

PRINCE ALFRED'S VISIT TO BALLARAT.

From the special report of the *Age* of yesterday we take the following account of the Prince's visit to the Band of Hope Company's claim:—

Shortly after two o'clock on Tuesday his Royal Highness arrived at the Band of Hope Company's claim, in his drag, with four horses attached, which he drove himself. He was accompanied by the hon. Elliot Yorke, Lord Newry, the hon. Mr Verdon, Mr Mannors Sutton, Mr Rothwell, Mr Brierly, Mr Paget. The way was lined with people as the party proceeded up the Sebastopol road, and as the Prince passed along he was greeted with cheers. He alighted at the No 2 shaft of the Band of Hope, where a very large number of persons were congregated. Inside the gates leading up to the shaft and machinery, there were drawn up, in lines two deep, the men employed on the mine. These presented a very respectable appearance. The Prince was met at the gate by the chairman of the board of directors, Mr Caselli, and by him he was conducted to the works, where the working committee of the board met him and conducted him round the machinery. For his behoof and enlightenment four of the machines which had been kept ready loaded with washdirt for the occasion, were put in motion, and he was thus enabled to get a tolerably accurate idea of how the various processes of washing were conducted. At the amalgamation, he was initiated into some of the mysteries of washing up. The machinery having been inspected, the Prince and his party prepared to descend the mine, where great preparations had been made for his reception. The works are always lit with gas, but on this occasion there had been extra burners put on, and here and there in the long gloomy looking drives, there were placed stars and other devices in the way of special illuminations. In one of the drives there were tables laid out, on which a light reflection was alluringly spread. In order to make the journey down the shaft as comfortable as possible, the directors had provided for the royal party a number of suits of clothes, into which those who intended to dare the dangers of a trip into the bowels of mother earth were duly inducted, and then the process of lowering commenced. I forgot to mention that around the mouth of the shaft a number of ladders had been provided with seats, and there watched the preparations for the embarkation with an amount of interest which only ladies can take in trivial things. If I were actuated by the spirit of the immortal "Jeames" I might be able to tell that the Prince came to the mouth of the shaft with as much unconcern as if he had been used to going down shafts all his life, and as if he had come to the contemplation of the scene with a foregone conclusion of what it was to be. He was necessarily the first to descend the shaft, and was accompanied in the cage by Mr Forbes. His Royal Highness was dressed in a suit of flannel, and similar suits had been provided for his immediate suite. Some of the visitors however, had been provided with dresses of dungaree, similar to those worn by the manager and other of the miners engaged in the claim. There was a slight incident while the process of filing down the shaft in twos and threes was being carried on. The cause of it was a dreadful middy who accompanied the party, Mr Paget. He had taken his place in the cage, it seemed, and as it commenced to move, got frightened, and made a spring for the surface. Fortunately he was caught by some one on the staging, and no serious consequences ensued. The

ladies screamed as a matter of necessity, and for some moment or so it was doubtful whether some one or some thing had not been crushed. Arrived at the bottom of the shaft, the party proceeded through the drives, his Royal Highness being conveyed the greater part of the distance on a truck, which was driven by the manager, Mr Forbes. At several points he stopped, and with an ordinary pick went to work to dig out for himself some of the treasure which has been so richly scattered by nature throughout this company's claim. He was not un-

successful in his researches, for he unearthed several pieces of gold of tolerably large size. Lord Newry and Mr Yorke also engaged themselves in prospecting, and hit upon several patches of a likely character. After spending about an hour and a half in the mine, the party were drawn to the surface in the same way in which they had descended. And such a sight as they presented when they came into the full light of day, will not easily be forgotten by those who saw it. Surely a son of England's Queen never before looked so much like a veritable "Little Pickle." With face begrimed, hands encrusted in mud, and garments all stained with the earth, this Prince of the blood royal looked like any ordinary miner emerging from a day's work. And he enjoyed it evidently. He was like a boy, who had struck on a new source of pleasure, and did not know exactly what to make of it. How much he really enjoyed himself could only be known to the immediate friends who accompanied him, but it was evident to all that he was highly pleased. Certainly he could never have witnessed such a scene before in his life. Below, he had the glittering ore in such thickness that he must have thought it inexhaustible; above, a well ordered crowd of men and women who had come out to see the Prince, and yet who kept their curiosity within the bounds of perfect propriety. Safely landed, there was a short adjournment to the dressing-rooms, and much merriment was caused by the fact that His Royal Highness insisted on everyone keeping their dresses and their mud on, in order that they might be photographed together. The photographer was not ready just for a minute or two, and there was another visit to the works, when the final process of washing off was illustrated to His Royal Highness by the manager of the company. There was a heap of golden dirt which had passed through all its preliminary stages ready to be acted on, and this, by the usual means of sluicing, riddling, and flashing, was quickly reduced to a bright, shining mass of gold. I am afraid to say what its weight was, but to me it looked, as it lay in the bottom of the tin dish, a very tempting sight. While the riddling business was going on, there was, oh, such a scrambling for the nuggets, and in those scrambles it may be imagined the Prince did not come off second best. He came out of them with his hands loaded with nuggets. They were very jolly moments those, and baffled my powers of description. Here, then, is another stir, and the business of the addresser commenced. The first "address" is a most sensible one. It takes the form of a most handsome nugget of gold, beautifully interspersed with crystals of quartz. Its weight is 22 ozs. It was found some two months ago, and has been reserved specially for the Prince. It is enclosed in a handsome morocco case, which, on a silver plate, bears the following inscription:—"Presented to H.R.H Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, on the occasion of his visit to the United Extended Band of Hope Company's mine, Ballarat. H. R. Caselli, chairman; A. J. Forbes, manager. 10th December, 1867." The chairman presents the nugget himself, and His Royal Highness replies in a few graceful words, in which he expresses the pleasure his visit to the mine has occasioned him. Mr Carpenter presented to the Prince an elaborate address bound in

presented to the Prince an elaborate address bound in scarlet morocco and maroon velvet. The statement, which was very lengthened, mentioned that the quantity of ground excavated and washed amounted to 2,500,000 cubic feet; and the gold taken from it was estimated at 151,000 ozs, valued at £608,000. During the last quarter no less than 1,720,000 was expended in dividends. The health of the Royal visitor is drunk in three times three; Her Majesty and the navy are toasted as heartily; and then, photographs having been taken, and the miners' habiliments doffed, the party proceeded, amidst loud cheers, towards Sebastopol, where an address was presented by the Mayor, Mr Vickers, and read by the town clerk, Mr Wall. The school children sang the National Anthem, and the Prince was pleased to express his pleasure at their performance. At the Albion Company's claim three handsome nuggets were presented to His Royal Highness. The party returned to Craig's Hotel a few minutes before seven o'clock, highly pleased with the tour. Sebastopol was profusely decorated with flags, and triumphal arches of evergreens had been erected. Crowds of people assembled to greet the Royal visitor.

We take the subjoined account of the levee and banquet, on Tuesday, from the *Ballarat Courier* of yesterday:—

The levee of H.R.H the Duke of Edinburgh took place at the Alfred Hall yesterday morning at eleven o'clock. His Excellency the Governor was present. The guard of honor was furnished by the B V Rangers, and the escort was formed by the V V Light Horse. The body of the hall was thronged with ladies, whose eagerness to be present was shown by some of them taking their seats nearly two hours before the levee took place. There was a fair representation of ministers of religion, the magistracy, and the trading, mining, and professional interests, among the gentlemen who had the honor of making their bow to the Duke. The total number of presentations, including the gentlemen who had received private cards of *entree*, was 286. In the evening, at eight o'clock, the banquet in honor of the Duke's visit was held at the Alfred Hall, which, since the levee in the morning had been promptly prepared for the purpose. An addition was made to the platform, on which a table was placed for the principal guests. In the body of the hall were six long tables, and on these covers were laid for 600. Mr Miller, of Melbourne, was the Gunter for the occasion, his contract having been preferred by the reception committee. It is only just to state that he fulfilled his contract in a very creditable manner. The tables were laid out in the most superb style; the plate used was solid silver, and the ornamental appearance of the whole was such as has not been equalled in Ballarat on any former occasion. Gentlemen who had attended the Duke's banquet at Melbourne said it was quite as good as that, although perhaps the hall was not quite so large as the Exhibition Building in which the Melbourne banquet took place. On the principal table the display was the best. A fern-tree epergne and platen of solid silver, costly china vases filled with choicest bouquets, silver candelabra in which colored candles were used graced the table on either side of the chair. There were also silver candelabra on the other tables, and a proper display of vases and epornes. On each of the six tables also there was a golden candelabra, the same as were used at the Melbourne banquet, for which Mr Miller was also the caterer. The viands comprised a boar's head, eighty hams, 250 ox tongues, saddles of mutton sirloins of beef, eighty pies, 300 fowls, seventy turkeys, forty geese, besides tarts, puddings, custards, jellies, ices, blanchmanges, ornamented Savoy cakes, rock tree cakes, and all the delicacies to be produced by the culinary art, with an excellent dessert of fruits of

tree cakes, and all the delicacies to be produced by the culinary art, with an excellent dessert of fruits of the season. The wines were pronounced to be of the best vintages, and were highly commended for quality and variety. Plants and bouquets were plentiful, and the way in which the tables were furnished, exhibited the taste and skill, which only experience, combined with art, can produce. Along the middle of the hall a crimson drugget carpet was laid. In the centre of the apartment was a pianoforte, at which, in the course of the evening, Mr Coleman Jacobs presided. In order to prevent what, on such occasions, is sometimes complained of, a deficiency of attendants, Mr Miller had engaged forty-five waiters expressly for this occasion. According to arrangement, ladies were admitted to the gallery, on producing tickets, for which a charge of 10s 6d had been made. A considerable number of ladies availed themselves of the opportunity, although the gallery was not quite filled. The hall was lighted with gas jets, more than a hundred and twenty in number, and these with the addition of the colored candles on the tables, made a very brilliant illumination, giving an aspect of cheerfulness and beauty to the view. The company began to arrive shortly before eight o'clock, and they at once took their seats. A portion of one of the long tables down the centre of the hall was reserved for the councillors of both boroughs, all of whom were present. Among the other guests we noticed the Mayor of Geelong, the hon Mr Jenner, M.L.O, Messrs Gillies, M.L.A, C Dyke, M.L.A, Humfray, Capt Smith, Messrs Clissold, J C Young, (of Melbourne), Professor M'Coy, Revs Messrs Strongman, Cummins, Walley, Henderson, Perks, Frazor, Messrs Lewis, Thomas Dixon, H B Chalmers, Oliver, Salter, Ratten, D Blain, Anderson, Williams, Myler Wallace, Dr Clendinning, Capt Steward and Burton, Messrs Cuthbert, C E Jones, & Co

The Duke of Edinburgh, His Excellency the Governor, and suite, left Craig's Hotel about 8 o'clock, being escorted by the V V Light Horse. On the road to, and at arrival at the Alfred Hall, both the Prince and the Governor were greeted with enthusiastic cheering by the assembled crowd. A guard of honor was furnished by the Ballarat Volunteer Rangers. The Mayor of Ballarat, and the Mayor of Ballarat East, received the distinguished guests, and on their entering the banquet hall the band played the National Anthem, the company rising up. His Royal Highness and the Governor, who were in evening dress, advanced to their places on the dais, when the chair was taken by Mr Steinfeld, the Mayor of Ballarat East. The Prince sat on the chairman's right, and the Governor on his left hand. The Mayor of Ballarat, the hon Mr Vale, Captain Standish, Lord Newry, the hon Mr Yorke, & Co, occupied seats to the chairman's left, and the hon Mr Verdon, Mr Sutton, Major Baker, Colonel Anderson, Mr Hale, & Co, on his right.