

THE REVEREND T. N. BURKE-GAFFNEY, S.J.

Father T. N. Burke-Gaffney, the Director of Riverview College Observatory who died on the 14th September, 1958, was born in Dublin in 1893. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1913 and first came to Australia in 1921. Almost all of his working life was spent here. He was senior science master at St Ignatius College, Riverview, until he joined the staff of the Observatory of the College in 1946. He was widely versed in science generally and his students remember, with affection, his habit of digressing into scientific subjects outside of the syllabus being studied whenever useful knowledge could be given to his classes; and, in view of his professional work in later years, we may need to be reminded that his knowledge of biological sciences was very wide indeed. In the Observatory, his chief work was in the field of seismology, to which he made several valuable contributions, the best known being the work on the seismicity of Australia and, with other workers, on the seismological recording of hydrogen bomb explosions. He took over the direction of the Observatory in 1952, when Father D. J. O'Connell went to the Directorship of the Vatican Observatory near Rome. Since that time, as well as carrying on the seismological programme, he made every endeavour to keep going the astronomical programme, so that it should not fall behind the high level which it reached under Father O'Connell. Father Burke-Gaffney was a man of retiring disposition and few of us knew him well until he assumed the directorship of the Observatory. After this, however, he came forward and took his due place in the administration of Science in Australia in the Royal Society of New South Wales, the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, and (in our own association) of our Branch, of which he was President during the last two sessions. He will be mourned by many friends in all walks of life and his place in science will be hard indeed to fill.—*From the Bulletin of the New South Wales Branch.*