

MISSION FIELD.

CEYLON.

The Rev. E. F. Miller says: Our Church organization is finished so far as the Committee's duties are concerned. It now remains to submit our results to a General Assembly which shall declare itself a Synod according to the provisions of the Ordinance. We shall probably meet in June or July next.

At a public ceremony held in Badulla for the purpose of dedicating Uva a Province, a number of Buddhist priests recited some Buddhist stanzas; a similar recitation had been permitted by the Governor on former occasions, notably at his levee in Kandy. This gave great pain to many Christians, and at the Bishop's request, attention was called to the matter by Mr. Bosanquet at a meeting of the Legislative Council. The Governor explained that it was not a religious ceremony, but only an address of welcome to himself, and was of opinion that it was irregular to introduce subjects not directly concerning the Council. It is to be regretted that he could not say that he had ascertained the character of the verses before he allowed them to be obtruded on the community. It is now known that the verses which were in Pali, and inaudible to those who were present, were the Jayamangala Gattea, the recitation of which is a familiar ceremony among Buddhists, and known to most Singhalese people. They recite the victories of the Buddha, and add after each, "May success and prosperity be yours by virtue of this achievement." They conclude by stating that by use of those verses Nirwana may be attained. They could hardly be described as an "address of welcome," being distinctly religious and characteristic of Buddhism. Christians have a right to complain when Buddhist ceremonies are thus mixed up with public proceedings, from which Christianity is carefully excluded.

It is said that the Buddhists in Ceylon have adopted the method of "fancy bazaars" for raising money for religious purposes. Two fancy fairs, presided over by Buddhists, have provided funds to buy a fine building for a temple, and a third is about to be held in Colombo.

NEW ZEALAND.

The Rev. A. W. Hands, of Southbridge, Canterbury, New Zealand, writes:—

On the 11th of last November I visited several Maoris in the pah, and asked whether it would be possible to gather a congregation together on Wednesday evenings at 5 o'clock, and as the proposal was well received, I arranged to hold a service every Wednesday evening, and we have been able to continue these services until now, although the attendance is sometimes very small. The church is built upon a site remarkable as the battleground of many generations of Maoris, a slight hill in the centre of an old pah or camp, about 150 paces in diameter. On one side the old

earthworks are still in existence; the walls, about seven feet high and fifteen feet thick near the ground, are covered with short thin native grass, burnt yellow just now by the summer sun. The old men now living can well remember seeing their pah in perfect order, ready for any attack which their "angry friends" might make upon them. ("Hoe riri—angry friend" is the Maori for "enemy.") The church was built from funds raised partly by Wesleyan Maoris and partly by Church Maoris, and the architect was a Wesleyan, who has shown the importance he attached to the ordinance of preaching by the extraordinary plan he has adopted in placing the seats or benches with backs. They are placed at an angle of about 40°, so that the congregation may face the right-hand corner of the building, in which is a large pulpit, entered only by a door from the vestry. The people have had only one Wesleyan service in this building, viz., that at the opening of the church. I have at last stepped in, and, I hope, won the pah to the Church of England. The church was opened last Easter, and was thus six months empty. Norere, the second chief, is a loyal Churchman. I am sorry to say the Maoris have not yet any idea of the "tapu" nature of the chancel or the altar, for I have seen women sitting on the floor of the chancel, and one day the chief or Rangatira (named Tiaroa) had used the Church as a place of meeting to talk over the questions relating to the native reserves, and they had pulled the Communion Table out into the church and used it as a writing table on which to sign their names or put their marks. We usually have the shortened form of evening service, reading the Canticles and Psalms, but singing the hymns from a little pamphlet hymn-book printed at Gisborne, a town in the North Island. The tunes we use most are "Rock of Ages," "Sun of my soul," third tune A. & M., "While shepherds watched." There are very few prayer-books in my congregation, but the responses to all the versicles and canticles are hearty and clear, and the Confession and Lord's Prayer and Creed are very generally known. Unfortunately there are two editions of the Prayer Book, and the Psalms differ considerably in these editions, so that I generally now read all the Psalms myself. If any one would send me a few prayer books in Maori, I should receive them gladly, but my pleasure would be nothing to that of the Maoris themselves. On Christmas Day we had the pleasure of a visit from the Maori deacon, the Rev. G. P. Mutu, of St. Stephen's, Kiapoi, a pah about 45 miles north of this. At 6.30 p.m. I met him at the railway station and drove him down to the pah, where he was greeted in a most hearty manner. At 7.30 p.m. we held service. Mutu took the first part, and I the lessons and second part of the prayers. Then Mutu preached an eloquent and forcible extempore sermon in Maori. We sang "Hark, the herald

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angels sing" in Maori, "Rangona te himene," "I hear the hymn." The church was decorated in thoroughly Maori fashion, and looked very well. The walls, which are of fine picked native timber, were decorated with long stems of the toi-toi (*Arundo conspicua*) nailed in diagonal patterns, the heads being prettily arranged. The general effect was very Maori-like. They had asked me to decorate for them, but I begged them to do the work in their own native way, and I was rewarded by a very pretty and rare sight. The porch and church arch were decorated with evergreens from the parsonage garden and flowers from the neighboring farms. There were only a very few Europeans present. I think they were all German. Mutu returned with me, and after supper told some tales of the old wars which were always being waged before the colonists appeared. Christmas Eve was an eventful time in my district, for a terrible fire devastated a portion of country about eight miles long and in some places three miles broad.

Fortunately the greater part of the land was wild tussock grass land, a few miles of it being covered with maruka scrub, a low bushy tree which never attains any great size, but which burns well. When the fire reached the settled portion of the district, it raged chiefly in the goose hedges and dry grass fields; the crops were too green to burn. I galloped off to the scene as soon as I heard how serious the fire had become; at 6 p.m. it was within three miles of our village, and was being driven before a furious hot northwest wind!

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