termination of the war before fixing the year 1919 as one that will be memorable for Lismore, at least during the twentieth century. Added interest is lent by the circumstance that this will be the first visit to the Lismore diocese of the Holy Father's direct representative. It is anticipated, therefore, that the Church and laity will be strongly represented, and the Bishop and priests and people of the diocese will doubtless welcome both, no matter where they come from. The weather in August, it is said, is charming on the North Coast, so that everything seems propitious for the occasion of the consecration of St. Carthage's. And the consecration of a cathedral, it should be remembered, means, among other things, a cathedral free of debt. Dr. Carroll, the priests and the Catholics of

Lismore, are indeed to be congratulated on such a consummation.

VICTORIA.

Reference to the epidemic was made at the 8 o'clock Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday, February 9, by his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Rev. Dr. Mannix. He said that he was glad to see that the attendance at the various Masses was so good and that the people were faithfully complying with the instructions of the health authorities. Fortunately the epidemic had so far been comparatively mild. There was no occasion for panic, but there was great need for caution. The health authorities could not possibly cope with the epidemic unless the people generally co-operated with them in their anxious task. This was not a time for closed or deserted churches. It was rather a time when, with due precautions, of course, the faithful should come to church and unite in earnest, public prayer that God in His mercy might arrest the progress of the disease. It was a time also when people should help one another. It was in the spirit of true Christian charity that the nuns had come forward with the offer of their assistance to the health authorities. The Sisters were prepared to nurse and care for the influenza patients in suitable improvised hospitals wherever their services were required. Need less to say, they made no distinction of creed, and they would not accept any remuneration. Batches of untrained Sisters were already getting a short course of training at St. Vincent's and Mount St. Evin's to fit them to work under the supervision of trained nurses if occasion should arise. The Sisters of Charity had already taken charge of the Boys' Orphanage, at South Melbourne, where the Red Cross had also given valuable and generous help. Should the need exist anywhere, Catholic school buildings would be put at the disposal of the authorities for hospital purposes. In several instances the Sisters are ready to take patients into their own convents and to nurse them as well. That was the spirit of Christ. That was what people expected from the Catholic sisterhoods, and their expectation was never disappointed. It might be that the health authorities would not need to avail themselves of the generous offer made by the Sisters, but in any event the Sisters had given an heroic example, and had placed the whole community under a debt of gratitude.

QUEENSLAND.

The first convent in Queensland for the Ursuline Sisters has been dedicated by his Grace Archbishop Duhig at Gladstone Road, South Brisbane. Rosary Hill Convent is delightfully situated between Highgate Hill and Dutton Park, and commands a magnificent view of the river. The area of the land is about three acres, and was purchased some months ago by our Archbishop. There was a splendid attendance of the public, many coming from long distances to show their appreciation of the community of nuns who were so successful elsewhere, and are now throwing their lot in with Queenslanders.

TASMANIA.

In beautiful weather and in the presence of a large assemblage in the college grounds, the new St. Patrick's College, Launceston, was opened on Sunday, Jan. 26, by his Grace the Archbishop of Hobart, Most Rev. Dr. Delany. The college and grounds were crowded in the early afternoon by many visitors desirous of looking over the place before the function began at 3 o'clock. The lawn was overhung with streamers of flags and bunting, whose bright colors, flying in a light breeze, had a very pleasing effect. Addresses were delivered by his Grace the Archbishop and by Monsignor Beechinor, the parish priest, attended by the Very Rev. Father B. Murphy, of Zeehan, acolytes, representatives of the Christian Brothers' teaching staff, and several of the laity.