

Work for God at Home and Abroad.

PIONEERING IN THE LAND OF GIANTS.

I WONDER how many readers of the BANNER have read of Patagonia since they left off geography lessons at school. No doubt the word conjures up dim visions of copper-coloured giants, for something big in the way of humanity is generally all we associate with the word Patagonian. It is not, however, for the big Indians I claim the interest of my readers at present; it is for the struggling Mission of the Welsh Church to the Welsh settlement in that wild country.

I cannot here find space to go into details of the founding of the Chupat Welsh Colony, the privations and hardships incidental to such an undertaking, the narrow escapes from perishing by famine, and from hostile savages. Among the earliest settlers were staunch Churchmen, who kept the faith of their fathers amid many inducements to join some one or other of the numerous sects which are represented in the Colony—and, I grieve to say, in the face of another difficulty much harder to bear, the cold neglect of the Mother Church at home.

For years they waited, with many a sickening hope deferred for a priest of their ancestral faith. Meanwhile they taught their children the Church Catechism, and assembled under the direction of one of their fellows to worship as far as they could under Lay ministration. It is touching to think of these lonely exiles of the Church raising with hearty Celtic voices the glorious song of praise that unites all Christendom in the Catholic faith, truly testifying by their constancy 'Yr Eglwys Lân trwy'r holl fyd a'th addef di': The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee.

At last, through the generous aid of the South American Missionary Society, and the strenuous efforts of a good clergyman in Wales, who had kept up correspondence with some of his old parishioners among the Colonists, a clergyman was sent forth in 1882 to gather into the fold those exiled sheep. He was welcomed by Churchmen and Dissenters alike, and many of the latter learned to love the

Church of their fathers, now that it was brought near to them in a strange land.

There are now between two and three thousand people in Chupat, nearly all Welsh. Though willing to do all they can for Church support, they are not able to give much money—being poor, hard-working farmers, earning most of their living by cultivating wheat, which in that almost rainless district is a very precarious business.

For the first year or two after the clergyman arrived among them the harvests failed utterly through drought, but the poor Colonists cheerfully gave their help in labour and material to build two little churches of the simplest kind; and, moreover, helped the Chaplain and his family by many deeds of hospitality. Since then things have prospered more. There is now a railway between the sea and the Settlement—that railway brought something better than mere temporal convenience to the Colony: it brought out a most earnest Lay-helper in its manager, Mr. Erasmus Jones, a Welshman, who in London had laboured hard to keep his compatriots together as Churchmen, in what is known in Wales as the 'West-end Mission.'

This good man at once laid himself out to assist the Chaplain, and, as the latter's district is very scattered (long days' journeys between various posts), his help was very valuable.

One of the most pleasant features of this Mission is the able and ready help afforded by Lay members. I hope at some future time to be permitted to give interesting extracts of letters from the Welsh Settlement.

A new country is now being opened up at the foot of the Andes—a fertile country never before trodden by the feet of Europeans. A daring band of Welshmen have pushed on through nearly 800 miles of deserts. Among them would probably be Mr. Jonathan Davies, one of the earliest settlers, who had from the very first held a Sunday School and taught the Catechism to the children. He says: 'If I go I will read the Church prayers as I have done here, and I pray that the time is not far off when the sound of a church bell shall ring through the valleys of the lofty Andes.' He concludes with an earnest appeal to his fellow-