

A LETTER FROM ATLIN.

Rev. Dr. Warden has forwarded the following letter, received by him from the Rev. John Pringle, missionary of our church at Atlin. As our readers are aware, two nurses were sent out to this district under the auspices of the Home Mission Committee of our church and of a committee of ladies in Toronto. Referring to these, in a private letter to Dr. Warden, Mr. Pringle says: "The nurses—well, God guided you and our women to choose and send them, that is all:"

Atlin, B.C., 25th August, 1899.

If you do not like climbing, don't come with me. I want you to go with me where weak hearts and weak lungs are sorely tried. It is "no trick" to go to Pine City, and besides you have been there with me before for a short time. So we shall hurry right through to Surprise.

No, we won't either. There is a spot called Spruce Junction, where Spruce Creek trail joins the main trail running East. There until recently I held service every Sunday at 1.30 p.m. It is a little cluster of tents, where I can gather very few for service.

But one Sunday not long ago, I had just removed my hat before beginning, when two young men came down the Trail from Discovery (Pine City). "Ah!" I said, "I've caught you on the fly." They took the hint and sat down with those gathered.

When I had closed the thirty minutes' service, one of them, a Scotchman, said, "This is the first time I have been in church for 12 years." That evening the first face my eyes rested upon, when I rose to give out the first hymn, was that of my Spruce Junction hearer.

Suppose I had preached some theory or opinion, upon some social question, wouldn't I have been sorry. I was glad I spoke about Zaccheus and Jesus that day, for that, like my meeting with this young man, was a wayside incident.

I think a good many are turned away from church because they go expecting to meet with Christ some time when they need him very much, and, disappointed at not seeing Him and hearing Him, think he is not there at all.

One is overwhelmed here with the importance of holding Christ up for the contemplation of the people, because you preach on any Sunday to a very large number of men and women, who hear you then for the first and last time. It is your opportunity and it never returns.

I don't know whether it is right to switch off in this way or not. I don't know what the editor and the readers will think of my side-tracking them in this way. But you must let me tell my story in my own way.

Now, come on with me, through Pine City over Nuggett Hill again, over the new bridge which a Cameron from Bruce built, and to Surprise at the head of Pine Creek. We are 800 feet above Atlin and 3100 above the sea. Better sit down and have a rest, a drink from Otter Creek, and a bit of hard-tack from the minister's pocket. We have come 13 miles since breakfast.

The trail follows the bluffs along Otter Creek for four miles. It is up, up, a climb all the way, sometimes along the edge of banks 200 feet high on a very narrow trail, where, if you have lived in Manitoba, or in one of the level countries of the East, you may get dizzy and have to sit down to get on an even keel, so to speak.

You can see men and women in the canyon away below you, can hear their voices, but cannot distinguish their words. The women wear sun-bonnets, and make you think involuntarily of old days and of gentle faces that are dust, which appear to you in memory, protected by sun-bonnets.

We meet here and there men from Otter and Wright, far up, travelling to Arthur or Discovery — some of them, you will learn, if you question them closely, travelling to — home. They have had enough of the wilderness with its hardships and its disappointments.

And now you see that poplar pole by the way side, with a sliver from a candle box tacked to it. Read its legend: "To Wright Creek." We turn to the left and go right over the "divide." Up the mountain side, scrambling over rocks and through the willows, panting, perspiring, perhaps repenting. We are at last over the ridge.

Stop just a minute, get up on that boulder, which the glacier found too heavy to carry any lower, and look around. Surprise Lake, a pond, away to the north. Boulder Creek, ten miles distant, flowing into Surprise Lake from the north, the tents, stretched for three or four miles along its banks, appearing, as you look down upon them, like houses lining a city street. Mountain above mountain irregularly piled—a sea of mountains, all around you.

Over there, to the East, is Wright Creek. We descend until we cross the stream of muddy water which has run through the sluice-boxes and rockers above, separating the "dirt" from the gold; and then climb up the bluff on the East side of the creek and go south, still rising.

At number 6 above "discovery"—for the claims are all numbered above or below the claim on which gold was first found,—we stop, 2500 feet above Surprise and 5600 above the sea.

Did you notice the brilliant phlox, the blue forget-me-nots, the sombre colored larkspur and monkshood, and even here and there a bit of broom with pink blossoms here and white blossoms there, and among the willows now and again a cluster of