

MOTHER M. GONZAGA BARRY IBVM
THE DIARY OF THE VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA .. 1875

Thursday May 20th, 1875

Wakened from our last rest in dear Loretto, Rathfarnham half past three am, as Mass was to be said at 4 am for the Missioners, by our good friend Father Hanly, who wished to give us Holy Communion before Mass that our departure might be hastened.

The last Mass in the Abbey was, it is said, the saddest and most lonely scene in the whole journey, the nine poor Emigrants in the large Church. The community had been desired not to rise at so early an hour and all affectionate adieux had to be said the evening before. Mothers M. Angela, Xaveria, Conception and a few of the sisters who had permission to rise, were with us, and although some tears were shed at the moment of parting with such dear loving hearts as they had always been to us, the courage and calm joy of the Missioners surprised even the men from the Convent, who drove the cabs. They said they could not understand the Sisters being so cheerful, seeing how they often seemed so sorry to leave for other Missions near home.

Many a tearful eye looked after the cabs as they drove down the avenue. The children were in the dormitory windows waving handkerchiefs. Whilst saying the Litany of our Blessed Mother, we lost sight of Loretto, probably for ever.

The skies and trees were weeping plentiful rain-drops. At Westland Row station, we were met by several friends and relatives of the sisters. Fathers Dalton and Kelly SJ and my brother John travelled down in the train with us to Kingstown and saw us on board the steamer. There we met S. M. Aloysius' sisters and brother, they had secured a nice little cabin for us and their kindness and attention during the passage shall ever merit a grateful remembrance.

The bell rang for departure, a hasty farewell at the cabin door, a blessing from the priests, and we went on deck to see the last glimpse of Erin, except S. M. Xaveria and myself.

I began already to feel so ill that I had to lie down, and soon had the melancholy satisfaction of knowing that every lady on board, with the exception of Srs M. Xaveria and Berchmans, was as sick as possible. The stewardess had great compassion for me, and announced each hour as it passed; she begged a beads or some little remembrance of us, that she might pray as she said for our safe arrival in Australia.

I gave her a beads, some Agnus Deis, a medal of the Jubilee, which she promised soon to try and gain. Arrived at Holyhead 11 o'clock am, (Father Hanly made us all take some Champagne) very reviving. Can't know how much I took as my glass was a tin. There was a rush for the train, Mrs Macken and Mrs Rispin invaluable, all the carriages full. After great debating with the porters seven of us got into a 1st class carriage to Chester, very comfortable. Mr and Miss Macken and Mrs Rispin (S. M. Aloysius' brother and sisters) left us at first station. Mrs Macken sent a telegraph from Holyhead to Rathfarnham informing dear Reverend Mother of our safe arrival so far.

Seven hours of railway travelling, scenery through Wales lovely, regretted not knowing the different beautiful spots we passed. Changed into 2nd class at Chester, one lady and gentleman in carriage. The lady proved to be sister to S. M. Clement Hogan, she was going to Chatham with her husband, a naval doctor. We had a chat about old school times in Rathfarnham as she, Maria, and Margaretta her sister were at school in my time. We took turns about resting our heads on her portmanteau; this rested me very much. She also had been extremely ill crossing the Channel.

As we travelled through England per express, there were very few stops. We sped by pretty villages, manufacturing towns, whole network of railway lines crossing and recrossing, perplexing to look at and very suggestive of a crash at any moment, or a meeting, more unexpected than pleasant, of passengers in neighbouring trains.

Saw illustrated advertisements at some stations, of the 'Somersetshire' and Melbourne Harbour. At last, after 6 o'clock pm we arrived at the Euston Street station, London very weary. Found a Mrs Murphy and daughter, pupil of Rathfarnham, waiting to receive us, also St. Gertrude Dormand's mother, it was pouring rain. Srs. M. Aloysius and Berchmans went with Father Hanly to secure luggage, 3 cabs taken possession of, and then off to Ford's Hotel, Manchester Square.

Ford's Hotel reached, we dismounted, were received by 3 waiters and shown to our apartments consisting of a nice drawingroom, and two bedrooms.....on the other storey. We found waiter Charles explaining to Fr. Hanly the geography of the beds and rooms. S. M. Berchmans could not contain herself when Charles pointed to a bed in centre of room, saying 'large enough for three, Sir, brought down expressly, Sir'.

Fr. Hanly responded that the sisters would arrange that themselves. It turned out there was one large bed capable of containing 3 in each room, but we only required to put two in each vast plateau. Helen Hughes and I had two nice little rooms to ourselves. All slept pretty well, D. G., after their fatiguing day.

FRIDAY MAY 21st

Father Carey's arrival announced, he and another gentleman Mr Naughten, a friend of his and also going out in the Somersetshire travelled by the night mail from Kingstown. Poor Fr Carey intended to leave by the same boat as the nuns and had even taken the precaution of sleeping at Kingstown the previous night. But he was not called at the Hotel and had the mortification of arriving at the pier just as the steamer was moving off. Frs. Dalton and Kelly had a great laugh at him, but told him he could get to London by the night-mail, and join us next morning. Fr Hanly and all of us were anxiously looking out for our chaplain. He was very tired after his night's journey, but set off with Fr Hanly to see if we could get on board the Somersetshire that day.

We heard in Dublin we could do so at one o'clock, Friday. We were lodged in the private Hotel and found it remarkably quiet. All the sisters sat down to write letters home. I should mention we had not put guimpes in our travelling bags, and so appeared in a strange but not unbecoming costume. We all had nice, fine cloth cloaks and large white collars and I thought the whole imparted quite a dignified effect, especially to the small people.

Mrs Murphy and daughter called and took Helen Hughes out to see Regent Street and the Park and to make some purchases. Shortly after their departure a servant came to enquire at what hour the Misses Gorman could see the sisters. By some mistake, we understood him to say Mrs Dormant and, though surprised at Sr Gertrude's mother sending a stylish servant to enquire, we said, 'anytime at all we would see her'. In about an hour two ladies were announced, they said something about their being cousins of S. M. Aloysius Arthur of Rathfarnham. A scene of confusion ensued.

The priests' lunch (soda water, brandy and biscuits) was on the sideboard. The sisters were just finishing a little lunch of cakes and oranges from their private stores; some of the sisters thought the ladies came expecting to see Sr M. Aloysius Arthur and politely intimated that she was not among the Missioners. Others wished to bring St Aloysius Macken forward, but she resolutely refused to acknowledge any acquaintance and felt rather embarrassed, owing to her having under her apron the remains of our luncheon.

I, at last, apologised for our deshabelle and confusion; they said they feared they had disturbed us at our office. However, order being restored, they proved to be nice, kind old ladies, who sent us an envelope full of pictures and prayers for the sisters. They bade us farewell in the court style, kissing our hands.

We had a long visit from M. Doyle, Sr Clare, she gave us an interesting account of Mrs Tayler her Reverend Mother's work in London, particularly in the 'Isle of Dogs'. Mrs Tayler had all prepared to receive us the day before at her convent, but our letters went astray somehow.

One or two friends and relatives of the sisters called. Fr Hanly returned to say we could not go on board till next day at Gravesend. Dinner ordered of meat. Friday: slightly to the amazement of 'Charles', who is a Frenchman and a good Catholic. Fr Hanly explained. He took fish. We read lecture, said beads, worked, talked and read. So the evening wore away; very wearily for poor Sr Bruno, Margaret the postulant and Sr and Ellen Fogarty, a protegee of Dr O'Connor's, coming out with us to Ballarat. They were in a back room, tired doing nothing, they wrote home. Another night in the Express beds.

SATURDAY, MAY 22nd

Rose early, had breakfast at 8.30 and started for the Somersetshire, Gravesend at 10.30. Just before leaving, Mrs Murphy and daughter and Miss Gorman came to say good-bye. We drove through Oxford Street, Regent Street, Cheapside, admired the magnificent shops, saw St Paul's (exteriorly), Post Office, Mansion House, Theatre Royal and other fine buildings, the names of which we did not know. Wondered at the crowded processions of people, cabs, hansoms, and other vehicles, full omnibuses, so unlike our Tramway cars.

We often had to go slowly in line for a considerable time. Arrived at the railway station for Gravesend found Mr Naughton very useful, a powerful young fellow about six feet high, who had his wits about him and thought nothing of taking 3 of our travelling bags in each hand, and any other amount of small things.

He sold out half of his farm to settle his sister comfortably and is now on his way to make up his losses in Australia, may God prosper him. He is a good Catholic; when he and Fr Carey were late for the boat in Kingstown, he went and heard two Masses and said he gained a great deal by being late for the steamer. He is in 2nd class.

In the train to Gravesend nothing very interesting, large tracts of low land with cattle grazing on them and divided into rather small fields by wide deep drains like small mill-streams; in Ireland this would probably be bog.

Gravesend: We went down on a kind of wharf with quantities of small boats at each side, the boatmen all stretching out their hands and crying out to us to let them take us to the Somersetshire. It was a little Babel, but Fr Hanly had been introduced to a water-man by the London agent of Messrs Wegrave and Co and received his card the day previous. He was now in attendance

and conducted us to the place where his boats and men were waiting for us. With the help of a sailor's hand, I got into the nearest boat and was about to sit down when I was politely informed that I should step on to the farthest off boat. So stepping and stumbling over five boats, the first section of our party at last reached the boat which was to lead the procession to the Somersetshire. I should observe that in all these transitions from the porch at Rathfarnham to this moment, we were accompanied by two flowerpots, one containing an Irish yew (quick-growing tree) and the other Arbor..... I think it was, besides S. M. Boniface's flower-garden in a tin box.

The boats took their way, and we got a good dashing of spray, but it neither alarmed us nor spoiled our good humour, and the boatmen seemed to like their cheerful and steady freight. A steamer ran up to us and nearly ran over us, as the rowers had their backs to it. We called out to them and they slipped round just under the bows.

We came at last to the Somersetshire, and arrived first much against our will for we did not ambition being the first to mount the ladder and wait on board to receive the two priests and the rest of the party.

It was not fair to have the two priests in the same boat, but as it was so, I reminded them, just before starting, to keep their eyes on our boat and in case of an upset, not to forget the 'absolvo'.

Several boats had already arrived and lay alongside the ship. So we had to cross them all, and step with the aid of a railing of sailor's hands, to the ladder. The boots and gloves so carefully selected by dear Mother Angela appeared to perfection. The ladder was not so bad after all, it was more like a wooden stairs; up it we went and then stood on the lower deck to receive the second boatful.

We should have been more stared at only their arrival divided attention. All safely on board, Fr Hanly led the way up to the poop deck through the upper saloon, where some ladies were writing, down to our cabins. They are all side by side on a row. And I think a minute description may interest as some of our dear sisters may in ages to come be inspired to follow our example and commit themselves to these little dens as a place of rest for 50 or 60 days.

The cabins are nearly all the same size. I measured ours with the old tape so often used in buildings, real and ideal, in Gorey and Enniscorthy. The following is the result. Size, Height, Berths 2 over each other just like the small mahogany beds in children's dormitory, only there are two beds in the space of one, one lets down and fits over the other, like the tray in a trunk, it is laced across the same way too where the little flock bed fits.

Measure of Beds: there is a little sofa or bed on opposite side, this goes the whole length of cabin and is the state bed in each apartment, being more roomy and airy. Two port-holes in some cabins, one in others, opened by ship carpenter, whenever there is no fear of the sea dashing in. There are cabins over ours, and off the upper saloon, better in every way, windows larger and higher, which can in consequence, be more safely left open. But, to return to our little cabins, there is a solid metal basin stand, with basin inserted; a plug and chain to it is to let water flow into a deep tin, set under. Three (3) painted tin vessels for water, a little mahogany shelf with croft and glasses fastened securely to it; a shelf all down one side of cabin, a good-sized looking glass fastened to the wall; a little piece of carpet, no chair or anything to sit on except sofa bed, but every sister got her trunk after a little delay, (they having been sent in mistake to the hold). They were useful as seats and principally as mounts into the upper deck. We disposed of ourselves as follows:

In the first cabin, Sr. M. Xaveria on state bed.

Sr. Bruno and Margaret on the shelves.

2nd cabin A, Srs M. Gertrude, Berchmans and Dorothea.

3rd cabin C, Miss Hughes and Ellen Fogarty as her maid.

4th cabin E, Mother Gonzaga, Srs M. Aloysius and Boniface.

5th cabin, Fr Carey, he fortunately had it all to himself. Quite a luxury and convenience too for weekday Mass.

Fr Hanly went to see Captain, Stewardess and Agent, to recommend us all to their tender mercies. The stewardess and agent came to us, both most polite. The latter gave orders to have everything provided for Ellen Fogarty in Miss Hughes's cabin, as she was to go as servant to the nuns; this saves her more than she can now imagine in the third class, where she intended going.

Everyone on board seems to wish to please 'the stout gentleman' as they call Fr Hanly and promise to do all they can to make the Ladies comfortable. Sooner than expected, we set sail for Plymouth, so there was great hurrying of last arrangements and messages.

Forgot to give letters and parcels to Father Hanly, must try and send them from Plymouth. Bid good-bye and got his blessing and felt we only really said adieu to Ireland, when we parted with our warm-hearted friend; may God and Our Lady reward him.

En route to Plymouth, very soon after starting dinner, the dreaded dinner, was announced and imagine our joy when we discovered we had a table entirely to ourselves, Fr Carey presiding and a large partition in the saloon screening us from secular observation.

We appeared in cloaks and collars at dinner, our trunks not yet having appeared. Dinner consisted of soup, made, we thought with a special view to oblige us to be very sea-sick; 'twas rich and all kinds of vegetables hashed up in it, red, white, green and yellow, about six or seven dishes of meat, vegetables, pickles etc., then as many kinds of pies and puddings.

The water had a greenish hue, not inviting to look at and soft to the taste. We heard it was made artificially. There were two more courses of bread and cheese and fruit. But we did not wait, we were free to go when we pleased and felt it prudent not to remain much longer in the rocking dining room.

We went up on deck, all were sickish, except Srs Boniface and Berchmans. Tea at 7 o'clock very simple, bread, toast, tea. Went to bed and had a very sick night.

SUNDAY MAY 23rd

First thing in the morning heard Fr Carey intended to say Mass in his cabin at 8 o'clock, got up and sat it out. All I could do was to offer to God what I felt. Srs Aloysius and Gertrude had to leave before Mass was finished, only Srs Boniface and Dorothea were well enough to go to Holy Communion.

We went up on deck and recovered a little. Breakfast bell rang at 9 o'clock and we went to Saloon; it was trying to our feelings to see on the table four dishes of hot meat, one of which was Irish Stew, viz, mutton and potatoes, beef, bacon, meat pie, chops, potatoes, mixed vegetables etc., etc., after a time, tea, coffee, toast, bread.....some had to escape just in time to be very sick.

All day very sick, towards evening came on deck, being persuaded to do so by S. M. Aloysius, who was just as sick herself and found it better up there than in the close cabin.

Met two stewardesses, sisters, the elder had crossed the Line 20 times and was now going to retire in favour of her sister and take a little rest, which she said she felt she required. On her first voyage she had care of the Good Shepherd nuns going out to Melbourne, we thought it strange that her sister on her first voyage should have charge of the Loretto nuns; she seemed pleased at the coincidence. They are both very unlike persons of their class, being very quiet and most ladylike in manner and appearance.

Another weary sick night for all except S. M. Berchmans; all day she was going about ministering to all. Sr M. Gertrude was very ill and amused us by her constant aspiration: ' Ah! To think we are suffering all this and we only going to Plymouth!'

We got into the harbour during the night and heard in the morning the glad news that we were resting at anchor in Plymouth.

MONDAY MAY 24th

'Our Lady, help of Christians'. Got up on deck early rolled up in shawls, which proved treasures on many occasions; so thick a mist hung over the shore that we could only perceive that we were near land and that the ship rested quietly on the water, this was a blessing in itself.

Soon the fog cleared off, and the shore appeared really beautiful. Plymouth harbour is very fine, the scenery round, interesting. It appeared beautiful to our weary eyes, high hills with remarkable looking buildings on them. We did not know what they were. Someone asked a steward and he said: 'This is a place, which they call Plymouth I don't know more of it.'

There was one beautiful hill planted from the shore to the summit and a kind of Castle at the foot. We had a quiet day, boats came to the ship, same as at Gravesend and several of the passengers went on shore. New passengers also joined us here. There was a large Australian vessel lying in the harbour. It had been 95 days out on the voyage and as all provisions were exhausted, it had put into Plymouth. But so much did they suffer on the voyage, that there were two corpses on board, one a lady who died just as they entered the harbour.

The crew cheered loudly for the good provisions they got and they cheered us to wish us better fortune on our way than they had had. A vessel without steam is an awful thing to sail in for so long a voyage, it may be delayed any length of time in the tropics and particularly at the Line.

We were all pretty well today, as we were standing still. Towards evening the harbour looked beautiful. The stewardess said they often stop two or three days at Plymouth, she did not know yet if the Captain would leave today or not. We all hope he will leave on the Feast of Our Blessed Mother.

Sr. M Aloysius discovered just in time that the elder stewardess was about to leave the ship, and she promised to take our letters and post them. There was quite a scramble to get them all into envelopes right. 'Tis a wonder if they are so as the bearer was seated in the small boat and in a great hurry to push off

One good thing is we are to steer out into the Ocean tonight, under Mary our Blessed Mother's care. The sailors commenced to weigh anchor, singing some kind of song. After supper we all went on deck to take our last look of land, it was a beautiful May evening. We took our seat looking towards the west and as the sun went down behind the wooded hill with the castle at the base, sky, trees and sea were all tinted with a golden light and made a lovely scene.

I am sure all our sisters thought of Ireland and the loved ones there. We said together the Litany of Loretto, a prayer to St. Joseph and recommending ourselves to the Sacred Heart and the Holy Angels, whom we begged to accompany us on our way, we steered quietly out of Plymouth Harbour.

The light house with its red light looked so pretty rising straight out of the water. We lost sight of it with the last points of land and were indeed alone upon the sea, yet not lonely, thank God. Our hearts were full of confidence in our Heavenly Father, whose work we were going to do and in our Blessed Mother's sweet protection.

TUESDAY MAY 25th

After a very sick night found it very hard to rise and dress, but accomplished the task in course of time, got on deck, rolled up in shawls and sat there in a state of endurance. Sick in the morning, sick during the day and sick at night and no inclination for writing my diary.

After the 26th May, came to the conclusion that instead of repeating last day's diary in the form of do, do, do, it would be better to leave it so and tell you once for all I was very sea-sick, in fact, only making an effort to exist, exerting myself to eat only in a helpless way, feeling it would do me no good, but might make the sea-sickness easier. S. M. Aloysius much the same, S. M. Xaveria ditto. S. M. Gertrude ditto, S. M. Boniface now and then squeamish, S. M. Berchmans very well. S. M. Dorothea is keeping up the credit of the Noviceship. Sr Bruno and Margaret very sick occasionally, poor Helen Hughes always. The Doctor took her under his care.

I, too, was surprised one morning before I got up by the stewardess coming in and announcing that he was following her into the cabin, which he did and sat down very unceremoniously beside the bed.

I forget the prescriptions, but that is no matter and now; instead of giving more details on sea-sickness, I left a few pages blank and intend to fill them up with some account of our new friends...the saloon passengers, but first a word for our Captain.

Captain Farquhar Holt is a great man so far as bone and sinew go, tall, but not stout, a quiet English manner at all times very gentlemanly. His voice is scarcely ever heard in the ship, but he is liked and respected by all the men in his vessel. A lady passenger who has made many voyages, says we are most fortunate to have so nice a man for Captain, some are so rough.

He is a son of a Church of England clergyman and went as far himself as Deacon. He asked Fr Carey how far the lady nuns would converse or mix with the passengers as on the one hand, he did not like to seem wanting in civility and on the other, did not wish to intrude.

Fr Carey told him we were a very strict religious order and that even if a visitor came to our convents the nuns could not go to the parlour or speak without leave from the Reverend Mother. This impressed the Captain so much that he never spoke or bowed to us till we were three weeks on board, but he watched us well and during Mass he stationed himself at the foot of the stairs to keep silence, and if any young midshipman came running down, he caught him by the collar of his coat and sent him speedily up again, without speaking a word. We never saw him on guard as he made the sailors nail up a screen to shut off the rest of the Lower Saloon from the officers' quarters, so that Mass might be said more quietly and respectfully.

He told Fr Carey he admired very much the unity of our Church and said he regretted that there were so many in the ship who probably had no religion at all, but were free thinkers. He took the greatest pains with his own services. A bell tolled every Sunday at 10.30am and he was very anxious that all who were not Catholics should attend. He read the service himself and the sermon.

He reads beautifully, I heard, but anything to equal the pains he took to have a little singing!! He had the little harmonium brought into his own cabin and had practising there and in the saloon for several days. The gentleman who played the first Sunday was a Dane, a Mr Hebbe; he discovered that he and some of his audience did not agree in matters of faith, so he refused to play or attend again.

The poor Captain was greatly distressed, but found out a lady Mrs Howe, a minister's daughter going to Ballarat, who could play the chants and hymns. And anything to equal the compliments he put himself under to have her play!! She told me, although she did not like to play, she could not refuse the poor Captain. He got a long sweeping brush handle fastened to the bellows of the harmonium, so that a gentleman could blow for her and so save her the exertion. The contrivance is very simple, it could be put on any harmonium, I think, and might be of use. However it wants the sympathy between the foot and the hand, so necessary in harmonium playing.

Mrs Holt sometimes comes with the Captain, but she is extremely delicate and suffers much in the tropics, then, I hear, the Captain cares and feeds her and even saves her the trouble of brushing or settling her hair. One could scarcely imagine this of so serious and stern looking a man, but his kindness to us shows he has a good heart. Fr Carey said to him last night he wondered how he could always be so practical and never seem put out. The Captain said: 'Put out! You should see me sometimes when I have to bite my lips and walk away until I get cool, but a golden maxim was always impressed on me by Canon.....`no man is fit to command others until he can command himself.'

Mr Hebbe, the Dane and his Mama - Mrs Hebbe is an old lady 75 years old, going out to see a son of hers in Melbourne. She has left her children and grandchildren to go see this son once more before she dies. He is very delicate and not able to bear the journey or fatigue of going to see her. She is a wonderfully active clever and kind old lady, pious too. She told us the other day she had made all her preparations to go to God, any moment he calls her. At her age one is detached from the world.

But she was grieved during the storm to see so many jesting and thoughtless about the Eternity they might so soon have to enter. We hope she is in 'invincible ignorance'. She always says such a Catholic, 'Thank God', when she says she is well or hears we are better.

She calls her son, who is with her, her baby, at least says she considers him as such, as he is her youngest and only 47. She speaks English very well and in appearance would remind you of Madame de Chazournes. Mr Hebbe (baby) is a strange character, tall and thin, extremely delicate, a great artist, a painter. He studied at Rome and has travelled much. Very bad at the English and gets himself into all kinds of difficulties by the things he says, particularly to the ladies. His mother says, 'he is very good and clever about many things, specially painting, but he is a scoundrel at the languages!'

Someone told him one of the ladies had a great deal of 'pluck'. He did not understand, but went to his dictionary and found that 'pluck' meant 'sheep's head'. There was no making him understand until Captain Backhouse came to Sr Boniface and asked the German for 'slang', they then explained to him it was a kind of slang word for courage or spirit.

He wears a strange kind of glass in his eye and with this he would walk up and down for an hour before us, looking at us, but never daring even to bow.

At last, he got some kind of an introduction and was quite satisfied to bow 3 or 4 times a day, or ask if we were 'a little better'. He speaks German well and had a conversation with Sr. M. Boniface in that language. He and I had one or two very unintelligible religious conversations, though he said they did him good. He complained to Helen Hughes of being misunderstood by the ladies and said the nuns are the only ones who do not laugh at him. He measured on his arm how long he would like to speak to them, but then showed her with a span of his fingers the little bit they speak and then all get off. He promises to come see us at Ballarat, when we are settled comfortably, but not to be afraid, he will bring his Modar with him.

Captain and Mrs Backhouse and baby: The Captain has been many years in the army and was out in New Zealand with his regiment during the war there, he is much older than his lady, very kind and polite to all the nuns. He was the first gentleman who spoke to us and always made it a point to come say good morning and have a little chat before breakfast.

He was a most affectionate father and kind nurse to his only child, little Emily, only 16 months old. She was a beautiful little child and so well trained to obedience by her Mama that she does at once whatever she desires her. Mrs Backhouse is daughter or niece to the late Lord Chancellor for Ireland. She is very young, most affable and agreeable to everyone and possessed quite an affection for some of us. She has really been very kind in little things, such as bringing us fruit, eau-de-cologne and insisting on our sitting in her easy chair on deck when we were more than ordinarily ill.

The Captain was very attentive this way too, and took a special interest in my taking exercise and having at least one walk every day. As for himself, he never ceased walking and we amused Mrs B, one day by telling our sisters made a calculation and decided that the Captain had walked half way to Australia, or at least to the Cape of Good Hope.

Mrs B. worked a nice bag and hung it up over our berth to hold loose things. She was glad to read some of our Catholic books and says she thinks the Captain will end by going over to Rome; both are very High Church. She wept at taking leave of us and left her address, with a request that we would write to her. She is going to Sydney, to remain a year for her health for which cause the voyage was undertaken. It certainly improved little Emily or, as her father calls her, Sandy, so much that she is not the same child. They were stationed in Cork, Limerick etc., and knew several of the O'Connell family well.

Mrs Rowe: Mrs Rowe is a young widow (26) with two children Bertine (3) and Philip (2) both are pretty children, but they look so sad in their little black and white dresses. Bertine's hair is like gold coloured floss silk, Lipps is not so pretty, but the most affectionate child with his mother I ever saw. He cannot bear her out of his sight, screams and roars whenever she goes down from deck and leaves him with the maid. Indeed, he frequently gives us a rather loud 'voluntary' on the lungs, but is perfectly quiet and happy if allowed to sit at his mother's feet, playing with his toys and getting a kiss every few minutes.

Poor Mrs Rowe left Ballarat with her husband and children for a tour through Europe and principally to see Rome. Mr Rowe was so very anxious to see it. But he got a fever in Genoa and only lived to reach Rome and go see St. Peter's once with his wife. He is buried in Rome. Mrs Rowe told me with many tears of his illness and death and of the kindness she experienced from some Catholic priests in her great sorrow and loneliness. He was only 29 when he died and seems to have been a good and upright man. She has suffered much from sea-sickness and low spirits. She is daughter to Archdeacon Stretch of Ballarat and is returning now to her family. She says she must come see us when we are settled in our Convent.

Captain and Mrs Burton: Captain Burton and his lady were our kindest friends, they often spoke to Fr Carey about us, asking him if they could do this or that for the nuns, they frequently sent us some choice wine they had brought on board themselves.

Mrs Burton is a native of New Zealand, that is, she was born there. Her mother Mrs Hobson and a niece were also of the party. Mrs Hobson is a widow a very nice lady, she had the grief of seeing her husband buried in the sea, as he died of consumption during a voyage he made for his health some years ago. No wonder Mrs Hobson does not like the sea, she seldom comes on deck. When she does, she likes to come speak to us.

They made a voyage to Europe last year to have London doctors' advice about Mrs B's health; she is returning much improved. Captain B was in the army, but has retired and is now about to enter the Law with a view to a judgeship in New Zealand. He has long studied and in appearance would make a splendid judge. He was the judge on the mock trial and was very anxious we should go to it, but as we refused, although everything had been left out that might shock us, he came to show himself to us in his wig and scarlet robes. We remained in the ladies' cabin, but Captain Holt brought all the characters in the trial to the door, so that we might see them, they were all admirably 'got up'. Before leaving the ship, Captain and Mrs Burton came to know if they could do anything for us, they gave us their cartes and made us promise to write to them when we got to our Convent in Ballarat.

MONDAY, JUNE 7th

Passed the night in a vapour-bath, felt sometimes so sinking into the other world, that I calculated the probable effect on my cabin companions when they should find me in the morning....gone.

Sr. Bruno brought Sr M. Aloysius and me a cup of tea and a biscuit, got through with it and then tried to get up; was an hour dressing, but got up on deck and found some of the sisters there. We all felt still in the 'doldrums'. Sat till breakfast, it was impossible to pray, only offer up the passage through the 'doldrums'. Mrs Backhouse insisted on Sr Aloysius having her chair down where the motion of the ship was not so great as where we always pitched our tents (round the cabin stairs where a seat ran round three sides and we could all be together). Some of the sisters had to go with M. Aloysius who was very weakly and only recovering her strength slowly.

The gaps in our ranks were availed of - Mrs McHaffie got her chair near Sr M. Xaveria and gave us her history. She is a nice old lady, speaks so like S. M Francis Rowe, Rathfarnham, that everyone remarks it. Our friend 'the Dane' seated himself beside me and began a very animated and interesting discussion on religion by praising the way we pray daily, 'speak to Christ so frequently'. He envies us Catholics our daily Mass or service. As he says: 'tis all his religion wants.' They forget on Monday all they say to God on Sunday. He told me of a Danish friend of his, a great artist, who was converted and became a friar in Rome and who told him when he last saw him that he was unhappy and is now perfectly happy.

We had a long conversation on many disputed points, which with his broken English and imperfect comprehension of that language, must have been a strange medley. However, he finished by saying that what I told him did him good and I should, he said, be glad of that. I must look out for a good book for him. He has read and travelled much and was more edified at the Catholics in Germany than in Italy. I tried to explain this.

About 3 o'clock, we saw a strange appearance on the sea, it looked like distant land with the sun on it, but it seemed to rise in the air and there was a cry, 'a storm is coming get down as quickly as you can'. All on deck rushed for the cabin stairs, but before we could get down, torrents of rain swept the deck and a high wind carried off one lady's shawl into the sea.

We were not able to get up on deck after dinner. The ladies' saloon was occupied by Mrs Rowe, the young widow from Ballarat. She suffered today for her exertions at the harmonium yesterday, as she had to play at morning and evening service. She could not sleep with a bad headache and told me she cried herself sick. Her two young children were crying too and she got no rest. If she had our Holy Faith to console her, poor thing!

Some of us sat in our hot little cabins, Srs Xaveria, Berchmans and I sat for a long time on the trunks in the corridor and got a little breath of air. After tea went on deck for a short time. Had to come down, all was so wet with the evening rain, went to our cabins, took off everything we could to try and get a little cool before going to bed. No one but those who have experienced it could form an idea of the heat of those cabins during the night. No bed-covering but a sheet and still the baths of perspiration increasing for 6 or 7 hours.

During the night we heard great hurrying to and fro. The Officers appeared not to have left the deck; they frequently passed by our cabins, the voice of the Captain was heard; there was a row, certainly something was the matter.

I thought we might be passing the line. Sr. M. Xaveria thought there might be fire and said the prayer to Sr Agatha more than 30 times. About 4 or 5 o'clock am, the officers came to their quarters and our noses told us they had all a glass of grog, then there was quiet.

TUESDAY, JUNE 8th

Got up early said morning prayers in cabin, saloon occupied, Mrs Rowe slept there. Came on deck, made Meditation heard spiritual Mass, said Office. Little baby Backhouse and nurse, who sleep on 2nd deck said that we had a fire in the ship last night. Serious danger at one time, small boats got in readiness. Cause of fire, spontaneous combustion and something about the gas from the cattle and the intense heat. Gentlemen resolved to keep the thing secret from the ladies. Fr Carey was told and warned.

When Captain Backhouse said 'Good morning', we asked was it true we had a fire last night; he said there was always a fire at night in a steamer. 'The engine, you know', added Fr Carey. He said he believed there was a kind of general row in the steerage. He used a mental reservation he told us afterwards. We had a laugh at both during the day, when we informed them we knew all about their grand secret.

Captain B begged us to tell him all about it when we found out all particulars; his lady came and gave us much information. I took my first bath and enjoyed it very much. I did not feel able to attempt it until today. Several of the sisters have taken them. Fr Carey bought a very nice chair and had my name put on the back of it. It was very kind, but he wants it much more himself. There are few seats on deck, but all experienced travellers are provided with these chairs. They are like Fr Sinnot's in St Gertrude's room in Gorey. We have invented seats, tin boxes covered with black and packing sewn up in the covering of our trunks, looks like a large cushion bound with scarlet.

The dear sisters who are to come out after us are recommended to bring out little stools or wooden boxes which could be stuffed and answer for seats.

At lecture time and whenever we wish to be together a vis-à-vis is desirable. Travelling rugs are spread out on deck for the children to play and roll about on. I counted about 20 of these folding chairs on deck the other day. The owners of them are all most anxious the nuns should sometimes occupy them, but we decline, as we are faithful to our seats at the cabin door and no one ever goes there or else stands up the moment we are seen coming.

My dear sisters I wrote the above half page after being obliged to lay the dairy aside for eleven days, the events of which I must give not in 'diary' fashion, but notes from memory. I found it almost impossible to write or even read more than a page or two of a book, without getting sick. Although I could do a little needlework, a great change from the old getting 'buried in books'.

Today is the eve of S. S. Peter and Paul, you are perhaps preparing for your Renovation Retreat; ours is put off until we arrive in Ballarat. It will help us to begin with fervour, please God. You are, I am sure, busy preparing the children for the concert etc., and I am at my ease in our little cabin, wishing I could help you; perhaps I could by a little prayer now and then.

To resume the events of our voyage, there was some danger from fire for two or three nights during the intense heat, but our good Captain took every precaution. He remained up with the officers and had the entire stock of coal removed. He is so liked and respected by the crew that they told him there was not a man among them that would not willingly go through the fire to please or serve him. This devotion is a great security under God, to the passengers. Captain Holt is indeed a kind and excellent gentleman, but can be strict and even severe when there is cause, as the following will show.

A few days after the fire, in fact, one day after, the Captain had been up all night watching. He went to his cabin to take a little rest. We were to cross the Line that day and our good young 'Middies' thought proper to take advantage of the Captain's absence to play some tricks on a young Midshipman who had never crossed the Line. They offered to let him off if he would treat them to a certain amount of brandy, but he stoutly refused. So, they seized on the poor fellow, made up a mixture of treacle, mustard and I know not what else and rubbed it all over his face, into his eyes and down his throat. Then they tried to shave him with some old piece of iron. He roared vigorously, all the gentlemen passengers rushed forward to see, as the performance took place on the 2nd deck. The 1st Mate's attention, being thus attracted, he ordered all the young gentlemen who had taken part in the affair, up to the poop deck where the 1st class passengers were. They were stationed quite near us and looked like children in a scrape.

There are 6 midshipmen on board and a little boy who looks about 10 or 11, but is much older. He is called 'the Commodore' in jest and was expelled from 3 schools for his wild pranks before the Captain took him in hand to reform him. He is the son of a Church of England clergyman; indeed we were told all the young 'Middies' on this ship were the sons of Ministers. I suppose most of them are, as Captain Holt is himself and is a Deacon too, whatever that signifies. He did not come on deck till 5 o'clock pm, so – no dinner for the young gentlemen. They consoled themselves by pumping with great energy and singing a song about 'Melbourne Town'.

While we were at dinner they ran about the deck, frightening the babies and stuffing bread and cheese into their mouths to keep them from roaring, much to the amazement of the Nurses. At last the Captain appeared, heard a short statement of the case, suspended his judgement until night, when he was to hold a court-martial on the culprits. He found there were only 3 guilty of the act, so he ordered them to go aloft on the 3 masts of the ship, and there await future orders - not a sail was up and they looked like 3 crows stuck up on the desolate looking masts. One poor fellow got the mast beside the chimney that sent up volumes of thick black smoke, which sometimes made him invisible, but did not add much to his comfort in the Tropics, I think.

All the ladies and gentlemen went and stared and laughed at the poor prisoners unmercifully. The Commodore stationed himself near us on the poop and commenced a lively conversation with his friends on the masts, by means of the Dumb Alphabet, little thinking all he said was perfectly intelligible to us through Sr. Berchmans, so accustomed to speak to her Aunt Mary in that way. Among other things, he informed them that the skipper, meaning the Captain had gone down to the cabin and that after dark he would go up and bear them company.

He did go up and earned a flogging for himself; while on the main mast he took an indian-rubber tube that communicated with the deck house, where the steersman always stood. He signalled to him and put the following question: 'I say, is the Skipper near?' The reply was scarcely a consolation to him, when the Captain's well-known voice answered from the other end of the tube: 'Yes he is and will see you tomorrow'. He did see him and made him feel the weight of a rope's end. Before noon, he bet 5 shillings with one of the officers that the Captain had not flogged him, and had the face to go with the man to the Captain to prove it; I believe he got a second edition.

The Captain says Commodore will yet be either very good or very bad, but he does not like his habits of telling fibs. The Doctor had to come to the poor young fellow who had been nearly blinded and smothered. He was a soft, innocent looking English boy who had sobbed and cried himself sick when parting with his mother at London. He had a little quiet cry over the side of the ship near us, when he came up late on deck.

No one would speak to him and all blamed him for getting the lads up on the masts into trouble, but he was right not to break the ship's rules and give drink to get himself off the shaving. I did not hear the result of the court-martial, but it was certainly no light verdict from Captain Holt.

Our next event was approaching the Canary Isles; we passed the Teneriffe during the night and when we went up on deck before breakfast.....was visible nothing but a bleak, desolate, rocky coast, no sign of habitation or even vegetation. No green spot to rest upon. Some said they saw something like trees in the distance but even with a good glass, they looked to me like clouds; we were about 2 miles from the island.

A ship appeared in sight 1st June near enough to signal; it was very slow in replying and did not seem inclined to answer at all. At last, our Captain found out it was a German man-of-war vessel. We told Sr. M. Boniface it was Mr Bismark coming to rescue her, as a German subject, from transportation. She looked at the ship with great interest, saying it was the last bit of Germany she should see.

Still in the Tropics. Passed the Line. Heat intense all day and all night, evenings and mornings pleasantly cool. Sails up over poop-deck, otherwise the sun dangerously hot, do not know how the poor people on 2nd deck and in steerage can bear the boiling heat, no shade, deck so much lower down. Three stoves constantly engaged by 3 cooks in cooking, besides the boiler and engine-room. A woman in 2nd class dangerously ill, her husband came for Fr Carey. She is a Catholic and an American. Fr Carey's (account) description of the way all the passengers in 2nd and 3rd class are lodged is sufficient to make us very grateful for our accommodation.

The Stewardess told us the same and said we ought really see how the people are there, yet the Captain, Doctor and all the 1st class passengers are continually going to Fr Carey to tell him how uneasy they feel about us. We do not take sufficient recreation, we apply too much to study, to work, to devotions – little they know how much happier we are than they. After some time they began to wonder at our constant cheerfulness and how we can always keep up looking so happy and gay, whilst they suffer so much from depression of spirits, these are only the ladies of course.

Sr. M. Aloysius, Margaret and I still keep up the sea-sickness with occasional assistance from S. M. Xaveria, who suffers a great deal, but tries to persuade us she is so strong she can bear any amount, while she thinks I can bear nothing being so weakly. She can scarcely sleep at all at night, found it necessary to remove her from Srs. Bruno's and Margaret's cabin in to Srs Berchman's and Dorothea's; gets on much better there, put Ellen with the lay-sisters, Sr. Gertrude with Helen Hughes.

Captain Burton remonstrated with Fr Carey on the necessity of our taking a little Champagne as a cure for the sea-sickness and offered some in such a nice way that we could not refuse. It was put in the dumb waiter over our dinner table, steward brought up some to me on deck as I could not sit out the dinner in saloon; the stewardess generally brought the sea-sick people their meals on deck. It was the only chance of our getting or keeping a bit.

When we went to saloon, it was always necessary to beat a speedy retreat, so we christened their beautiful room the 'Chamber of Horrors', which amused some of our friends very much, as they said they considered it a 'Chamber of Delights'. Their good appetites made them think so. Shoals of flying-fish seen, but I did not see them. Two of the sisters saw a Nautilus.

A concert or rather entertainment given by 2nd class passengers and crew on their deck; we did not care to attend and continued our walk on the poop – beautiful moonlight night, heard the song 'Thou art so near, and yet so far' sung by a very fine woman's voice. 'Commodore' mounted the mast and sang 'Red, White and Blue' with variations of his own. There were some other songs and readings, amongst them the 'Little Vulgar Boy' in Bell's Reader, but we could not hear.

The ladies brought us their chairs and made us sit in them; after a little while we excused our retiring so early, thanked them and went down to our little vapour-baths in the cabins. In general, we made our examen on deck whilst in the Tropics, not to remain rolling about too long in our cabins, it made us so sick, there was no chance of sleep.

Whales were announced to be in the vicinity of our ship at the starboard side (the left-hand side of the steersman is called the 'Port', the right the 'Starboard'). I saw a good deal of spouting going on in the sea, but could not distinguish whales; felt disappointed, as my conscience told me that if ever anyone should hereafter implore me in the usual way: 'Did I ever, ever, ever see a whale?', truth would oblige me to give the long answer: 'No, I never etc.', but the whales behaved better than I expected, for next day three fine good-natured ones came after the ship quite near; they seemed to be out for a holiday, for such jumping out of the water and plunging down again and rolling about and frolicking and spouting!!!! No one ever saw whales in better humour, they really seemed to enjoy being looked at. They did not appear very large to us, yet they were 30 feet at least. The Southern whales are not so large, but are more valuable being what are called Sperm Whales.

More champagne, Captain Burton, afraid to offer it lest it should be refused, sent Mrs Burton to negotiate. She came to the sisters, they tried to get out of it by saying they were sure I would not like it. She then came to me, knelt down on the deck like a little child to beg of me and at last said I should, whether I like it or not. It certainly must be good, none of us have been so sick since we commenced to take a little in our cabins after dinner. When Sr M. Aloysius was so very ill the Doctor ordered it to her, and I got some. But not so good as Captain Burton's, although very dear 4/6 for a small bottle.

Fr Carey gave me an exhortation on the necessity of taking it, and very much against my will, kept us well supplied from his own resources. At first, I could take any amount without feeling the least effect, but as I got well I could only take a little sip as in Gorey, and even then paid for it by a headache, so wine and my health, I see, can never agree.

SUNDAY, JUNE 20th

We made an attempt to celebrate the Feast of St. Aloysius in a spiritual way at Mass and Holy Communion, but very sick during the day and evening. Ditto next day. 21st Was wished very affectionately a happy Feast; Sr. M. Aloysius presented me with dear Reverend Mother's 'cadeau' given for the occasion. I did the same kind office for her, but indeed St. Aloysius did not act very generously to his clients, except in the way of suffering or mortification, that he loved so well for himself. We were as sick as sick could be. I was not able to go to dinner, and sat rolled up in shawls in a corner of Ladies' Saloon until bedtime; then, notwithstanding being very sea-sick just before lying down, I slept well, thank God, and awoke feeling better.

I particularise this day, as I know all the fervent and affectionate prayers offered on this Feast for the exiles on the sea. The fruit of them and their answers appear to have been given next day 22nd (Sr. Gonzaga's) as since that to the present eve of S. S. Peter and Paul's none of us were ever sea-sick (except Margaret) and all of us feel much stronger and better, thank God. The weather has become very cold, and it is necessary to put on all the warm clothing possible; the Captain says we may meet icebergs, when we go further south, but he will try and avoid them.

Can't go on deck any more after dinner, too cold and dark; at the end of May and beginning of June the nights were beautiful moonlight and starlight. Sisters M. Gertrude, Boniface, Berchmans and Dorothea great astronomers, they amused us all very much one night by an extraordinary discovery. After a long contemplation of the heavens, they declared they thought the 'Little Bear' had got two tails, otherwise they could not account for the Polar Star.

By degrees we lost sight of the northern Constellations and the Southern ones appeared. The only one remarkable to my eyes was the 'Southern Cross', it is very striking but owing to the stars in one arm of the + not being so bright or visible as the rest, it looked to me more like a triangle, than a regular +.

Mars looked a beautiful star as long as visible every evening appearing beside our ship, a beautiful rose colour and so bright. I was sorry to lose sight of him and thought of Longfellow's beautiful lines:

'And earnest thoughts within me rise.
When I behold afar
Suspended in the evening skies
The shield of that red star.
O star of strength, I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand
And I am strong again,
The star of the unconquered Will
He rises in my breast
Serene and resolute and still
And calm and self-possessed.'

We had three or four beautiful sunsets, it reminded me of sunsets over Irish mountains long ago. The sun, as it went down in beds of the deepest scarlet and brightest gold behind masses of dark clouds which it tinted with its rays, made one think without much stretch of the imagination that it was really setting behind mountains, hills and trees. A yellow shade of light stretched in a line across the sea looking very like a sandy beach. At other times we had towns, castles, trees; the colours were very bright, but I think the sunsets of Erin on sea or mountain cannot be surpassed.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23rd

Ladies in the Saloon gave a musical entertainment, with reading and recitation, there was supper afterwards and Captain Holt sent the Doctor to our Saloon with a decanter full of wine. Only some sips of the wine had been taken and the decanter had been laid on the table, when the ship gave an unexpected roll to one side and over went tray, plates, glasses and the entire contents of the decanter into the velvet cushions of the Ladies' Saloon. We felt greatly ashamed of having finished our wine so completely and expeditiously. We called the stewardess, gave her the things and explained, hoping she would do the same to the Captain, but we were disgusted to see her coolly hand all to a steward who was going into the Saloon.

However, we told the story ourselves next day to Captain Backhouse and Mrs Burton, knowing the Captain and all would hear it for whatever you say to

one seems to go the round of the saloon, interesting news is so very scarce on 'this 'ere ship'.

SATURDAY, JUNE 26th

A poor man died in the steerage of bronchitis; he was a Protestant and working his passage out to Melbourne. His death was rather unexpected, the Doctor was only with him the night he died. He and the Captain were called up suddenly, some of the Sisters heard him going by. The Doctor could do nothing. The Captain read the prayers and stayed with him till he died at 2 o'clock am, he was buried at 3 o'clock pm Saturday in a canvas coffin with sand and coal to sink it. But it did not sink and was visible for a long time; those who were there said 'this was a good sign' - of what, I wonder!

Of course, we were not present, but I heard the Captain read the service and the ship's flag was taken out for the occasion, as a pall, I suppose. There is another man very ill too with bronchitis, the great cold and damp here generally make an attack fatal. The last voyage, two gentleman passengers died. Saloon passengers feel uneasy lest the sisters should get cold, but thank God they are wonderfully well.

A curious ceremony took place the 21st June, which I forgot to mention before. The sailors had entered into their agreement that day month but were to receive no pay till they returned to London again lest they should leave the ship. So the crew wanted a few shillings to spend in Melbourne and they generally try, as they say 'to sell the old horse'. This is a wooden frame they dress up like a horse; it has a moveable head. A man mounts on it and the sailors push it and pull it along with ropes, even make it jump and caper in the dim evening light, it looks very natural, they say.

The horse was not brought up on the poop deck until 8 o'clock in the evening, the man mounted on its back began a song something about hoping this old horse may be sold. All the sailors joined in the chorus, twice it went round the deck and then the Auction began. Several gentlemen bid, at last it was bought by Captain Burton for 3 pounds, but this was a kind of subscription from the gentlemen to the crew, who cheered loudly for them, as it was more than they expected. The horse was then raised up with pulleys to the middle of the mainmast, the man sat on it, some lights were struck round it and then it was let fall with a great splash into the sea. This account was from those who witnessed the scene; I was in bed sick during the performance.

The Captain has a great eye on the sisters since the cold weather set in, he seems to think they do not come on deck sufficiently muffled and the other day sisters M. Boniface and Berchmans were walking together. They had their shawls on and were surprised by the Captain coming behind them and

enveloping them in a large warm shawl of his own, and telling them they should take care of themselves in such weather.

Although a very gentlemanly man he is very distant and reserved in his manner to all the passengers and this was quite a wonder among them. We were three weeks on board before he attempted even to bow to us. The first time he attempted it was after the sisters had sung Mass for the first time. He approached Sr M. Berchmans and Xaveria, cap in hand and told the former what pleasure she and the 'lady nuns' had given him that morning by their beautiful singing. He was at his usual post, the foot of the stairs behind the screen to keep 'all quiet' during Mass. He did not say anything of this himself; the steward told Fr Carey.

We passed a ship bound for Melbourne about the middle of June; it had started from London 12 days before us and we left it behind and out of sight in a very short time. It was a sailing vessel and we counted 20 sails up.

TUESDAY, JUNE 29th

Mass at 7 o'clock very rough, but all able to assist at it (T.G) in honour of SS Peter and Paul. Thanksgiving after Holy Communion in cabin, office and meditation in Ladies' Saloon. Not so stormy or cold as yesterday, some appearance of sun and deck pretty dry. The sisters had a good walk. I wrote the 'notes' in diary all morning till luncheon time, then had a walk with S. M. Boniface. Lecture in the Ladies' Saloon, about the middle of our reading Mrs Hebbe, the old Danish lady came in and as we then still continued, she seemed to like what she heard and remained to the end. It was a very nice lecture about the patience and charity of the Heart of Jesus and a chapter from Fr Faber's 'Growth in Holiness', I hope it may do her good.

Mr Ayles (chief Mate) sent the stewardess up with his pet of a little dog. It is just like a lump of white floss-silk. I never saw such hair as 'Flora's'. Something like M. Joseph's Snub, but not half the size. Helen amused herself with it a long time. Recreation after dinner and tea in Ladies' Saloon, amused ourselves with proverbs and puzzles etc., went to bed in good spirits, grateful to God, all well but poor Margaret. I thought of our Renovation Retreat last year, and M. Carmel's arrival in Enniscorthy, and prayed before I went to bed for you all as fervently as I could that God would love and bless you and make you every day dearer to His Sacred Heart. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30th

Finer day than even yesterday, more sun visible, passed Prince Edward's Island early in the morning, it was covered with snow. The Albatross and a kind of bird, yellowish breast and brown wings, flying round the ship in great circles. The gentlemen have lines and cords out to try and catch some of the

birds, up to this time they are unsuccessful. If they catch an albatross, they tie a little label of wood on its neck with the name of the ship and the latitude and longitude, then let it free. They say if it once got on deck, it could not get off without help. It measures about ten feet from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. They do not look so large on sea.

The first class passengers gave an entertainment in saloon in aid of a charity for seamen's orphans. Reading, Recitation, Songs and Piano pieces played by Mr Hebbe, the Dane.

THURSDAY, JULY 1st

Wet, cold, dull day, no getting out on deck, sisters busy studying and working, several little presents made for our lady friends and the children. Srs. M. Aloysius and Berchmans at point lace. M. Berchmans made a very pretty little paper basket for Mrs Rowe's (the Ballarat lady) little girl Bertine; it was filled with green woodmoss and everlastings. When Helen Hughes took it to her, she threw her arms round her neck and kissed her with delight and said she would go and kiss all the nuns. But when she came to the door of our saloon, she got frightened at seeing us all sitting round and could only bow and kiss hands from the door.

She is a beautiful child about 4 years old, but is greatly afraid of the nuns; however I met her a while ago and she gave me a good kiss. Her Mamma says she must often come to see us in Ballarat. I wish she would let us teach her for her soul's sake. Her little brother Philip's got his cadeau also, as he is two years old today. He is never happy but when with his Ma, at all other times 'He is a terrible roarer, so he is' and would want to be taught by M. Agnes' boys 'The first lesson of her little school – obedience'.

FRIDAY, JULY 2nd

Feast of the Visitation, a dull November day in appearance, damp, drear and cold, no wind out. All the sails furled and we are only creeping along; as the Captain has to be very saving of his coal, there is only half steam up. A great deal of his coal was wasted and rendered useless by the Fire we had in the Tropics. This makes the supply short, and the calm we have in this latitude is quite remarkable as the Captain expected a smart breeze and is every day disappointed. He took up the screw twice in two days and had to put it down again. It is much pleasanter sailing without the screw, but anything is better than standing still and rolling about.

The sisters are all entreating St. Michael to get us a favourable wind. We sent a little box today to Mrs Burton. It contained some nice samples of point lace, sprigs of leaves and butterflies on handsome bows of ribbon and silk,

also a pretty pin cushion and marker, all the work of Srs M. Aloysius and Berchmans.

Mrs B has just come to Ladies' Saloon to thank us; she and Captain B were so kind I am glad we had some little thing to give them. I have been thinking of dear sisters, who may have renewed their vows today, and united with them in spirit. I hope our Blessed Mother obtained for them all great love and fervour.

SATURDAY, JULY 3rd

Last night before going to bed, we all agreed to say the Little Crown of St. Michael and the Holy Angels, we said it together in, Ladies' Saloon. The consequence was the screw was taken up, the wind got up too and by the time we went to bed, the sea was so rough that we were nearly thrown out of our berths.

To make matters worse M. Xaveria's bed and mine had been so damp that the mattresses were removed and put on trunks for the night. So not having sides to keep us in like the berths, we were in danger of finding ourselves on the floor more quickly than gracefully. However, I was propped up and felt safe. The wind and sea continued to rise during the night and boxes, barrels and bottles began a noisy dance. Sometimes a loose tin trunk would take a caper and come smash against one of the cabin doors. A library over S. M. Xaveria's head, or rather a quantity of books on a shelf, rained down over her. She tried to stick on to the bed, but was not so successful in keeping blankets and quilt on.

A large bottle of Holy Water skipped across the room; it was broken against the opposite wall. A large wooden box or rather chest of Sr. Bruno's, that was over two trunks came down with a great crash bringing with it a cup and saucer which it left in pieces on the floor. A good deal of glass, chiefly bottles, was broken through the ship. We heard great laughing occasionally from the neighbouring cabins. St. Michael gave us a noisy night, but as there was no great storm, nor any danger, we felt most grateful to him when we found the ship had made such progress during the night.

Snow and hail had fallen during this time and someone made a snowball on deck, brought it down to saloon and said to one of the ladies: 'Now you may boast of having had a snowball in your hand in July'.

The sun came out beautifully after breakfast. Everyone went on deck. I delayed a little and when going upstairs met a lady who said the snow was beginning again. Still persevered and had a good walk in the snow. A very delicate lady, Mrs Cauldwell, who had not left her cabin for a fortnight, was seated on deck rolled up in a large fur rug. On her head, her husband had

put a bit of an old sail to keep off the snow. It had a strange effect; this lady has a fortune in diamonds worth I forget how many thousand pounds.

Mrs Cauldwell showed them to Fr. Carey, necklace, bracelets, a kind of tiara etc.. He said they were so bright he could not look at them. Took another long walk on deck, had a very pleasant recreation, sang the Litany of the Blessed Lady all together in Ladies' Saloon after supper, had a little music, said the Crown of St. Michael and the Angels again and went to bed.

SUNDAY, JULY 4th

Mass at 7 o'clock. Sea, so rough it took 40 minutes. Had some very nice singing and the usual attendance of Catholics and Protestants. Going rapidly along; Mrs Rowe came to our Saloon and said Captain Holt expects to be in Melbourne Saturday fortnight. We told her we expect to be in Friday 16th. She rather wondered we were a day before the Captain, but we calculated on the assistance of the Angels and their Queen.

During service in the Saloon, there were some droll scenes of tumbling and climbing on, we were told. The harmonium was brought into Saloon during breakfast. It remained standing for a moment or two. Then fell flat on its face; just as it was raised up and tied to a rail, an armful of cups and saucers our little waiter was carrying went down and changed their form on the floor, much to the amusement of Baby Backhouse, who was sitting near.

Fr Carey sent us his Sunday's dessert; it consisted of sugared strawberries and jellies and preserved ginger; nearly every Thursday and Sunday he gets something specially good and sends it to us.

After dinner every day, we have about eight different dishes of pies, puddings, tarts and sweets. It is nearly an hour before we come to the end of this course and we thought in the first days, this was quite long enough to sit, indeed, too long for most of us, so we all moved off; after a while we discovered there were two more courses, bread and cheese and fruit or preserves, but we never waited for either. It was as well not as we had a table to ourselves and could do as we liked and did not drink wine as at the other table.

I think the seculars rather admired our not staying, from the remarks they made. We had a quiet walk on deck instead during the fine weather, but the Steward George often brought to Fr Carey's cabin a sufficient supply for himself and the nuns.

Miss.....has had a severe attack on her chest, she is a delicate little thing. The Doctor ordered her to remain near the fire when she got up and as the stove is at the end of our table, she came to ask my leave to sit at our table

for a few days. I told her she should be a nun if she came to our refectory, she was amused at this, but only stayed 2 or 3 days.

She asked if I knew and liked Thomas a Kempis. Of course, I said yes, but surprised her by telling her the same as I did to Mrs Backhouse on a similar occasion - that in the Protestant edition of the Imitation, one beautiful part had to be left out: viz, the 4th book, but as it was all about the Blessed Sacrament and Mass, of course, it would not suit them. Both ladies said they never knew there was a 4th book and it was a pity to omit it. I said I should show it to them, as I will when an opportunity offers. Did not forget S. M. Scholastica's anniversary in Gorey. RIP

MONDAY, JULY 5th

We all said the Little Crown last night in Ladies' Saloon, but could not kneel, owing to the dancing propensities of the table. Which is not fastened to the floor, as all those in the large saloon are, still as they go with the ship, they sometimes present a strange appearance. But 'table moving' has ceased to be a wonder to us. The Captain told Mrs Backhouse a sad story of a table on one of his voyages. The tables were not well fixed and whilst at dinner, one of them fell on the Doctor of the ship and absolutely cut him in two. He was killed on the spot. I could well believe it, for the tables, chairs and all the furniture are immensely heavy; they seem to be weighted. There are wooden frames placed on the table in rough weather and the plates etc., are kept from slipping pretty well by them, provided you are careful to slant everything contrary to the slant of the ship, or the way it heaves.

I am often afraid, when I see everything on the table tumbling down to my side, lest the table should come after them. At breakfast this morning the moment Fr Carey's tea was laid on the table, away it went between Sr M. Gertrude and himself. The same happened to his soup at dinner and he and the sister next to him felt very nervous during the repast, owing to a large dish of some kind of hash swimming in a rich gravy. The steward placed it for safety in a dumb waiter over their heads and it swung to and fro in rather a nervous way for those beneath to look at. But they are really safe, as these swing-shelves and the lamps are hung on scientific principles so that they always keep their centre in equilibrium.

TUESDAY, JULY 6th

Last night very rough, but not so noisy as the night before. However, Bruno gave one grand contribution; she had tin cases of starch, flour and tea, with a smoothing iron on a shelf, which ran along the cabin and projected into the passage. All these boxes ran out and tumbled over with some soap and the iron, making a noisy din.

Mrs Benwick sent us one of the largest and most beautiful photographic albums I ever saw, filled with cartes of all living celebrities and two packages of large photographs, views of Rome, Florence, Venice, London and copies of some beautiful pictures. The smallest of these were the same size as Lawrence's views of the convent and nearly all much larger. Mr B got them wholesale to sell in Ballarat, where he has a large drapery establishment. He has a photographic Gallery of it too and told Mrs Backhouse the building of it cost 20,000 pounds.

A few days before he left London, he received intelligence of the death of his wife and he has a large, young family, awaiting him in Ballarat, the youngest an infant, he is very anxious to arrive home quickly.

The Captain announced a 'small storm' tonight, or, as he calls it 'a sneeze'; all things in the ship are secured, and so we go to bed, not expecting to sleep.

WEDNESDAY , JULY 7th

Before going to bed we heard that one of the sails of the ship had been carried away, still they say there is no storm, only a 'stiff breeze'. Anything to equal it!! The cabins seem to turn upside down. It would be impossible to describe it; the waves are dashing up over the windows, every few moments, darkening the room until they pass. During the night there was great noise, when the ship gave two or three great heaves, then sometimes there would be a great crash of bottles, plates, boxes and I know not what.

The stewards, midshipmen and all loungers about would cry out and laugh, sometimes run up and down the corridor, so that we half suspected some of the crashes were made up for the occasion, and for the benefit of the passengers trying to doze in their cabins.

THURSDAY, JULY 8th

The storm or 'sneeze' has increased; last night before going to bed we heard one of the sails had been carried away. S. M. Boniface had her bed on the floor in our cabin as she found it impossible to hold her high position over S. M. Aloysius' berth.

Few slept any during the night with the addition of an empty barrel rolling about. Sisters Gertrude, Aloysius and Boniface went to bed after breakfast to try and get a little sleep, Helen Hughes too. They were worn out for want of rest. I got in between a bed and a trunk on the floor of our cabin. I commenced my letters 'home' stopping every now and then when a great heave of the vessel would turn the things upside down or a wave dashing against the window left us all in darkness until it passed.

During these little interruptions it was necessary to seize the ink bottle in one hand and hold on to the bed or trunk with the other. S. M. Aloysius, seeing this going on from her berth, asked me gravely had I tied myself to the bed as she did not know otherwise how I kept from falling. However I got the contents of the ink bottle into my lap on one occasion and I hope my dear friends at home will take into consideration the difficulties of my 'pursuit of letters' when reading them.

A gentleman's servant was washed over the 2nd deck today by one wave and fortunately dashed back by another almost immediately, so he escaped with a cut head and of course a great shock. The little Commodore had a bad fall also and was brought downstairs crying like a baby. As a small consolation for all these accidents we are going at the rate of upwards of 300 miles in the 24 hours and if we could keep up that speed we should land in Melbourne on the 16th, we are still distant from it 2500 miles. The Captain is in great spirits.

FRIDAY, JULY 9th

Beautiful day, sea calmer, so that we could all have a nice walk on deck. Mrs Backhouse took a few rounds with us. She told me we have quite upset all the saloon passengers' previous ideas about nuns and even her own. She thought we should be very austere melancholy creatures, who really accepted of conventual life as a kind of last resource from the sorrows and disappointments of the world.

Here she sees the sisters at every hour of the day, the picture of content and happiness always occupied, cheerful and without restraint when spoken to, pure and free from the world and a great deal more, which she says quite puzzles her. I promised to give her Dr.....'s lectures on conventual life. They will enlighten her, as they were written more for Protestants than Catholics.

SATURDAY, JULY 10th

Rather rough this morning, confessions at one o'clock. Fear we cannot have Mass and Holy Communion tomorrow if it is not calmer. Today a pair of ducks scampered off our table before we went into dinner and ran into opposite cabins. Helen Hughes was sitting in saloon saw the race and recaptured; all moveables kept dancing during dinner.

SUNDAY, JULY 11th

No Mass, walking difficult, felt very much as if my old friend 'Oh my' sea-sickness was returning, but kept it off during the day. Captain had his service as usual, morning and evening in saloon.

MONDAY, JULY 12TH

Very sick, got up and dressed, then lay down on the floor, which was up on one side like the slant beside the terrace (Gorey) and then was as sea-sick as anything. M. Aloysius got the brandy and water, it burned me going down, as usual, but no matter, felt all the better after. I was not able to go into saloon today for meals, but had them in cabin. Stayed in bed nearly all day rolling about, but felt my headache much better after getting rid of so much.

TUESDAY, JULY 13th

Father Carey came to the cabin last night to know what hour would be best to say Mass in the cabin in the morning. We settled on 8 o'clock. Had Mass and Holy Communion in Fr Carey's cabin. Day very fine, and knew I should have a walk on deck, although I am as disinclined for walking exercise as ever. Sisters M. Aloysius and Dorothea are famous walkers. And S. M. Aloysius always manages that I should take a walk every day that it is practicable and indeed sometimes when it would seem not to be so, from the fact of the deck being on such a slant that Captain Backhouse says, we learn by it to walk like flies on the perpendicular.

He is the most incessant walker himself, being accustomed to it in the army and takes the greatest interest in my perambulations, enquiring have I had my walk and recommending the sisters to make me take it. Poor Sr Aloysius sea-sick today, but she has more energy than I have to shake it off or get over it. She was able to go to saloon and had her walk on deck.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14th

Gave our good Captain Holt his long promised treat of a little sacred music for himself. He came to Ladies' Saloon at half-past five o'clock (by appointment) and brought Father Carey with him, who never saw it before, as no gentleman ever comes in there. The Captain said that on other voyages he always had the Choir for Church service to practise there, but he did not this time, lest he should inconvenience the nuns.

We got the photographs of Rathfarnham and Gorey and showed them to our visitors, both were very much pleased with them. It was easy to see what a love for music the Captain has, his whole heart and soul seemed in it. The Sisters sang some of Mozart's 12th Mass, which is his favourite, a 'Tantum' 'Salutaris', 'Ave Maria', 'Te Prego', 'Alma Virgo', 'Memorare' and 'O Voices'; the Captain said he would much rather have that singing than the best Opera London could give him; that in fact, he would not compare any music with Sacred Music, but that of Sacred Music he preferred Masses; nothing, he said, made him so forget this world and all his troubles and took him so out of himself.

He often went to hear her Majesty's Organist (I forget the name) play in the private Chapel at Windsor, he says it is the most beautiful organ in England and beautifully played. Sometimes, they have Mozart's music, but Hayden or Weber is all the same to him so (long) as it is a Mass. I told him he must hope for a special enjoyment in Heaven, where there is endless beautiful music and we should all be able to sing so sweetly.

He told us of his father, who died of softening of the brain and nothing was able to tranquillise him, but Sacred Music; it was not unusual for his sister to play the harmonium all day long for him. Then, he would remain calm and at rest, but at all other times he would continue raving. The poor Captain said he often thought he should be like him before he died. We asked when was it better to come out to Australia in May or November; the Captain said November, decidedly the best for many reasons which he gave us. But remarked he never had so decidedly favourable a voyage at this time of year as the present.

We laughed about the superstition of sailors not wishing to have priests or nuns on board. He would not admit it was a general belief, particularly with regard to nuns. We said we hoped some of our sisters from Ireland would yet come out with him in the Somersetshire. Of course he said nothing would give him so much pleasure, and indeed I hope if any of the sisters will be inspired and get the permission to come to us, they may sail in the Somersetshire. For, with a view to make people be kind to them, we have tried to make friends for them in 'this ere ship'.

Captain Holt was only two Christmas' at home in twenty-five years. He returns to England next month, will leave for Melbourne again in November and when he arrives in London next April, thinks this ship is to be enlarged and get more powerful engines. Being an iron ship it will be easy to do this. Then she will be swift as well as sure. She has the name of being very safe, but not swift. I should tell you the Captain had his dress coat with gold lace and buttons on for our soiree. He wears this on Sundays and state occasions! He thanked us most warmly on leaving and we thanked him for all his kindness since we came on board.

THURSDAY, JULY 15th

Was aroused very early this morning by a man chopping sticks outside our cabin door. Yesterday it was some compatriot singing, 'God save Ireland'; last night while I was asleep there was a long piece of Scottish poetry recited at the lamp by a Mr Smith to an admiring audience. But one gets so accustomed to all the noises, one drowning the other, that they do not keep such good sleepers as I am awake.

Our cabins in Lower Saloon are much quieter than those in the Upper, as they are next the deck and have all the noise of the people and sailors walking over their heads, with the pulling of ropes, sails etc.. We are under the upper saloon; of course, we have some inconveniences also, but I agree with the Captain, who says that as a passenger, he would much prefer one of the lower cabins. This is a hint for our successors in this ship.

FRIDAY, JULY 16th

Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Mass and Holy Communion, thank God, prayed for M. Carmel. All feel so happy at the thought of being near our journey's end. The dislike of Saloon dishes grows nearly as strong as when it was a 'Chamber of Horrors', great betting on day and hour of arrival at Melbourne. I say we shall arrive in Ballarat on the 20th, St. Joseph's Feast.

SATURDAY, JULY 17th

Packed up all the morning.....don't mean to say by this that I succeeded in getting the early hours of the day packed up in our trunk, but got all loose things in the cabin stowed away and felt as if this were a great advance towards land. Went on deck for a long walk and some of our lady friends came to express their regret at our approaching separation. The Captain told Fr Carey that he intended to give a champagne party and supper to the saloon passengers this evening and he would be glad to know if the nuns and Fr Carey would honour the saloon with their presence.

Fr Carey said he did not think we would but could ask the nuns; of course we begged to be excused, particularly as we should all retire early, to rise early for Mass. Some of the stewards told Fr Carey that the party would not break up till about 2 or 3 o'clock am; also that there would be no tea at seven in the saloon, as the supper was to take place at 9 o'clock.

We made up our minds we should not be down after our tea. After dinner our waiter (Benjamin) informed me during dessert that there would be coffee if we would wait, 'as there was to be no tea'. I told him calmly we could not take supper and dinner at the same time and that we intended to have our tea in the Ladies' Saloon, so we were suffered to depart in peace.

At seven, Benjamin appeared in Ladies' Saloon with tea-cups, bread, etc., the stewardess also assisting. They brought in a white table cloth and I thought we were going to have something special, but no, the usual bread, butter and jam and toast. The sea got very rough and the little table commenced to pitch about, to the no small danger of Srs Berchmans' and Dorothea's heads. They were sitting on the floor and had their picnic on a box where the bibles and service books were kept. When going down to our cabins, we met some of the guests, visibly decked out for the party.

SUNDAY, JULY 18th

Ship rolled fearfully all last night, difficult dressing in the morning, but all got up early with the hope of Mass. Fr Carey held a consultation and we decided to wait till half-past eight, to see if it might get calmer. S. M. Berchmans made several attempts to arrange the altar, but at last we abandoned the idea of hearing Mass, much to the disappointment of some ladies, particularly Mrs Burton and Mrs Rowe, who had risen early after their late sit up, to assist at our last Mass, perhaps, I should say hear our last singing, but I think it is a good thing to bring poor wandering souls into the Real Presence of our dearest Lord, when they know how to observe a becoming reverence, as all our visitors did. Each one heard her own Mass in private; there was no church service today.

A long strip of land visible, but very distant; they say it is 'Portland, diocese of Ballarat'. Everyone hopes we may arrive at Cape Ottaway before dark, that we may be telegraphed to Melbourne and get the pilot on board. Saw the lights on Cape Ottaway about eight o'clock.

MONDAY, JULY 19th

Last night, we were awakened by the ship stopping, and great cheering of the crew, for the pilot who came on board. The night was so bright with moonlight. When we woke in the morning we were safe at Sandridge Pier and crowds of beautiful ships round us. Said grateful prayers and hurried up on deck, a pretty sight was to be seen from it. A large man-of-war just beside us, all the guns mounted and pointed.

We were told it was the Melbourne training ship, small boats and skiffs coming over the Bay to the Somersetshire, some of the vessels moved aside, and ours came up close to the pier. A railway for luggage comes along it up to the side of the ship, no climbing down a ladder, but you just step from the ship to the pier.

Friends of passengers had already come on board and when we went down to breakfast there were several new faces, amongst them some of the children of Mr Benwick; it must have been a sad meeting.

The newspapers were eagerly read by the gentlemen. We enjoyed beef-steaks and fresh eggs for breakfast. The officer of health came on board, our Doctor gave a favourable account of the health of the passengers and crew. All were indeed, thank God, well. So no fear of quarantine at Sandridge.

Immediately after breakfast, we hastened to put the finishing touch to our packing. Trunks were corded, addresses looked to, the stewardess rewarded with 1 pound. George ditto, little Benjamin 10/-. Helen and Father Carey contributed their share, and all officials were particularly attentive and obliging.

We put on Communion veils, kid gloves and boots, took our shawls on our arms and went on deck to look out for the Bishop, although we were told that unless a telegram was sent from Cape Ottaway the evening before, our arrival could not be known.

Our friends came to take leave of us; none seemed so affected as Mrs and Captain Burton, Mrs Hobson (her mother), Mrs Macaffey and Mrs Backhouse. The ladies shed tears. Poor Mrs Hebbe 'the Dane' met a severe trial; the old lady had great fears she should die of joy on seeing her son on board the ship and now the news came that he had left Melbourne and gone to India. Both mother and brother were in great grief and we tried to console them by everything we could think of, while the kind-hearted Mr Cauldwell went into Melbourne to find out the truth of the report.

Before we left, we had the satisfaction to learn that Mr C returned with the good news that Mr Hebbe the elder was in Sydney and would return in a few days. In the meantime, two strange priests came on board and I was called forward to be introduced to them. They were, Father Cahill, Superior of the Jesuits in Melbourne and Father Watson SJ. Fr Cahill said he was commissioned by Dr. O'Connor to meet us and give us welcome whenever we arrived, in case he should not be on the spot himself. So now he welcomed us to Australia for our Bishop, as his Lordship could not be in Melbourne before the 4 o'clock train.

We were to go with him into the city, or rather with Fr Watson, and he would go on and provide carriages for us by the time we reached Melbourne, as he wished us to go to the Archbishop first and then to the Good Shepherd nuns at Abbotsford. So, recommending our luggage to the special care of the first Officer, Mr. Ayles, bidding him and all others adieu, we left the ship same way as we entered it, except there was no ladder nor stairs, at the side of the ship, which was on a level with the pier.

Father Watson led the way and impressed on us that we need not walk quickly, but follow slowly after him, this we did, three and three, like a procession. Only we carried little black bags with things for our immediate use, this was a wise precaution. Sandridge Pier is about ten minutes walk from the railway station. Arrived there we had a delay of half an hour. I begged Fr. Watson to take the purse and get the tickets.

There were such a number of us, but he would not. Said Fr Cahill would settle all, this good Fr returned by the up train with a Fr O'Sullivan from the Archbishop's. We got into the train, and in about seven minutes arrived in Melbourne. Here two large waggonettes received us all, they were covered overhead.

The Jesuits sat outside with the drivers and pointed out the principal parts of buildings as we passed. Some of them were magnificent, the Treasury, the Governor's House etc., streets large and wide at the sides. We drove up a handsome avenue and stopped before the Archbishop's residence, it has a most imposing appearance. The usual veranda, which surrounds all the houses was represented here by a massive colonnade.

We mounted the steps to it and the hall door was opened by a coloured servant man who, however, is a native of Ceylon. He informed us that His Grace was not at home, but Dr. Fitzpatrick, Vicar General and some of the priests of the Cathedral welcomed us and proposed to show us the beauties of the house and the Cathedral.

We went with them to the splendid library. It is an immense, long room, beautifully furnished, an immense quantity of books round the walls. And cabinets under them on which were vases, bronze statues, pictures or engravings, and so many beautiful things that one of the Jesuits said to one of the sisters, who stopped to examine some article of 'vertu', 'Oh, sister, if you stop to look at half the things here, we shall not be out of this today!'

However, I could not pass a beautiful white marble or porphyry cross, twined round with such exquisite wax flowers that I thought I had never seen anything more beautiful. At one end of this room a door opened into a gallery or tribune. We entered and found ourselves in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the Archbishop's private chapel! It is a perfect gem. Stairs from the tribune led down to it, we were happy to kneel once more in a Chapel. It was the first time since the 20th May in Rathfarnham.

We then admired everything and particularly noted the beautiful Stations of the Cross, they were in half relief, not very large, but beautifully carved and delicately coloured.

After thanking our Lord for our safe arrival and begging His blessing, we followed our guides to the picture gallery. It was a beautiful room, lighted from a dome in the roof. I will not describe the pictures, only they were large and looked like good copies from the old Masters, but as some of these gentry never paint according to my 'beau-ideal', we are not great friends. I am not capable of judging of their excellences and no one with us seemed to know much about them.

So we walked through quickly; I could not help wishing there had been a clothing society for painted children in Rome at the time of the 'Great Masters'. There was a handsome Altar covered and festooned with crimson velvet and gold fringe at the upper end of the room. Over it was a beautiful painting of the Communion of St. Jerome, the priests told us the Archbishop used this for a chapel while his own was being newly decorated.

We next went up on the roof of the house, it is surrounded by a balustrade, but the roofs and chimneys rose up all about us. We were well screened, though the view was not hidden and a very fine view it was - the splendid Cathedral near us, the Jesuit College which almost joins it, the Christian Brothers' an immense building, the Governor's House, Treasury etc., and Abbotsford convent in the distance.

Dr Fitzpatrick brought us an opera-glass to look through. One thing struck us very much, the number of churches and all nearly with crosses on gables and spires. We were told that all different religions build their own churches and nearly all put crosses on them, so that is no sign here of a Catholic Church.

We pointed out one very pretty church just opposite the Cathedral and Fr O'Sullivan laughingly told us that was a lady's church, a Miss Turner, she built it herself and now preaches in it every Sunday and has a large audience too.

Here, on the top of the house Sr M. Berchmans had her first meeting with her uncle Fr Dalton SJ, he came up as he said, to look for 'his nun, his child'; we were all disappointed at not meeting him on our landing. But Fr Cahill told us it was impossible for him to come, as he was in the law courts, on a case of great importance about some poor little children left by their dying mother to his care, but now claimed by the Protestants, and all Melbourne was excited and divided on the issue of the case. We had great fun with M. Berchmans about her uncle being in the hands of the police, when we arrived.

Both uncle and niece seemed very much affected at the meeting and very glad to see each other. Fr Dalton has goodness and kindness in his very appearance. He was very kind to all the sisters. The good priests had a nice luncheon prepared for us and though we felt ashamed, eleven of us sitting down to be waited on by them, we did ample justice to everything and all seemed delicious, it being our first taste of food on land for two months nearly. We quite forgot our promises of not looking at tea for three months after our landing. Some of us could never force ourselves to take the beverage so called on board the Somersetshire and had recourse to water and milk. Some called it chalk and water, but that was a calumny, as the water was whitened with real milk, and very glad and grateful we were to get it.

I should have mentioned that before this we visited the Cathedral, and I do not think I will try to describe it, for it is a truly magnificent building, planned nobly, but some say so vast that it will never be finished; still I am sure it will. The Altar is now placed about where the centre of the church will be when finished. There is one grand stained glass window. I think it is the large western one. All the other windows are filled with amber glass and this subdued light had a very fine effect on the noble pillars and arches, the Sanctuary and all the decorations.

The side chapels were to the BVM as Mary Immaculate and to the Sacred Heart; there was a very beautiful painting of the Sacred Heart with a cross, that is our Lord was represented carrying the cross and pointing to His Heart.

There was a very large white marble crucifix in the Sanctuary, when the Altar is finished the cross will be placed behind, as in the church in Gorey. The altar-rails were very beautiful gilt metal. The Blessed Sacrament is kept in a side chapel. The Stations here also are peculiarly beautiful carved figures, coloured and very large. Fr O'Sullivan introduced Dr Fitzpatrick as the 'guardian genius' of the Cathedral, as it was all built under his inspiration.

As they are building it still he almost lives in it and seems to love every stone (builder like); he is a most saintly looking old man, very gentle and quick in his manners, reminded some of the Cure d'Ars. Fr Carey stayed at the Archbishop's to see us again in the evening or next morning. He looked very sorry when saying good-bye. Bidding good-bye with grateful thanks to our kind hosts, we again mounted our Waggonettes, and set off for the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Abbotsford, Frs Dalton, Cahill and Watson accompanying us. Fr Dalton is confessor to the nuns and penitents and an immense favourite, as we soon perceived.

When we arrived, we were shown into a large and handsomely furnished reception room. A rich Brussels carpet completely covered the floor, a lounge, easy chairs, even flowers, fancy work and other ornaments. The walls had several oil paintings, we were told many of them were the productions of one of the sisters, a Colonial, and Mother Assistant.

Three or four of the nuns came to us, we got a warm welcome from all; cake and wine were brought to us; we did not do much in that way, owing to the luncheon at the Archbishop's. After a little I asked for Mary Cullen, and she came to us, delighted of course to see an old friend from Gorey. She is certainly in appearance one of the nicest nuns in the community, and there are many very nice nuns among them.

There are about 32 sisters or more there. Fr Dalton introduced Mother Euphrasia to me as his greatest torment. She is the Assistant, loves the poor penitents so much that she is continually devising something for their spiritual good, which of course Fr Dalton has to carry out. Even then, she was talking to him about their retreat.

They were going through it then and several were to make their consecration at the end and take what they call their 'final vows'. This good Mother being 'a Colonial' has constantly to defend her native land from the jesting attacks of all who take pleasure in tormenting her on this head.

Now, they were teasing her about the incessant rain, which had poured down for some days past 'I've the most delightful climate in the world', she answered, whatever this climate did, it did properly. When it rained it rained earnestly. When the sun shone, it shone brilliantly; all agreed it did the latter with a vengeance in Melbourne. The priests complained of the cold of the day, we found it like a pet day in April, but we were told when we were some years in Australia we should feel the cold as they did. Strange to say, long years of residence make people less able to bear the cold.

ABBOTSFORD

We were conducted by several of the sisters through the convent and places where their works of charity and industry are carried on, and first to the chapel. It is quite a new building in the form of a cross, sanctuary very large in proportion to the rest. No altar rails but a step like Rathfarnham. The nuns are in the choir front of the Altar. The left transept is screened off and appropriated to seculars, who come to the morning Mass.

The right transept is also screened off and over it is a large gallery; the lower part of this choir or transept, is occupied by the penitents, the gallery above by the children of the Industrial Schools. The altar is plain, seemed painted wood, at either side there is one to the Sacred Heart and to our Immaculate Mother. Both statues very handsome and devotional and tastefully decorated. Behind the altar is a chancel, the width of the Sanctuary, all the windows beautiful stained glass.

We then went on to see the Industrial School, fine large room, two rows of desks down both sides, passage down the centre and a large wood fire burning in the grate at the end of the room. All the children wore white pinafores and looked bright and happy. There were about 300 children, some not more than 2 ½ up to about 12 years of age.

They commenced singing as soon as we went in; they sang their school songs, so as to give us a great idea of the lungs of the young Colonials. The action was energetic and perfect. We visited the work rooms, where the more grown learned to make and mend clothes, the wash house and bakery, where the Industrial children are taught. They are quite distinct in all things from the penitents.

The dormitory is extremely neat; a little room at the end contained two beds just like our boarders' beds, trimmed with white, for the two nuns who sleep in the dormitory. Two little children, one in her nice little white bed, the other, a wee thing, seated in a little chair beside the bright wood fire, looked happy and cared for.

We then went to see the Penitents (they were nearly all Irish, 140) in a large house, engaged in washing, and several children of Mary, wearing their blue ribbons and medals, were amongst them. This is given as the first reward of good conduct in the house. Afterwards, if they wish, they become 'consecrated', and wear a special dress and something like a sun bonnet instead of a veil.

Several of these were engaged folding and ironing and looked sweet gentle young creatures. What happiness to see them there safe and at rest! The whole of the women sang one or two hymns, there were beautiful voices among them. They then sang 'The Shamrock' for the sisters from Ireland.

There is a beautiful oratory for the consecrated Penitents, dedicated to Our Lady of Dolours, a large, black cross on the Altar and a statue of our Immaculate Mother stands beneath, the drapery white, edged with black lace; most beautiful flowers, lilies of the Nile, roses, geraniums, all natural were on the altar; a beautiful white marble statue of St. Mary Magdalen is also in the little chapel. The Office of Our Lady is said here every day.

We visited all the rooms and places where the different industries are carried on; in one room they were making the nuns' untanned leather shoes. Whilst at work they hardly ever stop singing. The sisters told me this was very useful and even necessary. Returning from the convent we visited the Infirmary and saw a sister who had been cured by a miracle about two years ago, through the intercession of Pere Eudes, the founder of the Good Shepherd nuns. She was now suffering from a bad knee.

I did not see the community room and noviceship, but some of the other sisters did, they say they were very nice:- carpets all over the floors and cloths on the table like a reception room, piano in community room, two bathrooms. I like the staircase painted all white, with a grey and white saving cloth like MRA.

It was raining heavily as we returned from our wanderings and the sisters made us put on large black and white (shepherd's plaid) shawls.

Dinner was now ready for us and the Jesuit Frs, Frs O'Sullivan and Dalton returned to Melbourne leaving Frs Cahill and Watson SJ to bring us to see the Jesuit Church and house at Richmond. As it was so late Fr Cahill thought we could not see the place well and it would be better defer it till morning. I thought the same, so one of the Waggonettes was dismissed, and we sat down to a good dinner of home produce, the Jesuits carving and eating and the good sisters waiting on us.

Margaret, Ellen and Bruno had a side table, we had been introduced to a gentleman in the morning a Mr O'Keefe, who said his wife could provide lodging for two of our seculars, so Margaret and Ellen were selected. Mr O'Keefe's only child is a nun in Abbotsford; he took her to Ireland and half round the world, before he would allow her to enter, but after seeing every place, she returned to the Good Shepherds, faithful to her first vocation.

Abbotsford could only accommodate five; the Jesuits told us before we went there that we could not expect to remain all in the one convent. After dinner we had to decide who should go with Fr Cahill to Mrs Jones of Richmond. I wished M. Berchmans to go, on account of Fr Dalton her uncle, who lives at Richmond and so it seemed better to send all who had shared Cabin D with her in the Somersetshire.

Sisters M. Xaveria, Dorothea and Berchmans, then took possession of the waggonettes and set off with the Jesuits for Richmond, Sisters M. Aloysius, Gertrude, Boniface, Bruno, Helen Hughes and myself remaining in Abbotsford. Reverent Mother said she was sure we would like to get a little quiet time to ourselves and showed us into another parlour more handsomely furnished even than the other. All of us remarked on the beautiful chairs, carpeting etc., and it made us say the good people at home have no idea of the grand scale on which things in general are carried on here.

We went to bed early, after again visiting the chapel. How delightful and quiet all appeared after the noisy, tossing cabins. I occupied Sr Margaret Mary's cell; she came to see us just before we went to bed; she had been to see our convent in Dublin and so took a special interest in us.

She is a very nice lively little sister and looks very young to have travelled so much. I measured the cell as it looked like one I would wish to have for the sisters in Ballarat. It was 10 feet by about 11, very lofty, a large arched window, plate glass, green venetian blinds, walls white, beds like our boarders' beds, white counterpanes, a large engraving of the Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, over the table near the bed and a large crucifix on opposite wall.

A Holy water font at the door, a little statue of BVM on table, glass over the door to allow light from the corridor to shine into the cells, but I did not require this, as I had a candle in a silver plated candlestick; all the sisters cells on same corridor were the same, we remarked all the rooms and passages extremely lofty.

Said my prayers with a very grateful heart and slept well, T.G., till about half past five am when some one called me for Sr. Margaret Mary. I was not sorry for the mistake, as I had good time to dress and make my meditation before Mary Cullen, Sr Gertrude, called me. She also came to bring us to Mass 7 o'clock.

We had chairs at each side of the Sanctuary. Fr Kelly SJ said Mass, after it there was a hymn sung and some prayers said by the children, then, a hymn and prayers from the Penitents. They vary the hymns, we were told, according to the day or season.

We had breakfast in the second parlour; three long windows and a glass door opened on the verandah; we heard this room had been used as a chapel until the other had been built and I am sure it was a pretty one.

Before we had finished breakfast Fr Kelly sent to know if he could see us. Of course we said yes, and he had scarcely come in, when the Bishop, Dr O'Connor and Dean Moore were announced, to the great delight of the sisters, who knew his Lordship, and to the no small trepidation of one who had to be introduced.

The Bishop seemed quite enchanted to see all safe and well, he gave us a truly fatherly welcome, and we felt at home in a moment. Dean Moore was also very kind. The Bishop said he must go to say Mass of Thanksgiving. We were all to be ready to start for Ballarat immediately after. Fr Kelly was commissioned to send the three sisters from Richmond, but their friends there were greatly displeased to hear we should start without the sisters who remained at Abbotsford going to see them, and indeed Fr Cahill and some of the others said they would not allow the three to return until we went for them.

They were prevailed on to allow them to depart. They regretted very much that the Bishop was in such a hurry to get us home for they intended we should all see the Jesuit Churches and houses at Richmond and Melbourne, the Presentation at Kildare's and the Mercy nuns at Nicholas St, Melbourne.

Reverend Mother at Abbotsford said we should have singing Mass, and the sisters gave us a very pretty Mass. The Dean, or his title, Dr Moore, assisted the Bishop at Mass, and when it was finished, we went to pack up our black bags and then met the Bishop and Dean, who were breakfasting in the large parlour.

Many kind enquiries were made by his Lordship for Reverend Mother in Rathfarnham and elsewhere. He told of a great mistake, which had been made by him the day before. He and the Dean intended to come to Melbourne by the midday train, but learning that some preparations for us had to be seen to in the Presbytery, the Dean decided to remain and see to them, while the Bishop hurried on to catch the train; some of the officials came out to see the Bishop into a good carriage, opened the door and he stepped in, all anxiety to reach Melbourne as soon as possible.

The first station he stopped at seemed strange, the second, stranger, he had seen it before, but not on his way to Melbourne. Before he could call a guard the train started again, and at the third station he got out and learned that he was on his way to Ararat, a town in a directly contrary direction to Melbourne!

What was he to do now? 27 miles from Ballarat and no train till late in the evening, no car or horse for hire in the bush. He had to send several miles for the loan of a carriage and arrived back to Ballarat only in time to go with the Dean in the evening train. They arrived in Melbourne between 11 and 12 at night. He laughed heartily and got laughed at for the mistake.

Our sisters arrived from Richmond, another glad meeting with the Bishop, then we prepared to say goodbye to the kind sisters at Abbotsford, thanking them for their hospitality, and hoping they might yet have a mission in Ballarat.

We got into three carriages and drove again to the Archbishop's. Dr O'Connor was anxious to present us and get Dr Gould's blessing for us. His Grace came out to the verandah to meet us and brought us into a parlour, the floor of which was of mosaic tiles, covered with pieces of matting and carpet for coolness' sake, I suppose.

The Archbishop is a very venerable looking old man with a kind manner; he congratulated Dr O'Connor on getting us for his Diocese, said he was not so fortunate, though he asked years ago. Mrs Ball entertained the petition favourably, but nothing came of it; he repeated this 2 or 3 times and added 'I suppose she did not think Australia was within the pale of the civilised world'.

He regretted we could not wait to see the schools and orphanages under the care of the nuns in Melbourne, he said he had to begin with four sisters, and two of that number died; he also, regretted not being at home the day before when we called. He asked, was there anything we had not seen, and hoped we had had a good luncheon.

We satisfied him on all these points and rose to take our leave; he blessed us all again and we remounted our carriages to go to the train. Dr Fitzpatrick, Fr O'Sullivan and poor Fr Carey saw us off, Father Carey promising to come see us as soon as he could; he looked quite lonely after his Somersetshire friends who can never forget his kindness on 'that 'ere ship'.

Fr Cahill had to go to the College, but Frs Dalton, Kelly and a German Jesuit, came with us to the station; the latter had a talk with S. M. Boniface in their native tongue. We all travelled 1st class had a carriage all to ourselves, the Bishop, Dean, Margaret, Ellen in the next carriage; at nearly every stop the Bishop got out to see how we were getting on; he made the Dean buy oranges at one of the stations.

Nothing amused us more than the strange little wooden houses, some of them very pretty and in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, roses and other summer flowers, although we must not forget this is mid-winter here. Between Gorey and Enniscorthy there is a small station house built of wood and the way the boards are planned and set is exactly the same as the way they are set in all the wooden houses in Australia, no matter what size the house may be.

Ballarat is 69 miles from Melbourne, and takes four hours by train. The country is flat and not very interesting to look at, little mountains of rock rise suddenly and sharply sometimes out of the plain and hills or low mountains looking quite blue in the distance run all along the route; there were some pretty views here and there.

Geelong, half way between Melbourne and Ballarat, is a town prettily situated on a bay or arm of the sea; the Bishop came to us at this station and said he was sorry we could not stop and see the convent of the sisters of Mercy there, but if we stopped we should lose the day and he was anxious we should arrive in Ballarat by dinner time.

We passed through a good deal of bush and I was surprised to see a good deal of bark from the trees lying on the ground, as the native trees shed their bark instead of their leaves, which are evergreen

BALLARAT

There are two railway stations in Ballarat, East Station and West ditto, we passed the East and went to the West. Ballarat from a hill just near the station, the city looked large and handsome with a bright sun shining on it.

Our arrival was to be kept a secret, as the Dean said if it were announced thousands would be waiting to receive us and we might not like a crowd on the platform, even before the train quite stopped some rushed into it, exclaiming 'Thanks be to God! let us get one look at them. Oh! What a sight for us, poor creatures in a foreign land! Praise be to God!' etc..

The Bishop and priests now appeared and the people retired, a passage was made through the crowd, his Lordship came to our railway carriage and called us out by name to him. It seemed he wanted the ancients first, as he handed myself, Srs M. Aloysius, Gertrude and Xaveria into his own carriage, the one the people of Ballarat presented him.

Sisters M. Boniface, Berchmans, Dorothea and Bruno were in the next; Helen Hughes, Margaret and Ellen had a cab, while the Bishop and Dean got into an open carriage with a pair of spanking bays, and led the procession down Sturt Street. A great many ladies and gentlemen waited on the colonnade at the railway station to see the nuns, amongst them Mrs Rowe and family. She came up from Melbourne in the same train; her father, Archdeacon Stretch, met her, a sad meeting I am sure, when she thought of the parting so short a time before.

Sturt Street is a splendid street much wider than Sackville Street; trees are planted at both sides, the shops and houses look very fine; there are some good public buildings, but we did not know what they were; as we passed the Town Hall, a beautiful peal of joy bells chimed out and kept ringing till after we had arrived at our destination.

They are rung, I believe, one or two evenings in the week, but if not rung specially for us, it was a pleasant coincidence for them to commence just as we came up to them. All the people stared at us as we went along, the Catholics I am sure rejoiced; as for us we prayed earnestly that God might give us grace to do some good amongst them, indeed as soon as we caught sight of the city from the train we began to pray for ourselves and the people and to invoke the Holy Angels of the place.

The carriages drove to the Cathedral, as the Bishop said he wanted to say a private 'Te Deum' there with us, and the priests for our safe arrival; but, a public one was to be said the following Sunday and we were to assist at it, so I will not describe the church – which is a very fine one – until then: there was no one in it when we went in, but when we turned to come out, there was a crowd kneeling in the seats in the Nave.

The Bishop said the Te Deum in the side chapel where the Blessed Sacrament was, the priests answering him and the Dean; we stood and said it with our hearts. Again in the carriages and on our way to our temporary convent, the Bishop told us we were to have a wooden house, great inconveniences etc., so we were not at all prepared for the stylish abode of -

THE PRESBYTERY

The carriages drove up to a handsome Gothic Church, a gate was opened just beside it and we found ourselves in a lawn and flower garden at one side, an orchard at the other and between both such a pretty house with large pointed windows, a porch, several stables and a verandah and raised walk running all round. At the door we were met by old Bridget the Bishop's house keeper, now called Miss Roche, all smiles and silks and looking young (40 pounds per annum instead of 10 pounds)

When we were all landed in the Parlour, we got the Bishop's blessing again, and while waiting for dinner to be placed on the table, we went out with him to explore the unknown regions of the Presbytery grounds.

First of all the Bishop took us across the garden to the Church of St. Alipius; a side door leading into the vestry opens on the garden and by it we could get into the Church whenever we wished. The Church is newly built, not yet dedicated, a good size, so large indeed that a priest from America who said Mass for us a few days after our arrival, thought it was the Cathedral.

It consists of a nave and two aisles, no transepts, the arches pointed Gothic, pillars of a smooth kind of grey stone, two rows of windows filled with amber glass, seats and altar rails of polished pine; the Altar very handsomely carved. The altar of BVM is at right of the high altar and a kind of chapel not dedicated yet to any particular saint. Picture of the Crucifixion in oils over the altar; vases of beautiful artificial flowers and grapes under glass shades on the altar; all the spaces between the benches in the nave and aisles are covered with matting; the altar piece over the High Altar is a copy of Raphael's Transfiguration. Our place in the Church here is near the altar of the BVM; there is a nice statue of Mary Immaculate.

After a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament we went through the grounds; there is a pretty little summer house just opposite the house, with seven sides, one for each of us. In the orchard there are apple, pear, cherry and gooseberry trees, a bath house and a summer house; there are large aloe plants more than five feet high, a small kind of palm trees, rhododendron, laurel, laurustinus and many other shrubs I do not know the names of.

I was delighted to see the familiar flowers, two large lilies of the Nile in the middle of the garden square, standing in the open ground all the winter, but the leaves are not so tall at home, owing I suppose, to the want of moisture. There were beautiful pansies, geraniums of all kinds, but not in flower, fuchsias ditto, verbenas and a good collection of plants on two flower stands under the verandah.

I almost thought the cactus (S. M. Bertrand's pelone) and a seed...of Mrs Martin's had been transported by some other means than the 'Somersetshire'; pots and plants are exactly like those in Enniscorthy and several others so like that I am frequently in the day reminded of our greenhouse under the trestles in MRA.

Fresh sand or gravel had been brought from the goldmine, the shaft of which is only a few yards from the Church; the sand or gravel is of a light yellow colour and looks very pretty and clean on the walks. The gold mines are called 'claims' here, one neighbouring claim works day and night sometimes, thanks to my ear, I do not hear it. There is also a crushing mill near; this extracts the gold from the stone, 4 penny weights being considered good in a ton, but large nuggets are sometimes found near the surface; 4 pounds per ounce is their value here.

But we were told long ago the dinner was waiting and the Bishop and priests said they knew we were longing to be left to ourselves, and so went off with a promise to return and see if we wanted anything in the evening. There was a grand dinner prepared, prominent in it was an immense turkey and roast beef, some of the finest potatoes and other vegetables I ever saw, several kinds of wine and champagne by the Dean's order.

We all had a good appetite, and did justice to our good dinner; afterwards we were to go and inspect the house. As you come into the hall there is a nice parlour at one side, two large windows, Gothic circle, plate glass, venetian blinds light green, lace curtains hung from large pole fastened to the ceiling, paper white and gold, large chimney glass, library and a beautiful harmonium, much larger than the one in Gorey, cost 86 guineas, pictures and photographs; I give particulars to show how the priests are lodged here.

There are five bedrooms well furnished, a nice library in four of them. All the rooms here are carpeted. The priests' dining room was our refectory and community room; it is a very large and cheerful room; besides, there are kitchen, pantries and servants' rooms. So a wooden house can contain a good deal of room. I forgot to say it is surrounded by a high wooden fence, like a high wall: the boards are closely joined and painted white, the upright post black; it has a very neat appearance and makes the garden as retired as a wall or enclosure; this is the way all houses or fields or paddocks, as they are called, are fenced in here, no stone walls.

All round the house are planted the blue gum trees, so good for the air and the chest, they are immense high trees evergreen and in shape resemble very much the poplar or sally; I enclose a leaf, it has a strong smell of gum, when broken or rubbed in its green state.

There is certainly no lack of water for in the garden and grounds there are 4 or 5 supplies; an iron tube stands up out of the ground about 3 feet, a brass cock on the top; turn this and you have as much as you wish. Two of these are in the garden and it seems to me a great improvement the usual way of getting water at home.

Another thing we all like very much is the fire of wood, it is so bright and cheery and so easily lighted. I think it must be some kind of gum wood, even if wet with the rain it will take fire like a match and after blazing for sometime, settle down into a bright fire like charcoal, scarcely any smoke or dust.

Sr Bruno said she would never like to see a coal fire again. The hearths of course are built for wood. Little Helen loves fire making; here 'tis a pleasant job not like the tasks the sister in Enniscorthy had last Christmas; I often think of them when I see the fire being kindled and poor M. Bertrand and M. Agnes's efforts to equal more fortunate speculators.

For about a fortnight after we came, the weather was beautiful morning and evening, a little chilly, enough to make wood fires pleasant. As a matter of course, we are here inundated with visitors of all ages, ranks and degrees; for although there is much greater equality here than in Europe, still there is a remarkable difference between those of 'the good old stock' who came out to build up their broken fortunes and the working classes who came to better themselves, and have generally done so much better than the other class.

There are many of the nicest ladies I ever met here and many women who seem immensely rich, but somehow you would not like to speak disdainfully of servants in their presence, feeling that they were once of that class; but all the young people are nice and in manner, accent and general appearance, much superior to the middle class of children and young people at home.

Of course, we have not had any practical experience of the children yet, but they seem very precocious, the young people nearly all are anxious to do something for themselves and seem rather proud to be in business or teaching a school; but I am afraid, there is a want of obedience and respect to their parents and a little general 'fastness', but the Bishop and others give them a good character for docility and generosity, and nearly all the girls that have had the advantage of conventual education in Melbourne or Geelong are very good, this is encouraging.

They are certainly a generous people, for the presents are beyond all counting and we are generally told they are waiting till we get into our own house. When the parlour is full of visitors two or three of the sisters hold a levee on the verandah and the same conversation is gone over and over with different batches of people.

They welcome us to their colony, inquire about our voyage and present state of health and if we think we shall like Ballarat; we ask what part of Ireland they are from how long they are 'out'; they tell us their experience, ask about 'Home' as they always call Ireland, bid us goodbye and then we begin with another new set, the same thing, with little variation, over again.

We are often amused to see how heartily a good servant will shake hands with a lady and the lady with her; the latter will sometimes ask us: 'Who is that? I do not think I ever saw her before.' Introductions, at least, in the convent, are not thought necessary.

People will come more than 10 miles and bring their children just 'to see a nun'; there is often a great deal of weeping on these occasions at being so reminded of old times and the nuns they saw long ago 'at home'; the remembrance will do them good.

The anxiety of the poor mothers to have their little children come to a convent school makes it most painful to have to refuse them, at least, until we can have a free school. There has been a great depression of trade, particularly the mines, in Ballarat lately, and the Dean says it is harder to get one pound now than to get 50 some years ago.

There are a great many Protestants, Germans and Jews here; some of each class have visited us and Protestants ask the priests will we take Protestant children in our schools. A great number of the priests from distant districts have visited us, some two days' journey off and some from Melbourne, who knew our sisters in Ireland; they all promise to send boarders – when we get into our convent.

They are all very hard worked, but seem to like their missions and the work. One of our priests here in Ballarat told us the Bishop is so kind and good to them, that they feel like at home with him, and do not miss their fathers or family in Ireland.

The Sunday after our arrival, July 25th, the Bishop told us he would wish us to be present at High Mass in the Cathedral and the public Te Deum for our safe arrival. So about half past ten the carriages came for us. The seven and Helen Hughes got into them and off we drove to the Cathedral.

When we arrived, the priest had not yet come; the Clerk a very responsible-looking person, informed us of the fact, but suggested that our places were prepared in the Sanctuary if we wished to dismount or take immediate possession or in any case, Dr Moore would be here presently.

After a moment's reflection, we decided it was better to alight and adjourn to the Vestry till the Bishop and priests arrived; this we did under the patronage of the Clerk, about a dozen little boys in soutanes and of course, an admiring crowd. The Vestry was a very large room, large enough for a conference, I thought, fitted up with everything that should be in a Vestry, two Gothic windows, a vestment press all down one side of the room. The Vestments for High Mass were laid out and very handsome they were, Bishop's Crosier, Processional Cross, brass torch-holders for the acolytes etc..

We sat down and in a few minutes the Bishop, Dean and priests came in; a cheery welcome from the Bishop and then we were conducted to seats prepared for us. As we entered the Sanctuary, the choir commenced the 'Laudate Dominum' Zingerelli; when it was finished, High Mass was begun, the choir sang the whole of the Gloria and Credo and indeed the entire of the Mass.

The organ is a splendid one, it is curiously divided, one half being at one side of the organ gallery and the other half at the opposite side; this saves the beautiful western window both from being hidden and from the danger of being broken by the vibration.

There is an excellent organist and the choir is very good, although we did not hear it at its best, they say, owing to absence of the best male voice and also some ladies. The Bishop preached first on the Gospel of the day, 'the Pharisee and the Publican', recommending charity and humility, then he spoke of the arrival of the nuns, reminded the people of how he had asked their prayers for our safe arrival, and that as God had granted their prayer, they should thank Him, for which intention the 'Te Deum' was about to be sung.

Then, he spoke in great praise of the Institute of the BVM or Loretto nuns, as we were called in Ireland; told the people the sacrifices the sisters had made to come to them, and that he hoped 'they would prove their gratitude in a practical way'; he spoke very nicely and feelingly and seemed to be listened to with great attention, as you would 'hear a pin drop', while he was speaking. Then Mass was finished and we had the 'Te Deum' in grand style, it was first intoned from the altar and then taken up by the choir, all the congregation standing.

After Mass or rather when the priest had gone into the Vestry, there was a kind of procession, the acolytes and a priest bringing the Blessed Sacrament back to the chapel, where it is kept. When this was over there was a great rush to the rails from the people in the middle of the Church to see the nuns - children were held up to look at them, but indeed it was very little of us could be seen, as we had our Communion veils on, but the good people were gratified all the same.

The Bishop and Dean soon came for us, and when we were in the Vestry again, the Bishop welcomed us all to Ballarat and said he felt we were like established now; we asked him which was the way he meant to establish us in, - the humility of the 1st part of his sermon or the pride we might feel inclined to by all the praises he bestowed on us; of course he recommended strongly that we should be founded and grounded in humility; so we concluded the Pharisee and the Publican were to prevent the praises from doing us any harm.

In going back to the carriages, the crowd was so great that the Dean and priests had to go before us to get a passage, but some Irish voices begged hard 'to be let get a look at nuns, anyway'.

When the first were safe and the priest went on to get the other four to the carriage, some of the people crowded round us and begged to touch our hands; one of them, a young girl, having got this boon, rushed off to a vacant spot and performed a very energetic dance to her own satisfaction, showing off the hand that had been shaken by a nun. It was not easy to get the carriages through the crowd, but we got home safely. T.G., and prepared our minds for a repetition of the same in the evening at Vespers and Benediction; the Bishop thought it would be useful for us to hear how the congregation and particularly the children joined in the singing.

We understood we should be sent for at 7. So we had supper early, but 7.30 arrived and no sign. At last, when we had ceased to expect, the carriages drove in and Fr Cleary arrived quite out of breath saying that his Lordship had waited, delaying the Vespers, as long as he could, but had at last to commence.

The men made a mistake about the hour they were told to come for us, but, driving quickly down, we were in before the Vespers were over. The ceremony was very nicely carried out, the Bishop, Dean, priests and two benches of boys in soutanes and surplices inside the sanctuary, but all in the Chapel seemed to join in the singing, the organ and choir joining in at parts.

The tune of the children was excellent, the only thing left to be desired was sweetness, what lungs these young Colonials must have! One man with a powerful voice led the boys, but seemed to ambition solely, to have the last note always; in vain the poor organist prolonged the note even beyond all strict bounds, his breath was longer, he was not to be drowned or extinguished in that way. We heard afterwards, it was a great trial of patience when the long-winded fits came on him. Benediction was beautifully sung by the choir alone. The people and children sung the Litany in turn, the same procession of the Blessed Sacrament as in the morning and then we got home quite edified and delighted at all we had seen and heard. This was our first Benediction since May in Rathfarnham.

OUR DRIVE TO LAKE WENDOUREE

In the course of the second week, the Bishop sent his carriage for us, as he wished us to see the place for our future convent and also the place he had purchased for himself near it.

It was a very pleasant day and the four most ancient had a very pleasant drive. The place where our future convent is to be, belongs at present to a Mr Wynn, who was member of parliament for Ballarat, but being a bigoted Protestant, was put out at the last election, chiefly through the influence of the priests.

In consequence, he is disgusted here and his daughters are anxious to go to Melbourne, where they hope to see more society and so have persuaded their Pa to sell his beautiful place, which he spent a fortune in building and planting. It is a splendid house with two fronts. One towards Sturt Street, as it is called, but it is farther from the town and street than the Loretto Convent, Richmond is from Wexford, though the road is a continuation of Sturt Street; the other front is in a kind of park where the Botanical Gardens are; there are carriage drives all through this park; one passes the door, but the house and gardens are enclosed with an ornamental fence.

The house is built of a kind of cane-coloured stone, it is two stories high and has a verandah of stone round it. Flower and kitchen garden, greenhouse etc., but I will give a minute description of the establishment if ever we get into it.

The view from the grounds is beautiful, of course, we only drove round the house as it were to see the park and Botanical Gardens. Lake Wendouree is so large that in summer there is a steamer on it, for pleasure-parties; we saw several little boats and there are boat-houses built along the shore. There are beautiful mountain views opposite the house, and the town of Ballarat at one side, part of it in the valley and part rising on the opposite hill, where St. Alipius' Church and Presbytery are.

St Alipius', our present abode, is at the top of the hill. Ballarat east and west and Mr Wynn's place at the top of a hill at the extreme end of Ballarat west. The Bishop's new purchase is about 10 minutes walk from Mr Wynn's. One of the reasons why his Lordship wishes to get this place for the convent is that he intends to build a College with his own residence at 'Michael's Mount', as we call the Bishop's, and so Chaplains would find it easy to come to 'Mary's Mount' for morning Mass.

There is nothing built at present on the Bishop's ground, but stables and coach house, but the whole is magnificently laid out in pleasure grounds and planted with every variety of tree and plant; we got handfuls of camellias, growing just like the roses at home; the broad walks are covered deeply with gold coloured sand and at every corner, where they meet are little upright metal tubes and brass cocks, full of water for the garden.

Instead of box edging, rosemary is planted here at St. Alipius; it grows about half a foot high, is cut like box and makes a very fragrant border. The Bishop and Dean met us at Michael's Mount. One of the sisters asked the Dean whose was the beautiful open carriage at the gate; he said: "It was mine once, but of course it is the Bishop's now."

Indeed the Dean never thinks of keeping anything for himself. He is the kindest and most generous man in the world to us, looks after everything for us, keeps his housekeeper here to cook for us, to be sure that we shall have everything of the best and that he will have all the bills. He goes to her once or twice a week, to see that she does not spare herself or the eatables and as she was for years cook at Mr Wynn's, we have everything in first rate style.

I had to appeal to the Bishop for a mitigation of some of our costly fare; the Bishop says the only thing the Dean wants is a little of the spirit of holy poverty, still he is the shrewdest man in the Colony and one of the cleverest about business. So that it is almost a proverb that there is no use in trying to deceive Dr Moore, and he manages all the secular business of the Bishop, who appreciates him as he deserves.

Every day both of them come together to see us. On our way home, we were in at the Bishop's temporary residence. I could not tell you how pretty it is: two palm trees at each side of the hall door and several nice little shrubs on a kind of terrace in front. Bridget was glad to see us and had champagne and cake ready for us by the Dean's orders, which are equal to Martin's orders 'here'.

On the way home, we saw the house in town the Bishop is anxious to get for the day school. It is a large two-storied brick house with a garden in the front and rear. At present it is a Protestant College, where young ladies and gentlemen are educated; it is a pity to know some Catholic girls are in it.

While waiting to know how the question of the two houses will be settled, I may tell you of some of our presents and pets. On the feast of MRA the Bishop's house-keeper came to us and gave us two parcels, which she said the Bishop sent. I thought they were some dainties such as he had sent before and did not open them till she was gone. The parcels contained a very handsome silver tea and coffee pot, sugar bowl, tongs and cream ewer. I put them on our altar I had settled for my dear MRA and had said while arranging it, 'Now Mother what are you going to send as a present, that I may put it on your altar?'

I did not expect a tea-service to be sure, but I put it all the same on the little altar in our community room, to make the Bishop laugh when he came to see us in the morning. A gentleman, a Mr Loughnan gave the Dean 100 pounds for us; He is a young man from Co. Kilkenny and very rich, realises in the mines 15,000 pounds per annum, but says he thinks this may not last. We said we would pray that he might get 30,000 pounds next year. I thought he might be a relation of Mr Loughnan's, Enniscorthy.

He came to see us with the Dean, also a Mr Brophy, first Catholic Mayor of Ballarat. He went with the Dean to get a little money for us from those who could spare it; They got a good deal, I think, but although the Dean said he would give me the list, he was only giving me instead a cheque book, telling me to draw on the bank when I would require it. One of the priests told me there is a secret of the Dean's on the list, he had to put himself down for 100 pounds, to get a good sum out of a man who is rich, but close and would not give more than Dr Moore.

It is well to see people consider the Loretto nuns as a charity, but even here our name for being rich followed us. It was industriously circulated, I suppose by those who did not wish to give, that we did not know what to do with our money and that one of the sisters alone had 15,000 pound; and poor people told us they were ashamed to bring little presents to such rich ladies. The Dean had much trouble to disabuse the people of this error, but he succeeded.

A lady sent us a chest of tea, canisters of choice coffee, and an ancient set of china brought from and used too, I am sure, in China - curious little cups and saucers without handles, and cups with lids and Chinese tea pot with gold wire handles, bowls and plates. The Bishop said he thought one of the large plates would bring 5 pounds from a china fancier. I wish someone would buy them from us and our little Chapel would have the benefit. A lady who rears canaries brought us a beautiful one and such a singer! I, often, think when I hear it on the verandah, that dear S. M. Gertrude would enjoy it. The cage is like most things, 'very superior' of its kind, having at the corners instead of wire, stained glass (it has a pretty effect in the sun), little bells outside and a swing like a parrot's cage. Helen cares for it.

Our other domestic pets are chiefly two splendid dogs S. M. Conception would like to hear of. One is new, about the size of a calf, an immense animal, gentle as a lamb with us, but his bark is the terror of the neighbourhood. His name is Muff and we are getting one exactly like him from Ararat for our new convent.

Our other dumb friend, Darkie, is a black, curly, water-dog, lively and quick, quite a contrast to Muff, but so kind to him that he will obligingly bring his friend part of his dinner of bones to save him the trouble of coming for it, but he does not patronise the cat to the same extent as Muff. I often see Pussy come out of the kitchen to where Muff is lying, purr all round him and then seat herself between his paws, he puts his chin on her head and both look quite satisfied. Darkie looks on and never interferes, the chickens and hens pick up the crumbs quite close to them and altogether they remind one of the 'Happy Family'.

The first Protestant Bishop of Ballarat has arrived, after remaining a few days in Melbourne to give time for a reception to be got up for him here. Great exertions were made to have it like Dr O'Connor's, but it was a failure, of course, they could not agree. One of the first.....of his church here said Dr. Thornton could not be called Bishop of Ballarat; the Bishop of Ballarat, Dr. O'Connor had been here for the last six months. It is thought the poor man will have to return whence he came, as no one could support wife and family on what the V are inclined to give for the Protestant religion.

There are immense numbers of Wesleyans and Jews here, also, Chinese, who are of course teetotallers; there are not any in the city, but they have settlements, or, as they are called 'camps'; they have the reputation of being the greatest rogues in the world.

It is very rare to see a black native in the town, we have not seen one yet. This is a great place for Germans, there are over 400 in Ballarat. S. M. Boniface is giving instructions to one who comes with his Irish wife, who almost succeeded in making a Catholic of him and he will very soon be received into the true Church, I hope; there are many converts here TG.

Now a word about snakes and the weather, then I think I am done, at least till I send you a budget from Lake Wendouree. I am glad to be able to tell you that all arrangements are concluded and we hope to be looking out on that fair scene in about a week from tomorrow.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th

As to the snakes, it is said there are no such things in the town at all, but they are common enough in the country and in the bush. The sisters of Mercy, who live a hundred miles from this and are the only nuns in the diocese except ourselves, have plenty of them in the hot season I believe; they are never seen except in the hot weather.

On the other hand, I was speaking to a woman, who has been 17 years in different parts of the Colony, and she said she never saw a snake yet; while Miss Coghlan of Wexford, who has not been out one year, told me she saw one that was killed in the paddock near the house, but 4 miles from town.

Centipedes are dangerous here, for their bite is poisonous and they infest some places. A young lady who had been at the Geelong convent, D of Melbourne, told me the children there used to look for them under the pillows before going to bed, but I did not hear any of them were ever bitten.

This Miss Ellis' own brother was bitten severely by one in the bush and had to get the piece cut out. The other morning a very large log of much decayed wood was put on the fire and Helen Hughes discovered some little animals running about it. We beat it with the poker and 3 large centipedes appeared; they were about the length of a long finger and had flat heads and of course, were running as fast as their hundred legs could carry them. We gave them as quick a death as we could. Two or three baby lizards, came to see us, they are quite harmless. Every day we say a prayer to Saint Patrick to preserve us from snakes and venomous reptiles, so we hope he will look after his children in a land unknown when he was on earth.