

in every undertaking that has for its object the spread of Scriptural holiness and the well-being of our fellow-men.

There is also a marked increase in the attendance at the public services, both on the Lord's Day and on week evenings.

I have received into the fellowship of the church a larger number than any previous year of my ministry, except 1873.

Death has been reaping his harvest too. Four aged members of the church have fallen asleep in Jesus during the year—R. Mathews, J. H. Collett, Mrs. Burridge, and Mrs. Nickles. These all died in faith. "They are not lost, but gone before." Every year adds some to the death roll. Who next is marked to fall? Whose name will be mentioned next year as numbered with the dead? This is known only to Him who knoweth all things. But let each ask, Is it I? Am I prepared? I feel that I have much cause to be profoundly grateful to my Heavenly Father for the pleasant and profitable intercourse we have had in the past. Nothing has arisen to mar the harmony of our meetings, and now at the expiration of ten years, as your pastor I can look upon many evidences of substantial progress. The church-roll is three times as large, the congregation is more than double; so is the Sunday-school. We have three earnest missionaries at work in the island, and a fourth preparing for service. We have schools both in the city and in the outposts, and through the blessing of God every year we have been used of God in the conversion of precious souls to Him. To His great name we ascribe all the glory for ever and ever.

If you are faithful to your trust in the future, the great Head of the Church will doubtless make the Church a centre of light and power in this land. Be ready and willing to make sacrifices for Him, but let us do all as unto the Lord, and not to men; and let us be content to wait for our full reward when our heavenly Master returns to earth.

OUR MEETINGS.—No. VII.

THE VISITATION SOCIETY.

This very useful society is presided over by the pastor, who has for his committee the deacons, the members of the church committee, and the whole of the district and sick visitors. The district visitors number twenty-one, and the sick visitors three, exclusive of the Bible nurse, who is a very real and present help in time of sickness and trouble. Its members also consist of a superintendent, a treasurer, a librarian, a secretary, and a very necessary collector, since the society is entirely supported by voluntary subscriptions, and an annual collection in the chapel.

Under the leadership of their superintendent, the visitors meet in the chapel every Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, whence, having asked God's blessing on their labours, they depart, each going a separate way to his or her district, bearing tracts, which they exchange for those left on the previous Sabbath, giving little books to the children at home, and entering freely into conversation with the parents and others, whom they earnestly desire to draw to the Saviour. By this means many never in the habit of attending a place of worship have become regular attendants, and some have been rescued from paths of sin and shame, and

become new creatures in Jesus Christ; others who have not yet been led to Christ have forsaken many evil courses, and become clean, respectable, and decent in their persons, homes, and habits, and ways of life: while many, very many, gladly look forward to the Sunday afternoon visit, and the new tract.

The worn condition of the tracts, and the general knowledge of them shown by the people, prove them in almost every instance to have been read, or heard read, while such of the children who do not attend a Sabbath-school anxiously look for their little book or card, and express their gratitude, not only in the usual "thank you," but by their sparkling eyes and smiling faces, for to many of them, probably, this is the only little kindness they meet with in their early rough, hard lives. Especially is this the case where the father or mother is a drunkard, or the latter a slattern; too often there are angry words, a kick, or a cuff, the reward of their little efforts to amuse themselves, or be useful, and the street becomes not only their only playground, but their refuge from violence.

The sick visitors do not confine their ministrations to the Sabbath; they visit their poor patients in the week as often as time and circumstances permit, bearing with them much to alleviate their sufferings, or comfort them in their infirmities; and now that we have a Bible nurse they receive constant attention, until they are either removed to another world, or in God's love and mercy restored to health. Many have cause to be thankful for a bed of sickness and suffering, since it was there that God met them, and revealed unto them their lost and ruined condition, and Jesus as their Mighty Saviour, able and willing to save.

At short intervals during the winter most of those visited receive invitations to a musical or other entertainment in the schoolroom, during which only two short addresses are allowed. These entertainments are highly appreciated, and 500 or more usually attend. At first a bountiful tea was given unto them, but this privilege was so shamelessly abused by some that it was obliged to be discontinued, and these entertainments substituted.

During last year 467½ quartern loaves were distributed by the visitors among the poorest and starving; fifty of the sick were provided with letters, which enabled them to obtain medical advice and medicine from one of the dispensaries, free of charge; 7,000 small books were given to the children, several hundred pamphlets to the adults, and 500 tracts circulated. Pecuniary help to the amount of £9 19s. 6d. was distributed in small sums to those who were ill or in great want; dinners provided for many of the very poor, or those recovering from illness, and requiring nourishing food; and at Christmas, through the kindness of a gentleman, 137 half-hundredweights of coals were sent to make glad and cheerful that number of homes.

Did space permit, many interesting particulars might be told of individual cases of good done and received; but their record is on high, and well known to Him who delights to see His children about their Father's business, and would have them go out into the highways and hedges, the back lanes, fever dens, and alleys of our cities, and by gentle force and persuasion compel all to come in, that His heart, His house, His home, may be full of those whom His dear Son died to save.

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