

Barrie

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WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY TESTS.

A PRIEST AND HIS PARTNER.

The Sydney correspondent of the "Age" recently wrote: -

In view of the prominence recently given to Mr. Pike's experiments in wireless telegraphy at Arncliffe, it may come as a surprise to many people to learn that for months past two other amateur experimenters have been at work in Sydney doing all that Mr. Pike has done and bent on doing more if only they might be allowed to hide their light under a bushel. "In the present stage of our experiments," said Father Archibald Shaw, of the Sacred Heart Brothers at Randwick: "publicity is the one thing we are most anxious to avoid." Father Shaw was encountered in an outhouse in the garb of a mechanic. A peculiar odor pervaded the room, which was littered with machinery and electrical appliances. There was the whirr of a lathe which the priest had just left. A young man worked at a bench with piles of coils in front of him, and another young man stood with a receiver over his ears before a collection of curious instruments at the end of a room where, through an open window, a couple of wires ran out to the aerial in the garden of two young men. One was Mr. Moroney, the wireless operator of R.M.S. Makura, and the other Mr. R. Wilkinson, Father Shaw's partner in this interesting hobby. How Father Shaw came to interest himself in wireless experiments is easily explained. Before taking holy orders he had been a telegraphist in the G.P.O., Sydney, and meeting with Mr. Wilkin- son, a wireless enthusiast of several years standing, he needed no inducement to undertake with him a hobby which might lead to results. Father Shaw also admits to being "a bit of an engineer."

It was while prospecting in the Labrador and Hudson Bay territory three years ago that Mr. Wilkinson, who is an electrical engineer, accidentally discovered that by the wireless system he could detect traces of ore in the earth. He had since given close study to wireless telegraphy. The equipment at Randwick is the work of Father Shaw and Mr. Wilkinson.

They make their own machinery and instruments. Up to the present they have not been able to transmit messages over a greater distance than 250 miles, but they are busy at work on gear which will enable them to talk 1500 miles away. But though they have not yet succeeded in making themselves heard at any great distance, they have heard others with more powerful instruments, as, for instance, the Powerful at Fremantle, and R.M.S. Makura at Suva. Mr. Wilkinson would like to produce, if possible, an Australian system of wireless telegraphy - that is to say, an improvement upon other systems. One of the greatest needs in wireless is a perfect recorder. In ordinary telegraphy, we have the tape machine, which gives us the message written. Father Shaw and his youthful partner would like to provide a similar recorder in wireless, and it is said that their experiments so far prove that the thing is feasible enough.

The progress of wireless telegraphy in Australia would seem to depend in some measure upon the assistance accorded to private experimenters by the Government. The naval authorities naturally do not welcome intruders in a sphere which has hitherto been their monopoly. They want the sky to themselves when warship talks to warship across the ether. In America an arrangement has been come to whereby the Admiralty has the free use of the sky for the first half of each hour, commercial business and private experimenters taking precedence the next half hour.