

This was considered only fair, and it was also thrown open to all who cared to compete.

But though the young reformers did not think it right to go further than the outsides of the cottages in their endeavours after improvement, their influence began to assert itself within also. They were so young themselves that they considered it would be an arrogant and presumptuous proceeding on their part to attempt anything that would look like dictation, or interference, and might materially injure their work in directions wherein it had been successful heretofore. They contented themselves therefore with working among the young people, relying on the natural development of that work, and were encouraged to find, that such reliance was by no means misplaced, for, besides the improvements effected by the youthful competitors in the outward appearance of the cottages, a further improvement was observable in the comparative absence of drunken men and untidy women.

The entertainments on Saturday afternoons had also somewhat changed in their nature by this time. The social element was still preserved, but instead of the riotous fun and hilarity of the opening meeting, a quieter mode now prevailed. After tea, there was usually a game, then all sat down, and the girls drew forth their sewing with which they proceeded while the boys sat quietly in their places, all listening eagerly to some entertaining book read by one of the young ladies till about half-an-hour before the usual hour for dispersion which was given up to general conversation, and the singing of a few hymns.