

THE REV. J. J. AHERN.

We regret to learn that the Rev. J. J. Ahern, Roman Catholic clergyman, of Fortitude Valley parish, died on Tuesday morning at ten minutes past 6 o'clock, at St. Killian's College, South Brisbane. The rev. gentleman was attended in his last moments by several of his clerical brethren, and by some of the Sisters of Mercy. The body was conveyed on Tuesday evening to St. Stephen's Cathedral, from St. Killian's College, South Brisbane, about half-past seven o'clock, the coffin being deposited at the altar. Prayers were then read, and afterwards the lid of the coffin was removed. The building was crowded during the evening, and until a late hour, religious ceremonies taking place during the greater part of the time. Shortly before midnight the coffin was screwed down. On Wednesday morning a special service, *praesente cadavere*, took place, the Rev. Father Fouhy and the Rev. Father O'Connor, of Toowoomba, officiating, assisted by several other of the clergy. The coffin being at the centre of the altar, the officiating priests were on each side of it, between them and the coffin being the candles. The building was hung in black, with centres of white crosses. The church was crowded, it being impossible to find way in for those who came at all late, and a very large number of school children were present, among whom the deceased was well known. All the children wore black scarves in the usual plaid fashion. Matins having been said, the Requiem Mass was celebrated, the Rev. Father Cummings singing the *Salutaris*. The choir was very strongly represented, and sang with much effect, and the ceremony was altogether an imposing one. When the mass had been concluded, the Dead March in Saul was played by the Sister of Mercy presiding at the organ, and the assemblage left the church. Three o'clock was the hour fixed for the burial. The church at this time was again thronged to excess, many present testifying their sorrow for the deceased in convulsive sobs and tears. The coffin, bearing baretto and stole on lid, had been deposited at the foot of the main altar. Punctual to arrangement, the Rev. Father Fouhy, accompanied by acolytes, appeared for the final absolution, and was joined by the Rev. Fathers Horan, Ewen, Cummins, O'Connell, and other clergy who, amid the doleful pealing of the organ, moved slowly up the centre of the aisle, the coffin being borne by several of our prominent Catholic citizens to the hearse in waiting. On being placed in the latter, a procession of all the children from the Convent and various Catholic schools in the city and suburbs was formed—their emblems of mourning being dark sash and white rosette. The convent children were in charge of the nuns and their assistants, and the boys under that of the Christian Brothers and masters of the Boundary-street school. In point of attendance the funeral was the largest witnessed in this city for a long time—the *cortège* of vehicles, horsemen, and pedestrians extending fully a mile. At Bulimba road the children who marched in procession were disbanded, and up to the arrival of the hearse at Nudgee nothing beyond the profound stillness and silence prevailing was observable. On the *cortège* reaching Nudgee gate, a halt was made to enable the children of the Orphanage to form in processional order *en route* to the cemetery. The spectacle here presented was strikingly impressive, all the children as they marched, to the number of about 300, praying with clasped hands, fervently and audibly, for the repose of the soul of the good priest. He was personally known to them all, and for him they evidently cherished a sentiment of filial attachment. On arriving at the grave the last solemn offices for the dead were performed by the Rev. Father Fouhy, nine of his brother clergy join-

ing the rites, after which the rosary and Litany were recited, all present kneeling and

responding to the prayers. Several of the children and many of his flock from the Valley wept bitterly on seeing the remains of their good pastor consigned to mother earth. The unusually large attendance at the obsequies of the rev. gentleman clearly demonstrated the affection with which he was regarded by all who had the happiness of knowing him, and in his decease the Catholic Church in Queensland loses one of its most zealous and worthiest of ministers.