

Work for God at Home and Abroad.

A LETTER FROM KAFFIRLAND.

WE have received a letter from S. Peter's, Butterworth, Kaffraria, thanking us most heartily for a grant made to the church there in 1884, and pleading for further help in a season of much distress which now prevails.

Some extracts taken direct from the letter will, we are sure, go far to interest English people in the settlement.

'At this place, where the parsonage but stands, we have managed to build the nave of a little stone church—"the best built church in the diocese," says our bishop. Although it is so very small, it is the parish church for this whole enormous district.

'The Europeans are now so poor that they cannot, I fear, this year, raise even our salaries, so that we have very little hope of doing anything for the church for some time to come.

'The fact is that the whole country is apparently on the verge of starvation. The drought is so bad that the Butterworth River has not been running this year. There is a tradition that it was about as bad in 1862. *Thousands* of cattle have died. In one magistracy 10,000 hides have been bought by the traders during the last few months. Cattle disease has spread all through the lower districts, and now small-pox, which has hitherto been partly kept in check, is beginning to alarm the doctor by its fatality. It is getting quite beyond his power to attend the calls made upon him.

'The crops have been very poor for two or three years, and this year there were scarcely any. Many of the natives have nothing, and when the proceeds of the hides have been eaten, I do not know what is to be done.

'In this parish there are 100,000 inhabitants; in S. Mark's nearly as many.

'The native church-people are supposed to pay the native deacon's salary, but at the end of the June quarter we owed 40*l*. I managed to get a grant of 30*l*. from the Finance Board for present necessities, and sent it to Mr. Boom.

'He writes back in an ecstasy of gratitude. His little girl, he says, danced round and round the room for joy. "Now, father," she cried,

"you can get me some food. I had no tea last night, and nothing all to-day." But it was too late that evening to get anything. His wife nearly died last week for want of nourishment—a young baby in her arms.

'I am constantly being applied to for help which I cannot give, for I have to meet the salaries of the teachers every quarter, and they exceed the grants. We are greatly puzzled and perplexed how to get on at all.

'Our out-stations want so much. Some pictures you sent out gave great pleasure, relieving the bareness of the walls of some of our little mission rooms and churches.

'I am writing to-day from Willow Vale, near the coast. Here the tribe, the Gaslekas, are "red," and very heathenish. They rarely show any desire for Christian teaching, therefore it grieves me all the more when I am obliged to refuse any advances from them, because I have no teacher to send to them, and no money to pay one. But there are many locations of Fingoes here, and they are making great progress. They are the hope of this part of South Africa—loyal to Government; and though the number of heathens among them still far exceeds that of the Christians, they keep the heathen element well in the second place.

'What with whites, red men, and Fingoes, there is plenty of change in my work. The Europeans display a wonderful interest and liberality, though they are mostly very poor; and the natives, many of them, are so much in earnest that work amongst both parties has been a great pleasure. It makes sturdy Christians, this living and standing alone among heathen neighbours, not only not losing ground, but, in some cases, Church people actually winning over heathen neighbours to the Faith.'

Now who will help this much tried worker, Mr. Coake, with his white and his native flock? Nothing will come amiss. Money to pay his teachers, or to send new ones to the poor red men, or to find actual food for the mission band and its little ones, is sorely needed.

Mr. Coake adds, 'I do not at all doubt that God will take care of His own work, but you will allow that I have reason to plead for your help in this time of distress.'