

Missionary Intelligence.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE BISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

Wednesday March 10th, 1852.—Setting off at 6 o'clock in the morning, we proceeded to the gold fields by slow journeys, breakfasting at Mr. G—, fifteen miles from Melbourne, and sleeping at K— & H—'s, twenty miles further; proceeding to the J—'s, twenty miles, on Thursday; to Mr. M—'s, through Kyneton, sixteen miles (out of our way), on Friday; and to Mr. O—'s, eight miles on Saturday. It was my intention to have driven in to the goldfield very early on Sunday Morning, hold service morning and afternoon, and returned to Mr. O—'s in the evening; as Mr. Wright, the Chief Commissioner, did not recommend our sleeping on the ground, and Mr. B— had expressed a doubt of being able to accommodate us. We learnt, however, from Mr. M— that this plan was impracticable on account of the distance (sixteen miles), and the character of the latter part of the road, directly through the thickest part of the workings. We therefore determined to make a circuit, by which we might flank the mass of the miners, and arrive at the Commissioner's tent without being smothered with dust, or overturned into one of the thousand dry wells or gold pits, and then throw ourselves upon the hospitality of Mr. Wright for such accommodation as he could provide for us. To accomplish this, we set off about half-past six o'clock from Mr. O—'s, and after a beautiful morning's drive of more than twenty miles, the enjoyment of the last eight being destroyed by dusty roads, and other symptoms of our approach to the gold country, we arrived safely, about ten o'clock, at the Commissioner's camp. Here we were most kindly received by Mr. Wright, who assured us of his readiness to do all in his power to make us comfortable. During the day, I held three short services; the first, consisting of the Morning Prayer with the Litany and a sermon, at eleven o'clock, near the Commissioner's encampment; the second, of the Litany alone, with a sermon, at Forest Creek, about three o'clock, near the temporary Post-office, to which I rode, (about four miles,) and at which I was therefore obliged to officiate in my riding costume; the third, of a portion of the Communion Service—viz. the introductory prayers with the Commandments, the Confession, Absolution and following texts, the Gospel, and the prayers for the Church Militant, with a lecture on the Gospel—about five o'clock, at the same place as in the morning. At the third service, as I wished to make it short, I omitted the first lesson and the "O Venite." The congregation consisted of about 200 persons morning and evening, and about 400 in the afternoon; estimated by the conjecture of the gentlemen about me, for there was no attempt made to count them.—They behaved with perfect propriety during the service, and showed at least as much attention as an ordinary congregation in any of our churches. Before I began, I told them of what the service would consist, and I said, that as the place did not permit of their kneeling generally, we would all worship together standing, holding our hats off our heads, but still so as to shelter them from the sun, during the prayers.—I thought this better than that myself and two or three others should kneel, while the great mass of the people remained standing. As I have delivered already, I was compelled to perform the afternoon service in my riding dress, and my pulpit being a stump of a tree, which afforded rather a precarious footing, you may imagine that I did not present a very episcopal appearance; but in the morning and evening I wore my usual robes.—At the close of each service, I spoke to the people upon the importance of providing some building for public worship before the winter sets in; and it was agreed upon by them that subscription lists should be immediately open at the different stores, and a meeting held this afternoon at the "Shepherd's Hut" (the usual place of holding assemblies of the miners,) at four o'clock, to appoint a Committee, and make arrangements for the accomplishment of our object. I am not very sanguine respecting the result, for I find that there are already two Wesleyan ministers arrived, one from South Australia and the other from Van Diemen's Land, and that there is also an Independent minister from the former Colony; and I fear that the miners are of a class, of which almost all who feel an interest about spiritual things are Dissenters, and only the multitude of the careless and ungodly are professed members of our Church. The two Wesleyan ministers are at present the guests of Mr. P—, at whose house I am now writing, and I have availed myself of the opportunity of talking with them about their system and its practical operation. They certainly have a machinery admirably adapted, speaking after the manner of

man, to carry out their objects; and when we contemplate it on the one hand, and that of the Church of Rome on the other, the deficiency of the Church of England in this respect cannot but be acknowledged and deeply lamented. My own growing conviction has long been, that unless we can adopt some means for establishing some closer bond of union among our people, and enabling them to recognise and associate with one another, we shall never obtain any hold, as a Church, upon the mass of the population in the Colonies. The gentry, and those who are utterly destitute of religion among the tradespeople and labouring class, will call themselves Churchmen; but among the mass of the people, the really pious, and such as are at all concerned about their salvation, will, almost to a man, join the Methodist, or some other dissenting community.

You will perhaps think I have written, as my custom is, too strongly; but although, if I were to re-write this letter, I might modify some expressions, I should repeat the substance of what I have said as the deliberate conviction of my mind, which all my observation and reflections for several years have forced upon me. To return from this digression. On Monday morning, we walked about a little to see the men washing out their earth, which they are now obliged to cart three or four miles to water. We did not see any large amount of gold procured; but there was sufficient to show us the nature of the operation, and the manner in which the precious metal shows itself; and after our return, Mrs. P— put the process to a trial, with some earth which we carried home with us, and obtained a few grains as a specimen. This morning also, we visited the Treasury Tent, where all the gold which is brought in for the escort is deposited. Here we saw one beautiful specimen of pure ore, weighing upwards of 5 lbs. It was the only piece procured from the hole where it was found, and it bore several marks of the pick which had been used in extracting it. How great must have been the excitement of the digger when he first perceived what it was, and while he was picking it out! In the afternoon we drove to a very pretty spot among the hills, about five or six miles distant, and quite removed from the mass of the miners, where three parties of three or four men each were at work upon a vein of quartz, which runs between masses of ironstone, and which is thickly sprinkled with gold. They have dug down thirty or forty feet in the solid rock, but are now stopped by water, and are waiting for a pump to enable them to carry on their operations. Their method is, to break up the stones which contain the gold, and which they have now learnt to distinguish with tolerable certainty, into small pieces, and afterwards crush them into powder, which is washed just in the same manner as the auriferous earth. We procured several specimens, and Mrs. P— brought away some of the quartz powder, of which she washed out a small quantity, and obtained, as before, a few grains of gold as her reward. Yesterday morning we proceeded to Fryer's Creek, where there is a gold field, to a point of the Loddon where they are washing, about thirteen or fourteen miles; and thence back by Fryer's Creek, about fifteen miles, to this quiet, retired spot, which we reached about half-past five, right glad to have got away from the gold region. The great plague there at the present time is the dust, which is so thick in the more frequented parts as to make any attempt to preserve a respectable appearance altogether vain. There is nothing picturesque in the scene generally, and the feeling which it produces upon the mind is, that nothing except the love of money, or the higher motives of duty, as the love of souls, could induce any man to remain above a day there. The miners are very respectful in their manner, and for the most part orderly.

March 19th.—When I had written the above portion of my letter, I was summoned away to lunch, previously to my setting off with the Rev. Mr. Cheyne, who had joined us, and Mr. Gregory, to preside at a meeting of the miners, which was to be held that afternoon at four o'clock, for the purpose of raising a subscription for the erection of buildings for public worship, before the winter. You will see the resolutions which were adopted, in the newspaper. The meeting was not numerously attended, but there were several who seemed really anxious about the object, and the result was more favourable than I expected. After the meeting, we rode back to Mr. P—'s, a distance by the shortest way, of some fifteen or sixteen miles, so that we were prepared for a ride of some miles in the dark; but, as the road was plain after we got clear of the gold pits, there was nothing to fear. Mr. P—, however, had sent a native with us, and this man took us a short cut, which proved, as is often the case, a long round; for when we had been riding more than an

hour, we found ourselves in the midst of the Fryer's Creek workings, where we had been the day before. The light barely sufficed to show us our way through the holes, and see us fairly upon our road; and we had then ten or twelve miles still before us; but, through the good providence of God, we got safely to our destination about half-past nine o'clock; not a little cold and dirty, but without any other discomfiture.

The next morning, (yesterday,) after a long and good night's rest, we ascended Mount Franklin, better known as "Jim Crow hill," where may be distinctly observed the basin of an extinct volcano, broken on one side, but preserving its general circular shape.—The evidence of its having been formerly an active crater is also to be found in the lava with which the sides of the hill are covered. The day was exceedingly hot, and the ascent very steep, but my dear wife accomplished it with her usual energy, and with no worse result than a face rather more ruddy than usual. From the top there is a complete panoramic view, very beautiful, which alone amply repaid us for the toil of the walk. When we came down, we again set off in our cart for Mr. B—'s station, about twenty miles, accompanied by Mr. Cheyne, upon whose parish we had now entered: Mr. Gregory remaining behind as Mr. P—'s with the intention of returning to the field of his labours in the afternoon. At Mr. B—'s we were, as usual, kindly received, and, only that we had a wooden bedstead, which was tenanted by its own peculiar community, spent a very comfortable evening and night. Mr. B— was a watchmaker, and now, I believe, a flourishing settler, but lives in a perfectly simple and unostentatious manner. He has a wife and a large family, and his house presents a very favourable specimen of domestic life in the Bush. The few people about the station came in to evening service, and, with his wife and children, formed a congregation of fifteen or sixteen attentive hearers. There are great opportunities, far greater, in my opinion, than an ordinary English Clergyman has in his parish, for the exercise of his ministry, in such a journey as I am now taking. May the Lord give me grace to use them as I ought, and may He, by the influence of His Holy Spirit, make them profitable to the people. And now I am called upon to adore Him for a special instance of His providential goodness. In the course of yesterday's journey we came upon the high road from South Australia to the goldfields, and, in consequence, fell in with many scores of people, all on their way to obtain a share of the treasure. We had thus an opportunity of speaking to a great number of persons as we drove along, and distributing tracts among them. To-day our route lay along the same road, and having determined to ride part of the way, I was on horseback, when I saw a company at some distance before me, and began to look out for some tracts for them. While I was thus engaged, trotting along at the same time, my horse stumbled and fell with me, throwing me forwards on my face, and actually rolling over my back as I lay along. Most providentially the dust was very deep, and furnished a soft bed for me to fall upon; and through the special goodness of God, the saddle of the horse appears to have rested exactly upon my back; so that, although the weight made me breathless for some moments, it inflicted no other injury than a bruise in the loin, and another, a slight one, on the chest. It is the most remarkable escape which I remember to have ever experienced. Bless the Lord, O my soul! may the life which He has thus preserved, be consecrated to His service! You may imagine what a figure I was, when I rose from my sprawl in a bed of dust two or three inches deep. My appearance, as she had previously heard that I was unhurt, called forth a hearty laugh from Mrs. P— at my expense. For my part, I was quite content to be laughed at, having so great cause for thankfulness that I was able after such a fall, to resume my seat in the cart, and drive the remainder of the stage with very little inconvenience.—*Colonial Church Chronicle, Sept.*

Youth's Department.

DROWNING THE SQUIRREL.—When I was about six years old, one morning, going to school, a ground squirrel ran in to its hole in the road before me, as they like to dig holes in some open place, where they put out their head to see if any danger is near. I thought, now I will have fine fun. As there was a stream of water just at hand, I determined to pour water into the hole till it would be full, and force the little animal up, so that I might kill it. I got a trough beside a sugar maple, used for catching the sweet sap, and was soon pouring the water in on the poor squirrel. I could hear it struggle to get up, and said, "Ah, my fine fellow, I will soon have you out now!"