

HOSPITAL INTELLIGENCE.

I HAVE been asked times without number, as our regular readers will have perceived, all sorts of questions respecting Roman Catholics being employed as Nurses, and have expressed regret, on more than one occasion, at the narrow and perverse spirit of those institutions which refuse to entertain the services of those brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. The subject is one of such extreme importance that I feel constrained to give, in this issue, the account of the opening of the Children's Hospital, at Petersham, which has been sent to me by a friend; it is a cutting from the *Freeman's Journal*, and the manly ringing words of his Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop are well worthy the perusal of anyone interested in the subject.

"The Nursing Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, a religious community introduced to the diocese of Sydney four years ago by his Eminence Cardinal Moran, on Sunday last took over the Children's Hospital, which has been erected in connection with their convent at Petersham. The ceremony of opening and blessing the building was performed by the Cardinal-Archbishop at three o'clock in the presence of a large assemblage, a considerable percentage of those present being friends of other denominations than Catholic. It was stated during the proceedings that of the original band of sisters, six in number (the number is now fourteen), and all of whom were skilled Nurses, three had died in their devotion to duty. It was also stated that since their establishment in Sydney the Sisters had attended two hundred serious cases of illness, one hundred of them being patients in destitute circumstances, nursing the patients in their own homes and in almost every instance with happy results. Emphasis was laid on the fact that the work of the Sisters was in the broadest sense Christian and charitable, no religious distinctions being made in attending the wants of the sick and the suffering, and it was claimed that the Hospital, founded on the same broad basis, though conducted by the Sisters, would be Catholic only in its best sense—in its all-embracing charity. It was pointed out that the sympathy of many non-Catholics had been enlisted, and it was urged that the perfectly unsectarian charity of the Institution gave it a title to the sympathy and support of the entire community. The building opened on Sunday forms only one wing of the design of Mr. J. B. Barlow, the architect. The building is of brick, with red brick and stone dressings, and comprises two Wards capable of accommodating thirty or forty patients, besides Doctor's, dispensing and Nurses' rooms. Spacious verandahs and balconies on either side serve the

twofold purpose of keeping the Wards cool and of affording a sheltered promenade for the little patients. The contractors were Messrs. O'Donnell and Sons, of Ashfield, and the cost was £1,315. Cardinal Moran explained that the Sisters had expended £2,500 at Petersham, and that they were in debt to the extent of £450. The appeal for aid met with a most generous response, for before the proceedings closed it was announced that the day's subscriptions more than covered the debt, the offerings reaching £580, while in addition something like £100 was promised in the shape of annual donations to the Hospital Fund. An interesting fact was mentioned by the Cardinal, and it was that four Medical gentlemen, only one of them being a Catholic, had generously taken up the staff work of the Hospital, namely, Drs. Collingwood, Thring, M'Sweeney and Fitzpatrick. The announcement that these gentlemen had given their services gratuitously was received with much enthusiasm.

"After the blessing, a public meeting of the friends of the institution was held in the principal Ward of the Hospital, which had been prettily decorated for the occasion by the wife of Dr. Thring. His Eminence took the chair, and among those on the platform were Messrs. D. O'Connor, M.P. (Postmaster-General); R. E. O'Connor, M.L.C.; George Day, M.L.C.; John Toohey, K.C.S.G.; Drs. Thring, Fitzpatrick, Collingwood, Fjelsted, T. Clune, M'Sweeney, and W. M'Carthy; the Very Rev. Dean M'Carthy, the Very Rev. P. Le Rennetel, S.M.; the Very Rev. Dr. O'Haran, the Very Rev. P. Slattery, O.S.F.; the Very Rev. Father Alphonsus O'Neill, C.P.; the Rev. Fathers T. Long, J. P. Fitzpatrick, D. Barry, O'Regan; Messrs. F. B. Freehill, John Bridge, Richardson (Under-Secretary for Railways), Owen Carroll, John Melliday, John Mason, J. Baxter, J. M'Shane, M. J. M'Cormack, J. B. Barlow, S. Hinton, and E. J. Hollingdale.

"His Eminence said that the institution was the outcome of the spirit of the Church, for the Church, while holding in the one hand the torch of truth, which shed its rays upon all lands and all races, employed the other hand in dispensing succour to the suffering and the afflicted from pole to pole. It was the mission of the Church to pour balm into the wounds of suffering humanity and to sweeten the bitter cup of affliction, and it was in pursuance of this divinely given mission that the devoted Sisters had erected this beautiful little Hospital, in which the sick children of the poor would be the objects of their tender care and their loving solicitude. It was precisely in accordance with that divine mission that the Sisters had devoted themselves to administering some relief

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)