

for instance, the attendance, which, as will be seen in the last report, was then remarkably good, has not fallen off this year in the least ; while in Upper Durham, probably, and in South Durham certainly, some improvement is to be noticed. I have good hopes that the farmers of the latter place will yet become regular Church-goers, duly prizing the means of grace which God has placed within their reach.

Holy Communion has, on the whole, been fairly attended, but no marked increase in the number of regular communicants can be claimed for any part of the Mission. There are many secret causes, connected with the family, personal and worldly affairs, which affect this matter, without sensibly affecting the attendance at ordinary services. It is often difficult or impossible to get at these causes, and I do not think that too much urging is advisable or likely to increase the real spiritual life of our congregations. Indirect influence and work, with prayer and an earnest expectation that God will in his own time and way work with us, is frequently the best way to deal with the matter.

Throughout last Lent I held a special week night service, every week, in each of the three churches, and, generally speaking, was well rewarded for my trouble. We did not have any large congregations, and such was not expected ; for, as will be remembered, the spring opened and the roads broke up this year unusually early, so that for nearly the whole Lenten season, it was very difficult to move about. In South Durham and L'Avenir, however, these services were remarkably well attended, considering the unfavorable circumstances, and were altogether very encouraging to myself, for I had the assurance that those who came to them made some sacrifice, and were consequently blessed in doing so.

The Cottage Missions of which I spoke in my last report, and which were so successful the winter before, were, last winter, almost a failure. This was owing, partly at least, to my being absent for a month in mid-winter and the snow leaving us so early in the spring as before noticed. I propose, however, to try them again this year, and have hopes of better success attending them.

We were favoured in June last by a visit from the Lord Bishop, on which occasion sixteen persons were confirmed, all but one of whom have been admitted to Holy Communion, and some of them have become regular communicants.

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