

## FOREWORD

Once again *Explorations* is drawing on the material treated in Colin Nettelbeck's article "The Consul's Treasure" (n° 7, December 1988, pp. 18-23). A first transcription of the Mueller letters was done by Bridget Nettelbeck. This was later verified and completed by Sara Maroske. We are grateful to her and to Rod Home for their authoritative presentation of the correspondence. Indeed we are proud to be able to offer to our readers an expertly annotated edition of the primary sources of a far from insignificant episode in French-Australian scientific relations.

At the end of this exceptionally long number we print a brief and belated review of the first Occasional Monograph produced by the French-Australian Research Centre of the University of New South Wales. Our relations with our colleagues in Sydney have been spasmodic, but we salute the work they have done in the common cause through their publications on several important topics, including French science in Australia.

As reviews from time to time in *Explorations* have demonstrated, the scientific connection is one of the constants of French interest in the Australian continent. At times the site of political conflict, this link can also be a purely family one. Walking down the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs in the VI<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement* some months ago I happened on the Rue Le Verrier, named after the astronomer and discoverer of the planet Neptune. A forgotten fact was suddenly recalled. Urbain Le Verrier (1811-1877), Director of the Paris Observatory, was the great-uncle of Francis Hewitt Leverrier, K.C. (1863-1940), the enormously talented friend of Chris Brennan and a leader of the Sydney Bar from the 1890s to the 1920s. The career of this model scientist-lawyer is summarized in an article in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (volume 10, pp. 80-81), but here clearly is one more entry for the reference work on French Australians ISFAR has as a long-term aim to compile.

W. K.