

case especially in effort on behalf of the young. Instead of the Sabbath school being a failure, it is evident that never in the history of that most important movement was it in a better and more efficient condition than at the present time. No less suggestive has been the better organization of woman's work, especially as seen in the congregational and presbyterial missionary societies. Consecrated and enthusiastic efforts in this direction have shown stability and permanence. If the idea was ever entertained that when the novelty of the movement wore off there would be a diminution of zeal and earnestness, there is now no place for it, since each year a steady progress has been maintained, and, judging from the past and the indications of the present, results unimagined as yet will be achieved at no distant date.

Organized effort in church work has been carried to a high pitch, and so strong is the tendency in that direction that not a few, and some whose opinion is entitled to the highest respect, are beginning to think that it is just possible we have a little too much organization. To make systematic, mechanical effort supersede individual responsibility would not be a good thing. Organization without the living, active warmth of spiritual life animating and directing it, would be injurious rather than helpful. As it is, however, there is no existing congregational society or guild that need in the least interfere with individual activity in promoting the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Personal visitation of the sick or effort among the neglected, speaking a word of counsel and giving friendly help when needed, are always best when spontaneously offered. A sense of duty and the warm impulses of a kindly Christian heart ought to be sufficient to prompt to these and kindred personal efforts in Christ's name, without being directed by an honorary president, or recorded in the secretary's minute book.

Outward and visible religious work may be in many respects satisfactory and encouraging. The inference also is legitimate that much of the activity and increase is the outcome of a spirit of love and consecration to the Divine Lord and Master, and as such is proper cause for thanksgiving. There is, however, one other truth that should not be forgotten. In so far as external prosperity is the direct result of true spiritual life, it is well, but if in some respects it is traceable to mixed or sordid motives, there is danger. There is a permissible provocation to love and good works, but there are also worldly emulation and striving to excel neighbours, which have their rise in pride and ostentation, which the Gospel knows only to condemn. With all the outward prosperity enjoyed by the Church, is there a corresponding advancement in spiritual power, and a higher type of Christian living?

#### A PAPAL BENEDICTION.

THE Rome correspondent of the *New York Herald* has apparently free access to the Vatican. Judging from the tone of his despatches he is enabled to speak with a certain degree of authority. He is privileged to make statements and deny rumours in such a manner as to imply that he is in the inner confidence of the papal authorities. At all events he uses this formula, "The Vatican authorized your correspondent to say," etc. In this there is perhaps nothing unusual or extraordinary, but admitting all this, the anomaly of the long description of Buffalo Bill's reception at the Vatican gives rise to curious reflections. Did this Rome correspondent of a New York journal receive the Papal authority to dilate on the significant benediction of the Wild West enterprise as indicating the world-wide importance of the event, or did the said correspondent yield to the journalistic temptation to give the enterprising showman a good advertisement free or other as the case may be? Why does the scribe preface his highly ornate description of the striking scene with the statement of his personal relations with the Vatican? Whatever the Pope and his intimate friends may think of it, the Hon. William Cody and his business manager will no doubt be highly delighted with their brilliant reception at the Papal headquarters, and the no less glowing description headed to New York.

Beyond an adroit scheme to entrap the Pope into standing godfather to the Wild West Show, has this unique reception any significance? In London and Paris the ex-scout was greatly pleased to have the fashionables, titled and untitled, accept his compliments and attendant hospitalities, but he did not approach the dignitaries of the Church with a view of securing their approval and blessing on his realistic delineations of prairie adventure. If he did make overtures to Anglican dignitaries or Parisian ecclesiastics they must have received them coldly,

for there is no mention of their special presence at the entertainments in connection with his exhibition, for if they had it may be inferred that the benefit for advertising purposes would not have been neglected. Seeing perhaps the readiness with which the magnates of the social world met his advances, the intrepid ex-warrior of the plains bethought himself of taking a rise out of the Pope, and that benevolent and venerable ecclesiastic readily, though possibly unwittingly, seconded the scheme of the astute showman.

With what unction the graphic correspondent dilates on the bewildering scene, as the vast Roman populace look on in delighted wonder at the red men in their war paint and picturesque trappings as they thread their way through the line of the Swiss guards. In due time "a princess invited Col. Cody to a place in the tribune of the Roman nobles." The tired imagination droops overpowered by the splendours of the scene. The historical surroundings, the vast array of Italian princes, princesses and miscellaneous nobles was sufficient to bewilder the boldest, and it is greatly to the credit of the hero of the day that he could look on with calm satisfaction on this magnificent pageant that united in one blaze of splendour the piety and fashion of modern Rome. With mingled feelings, serious and comic, the event will no doubt linger long in the memory of the Hon. William Cody and his skilful business manager. "The Pope looked at Colonel Cody intently as he passed, and the great scout bent low as he received the benediction."

What does it all mean? Is it a symbolical representation of the Papal conquest of the great western continent? Were the manager and the star athletes of the Wild West Show the representatives of the intelligence, culture and piety of the west, and the dusky tribes of the western plains symbolic of the subduing yet elevating power of Roman Catholicism over the vast territory bounded by the setting sun? Perchance it may mean that as the more potent forces of modern civilization are leaving the policy and ways of Rome behind them the Church looks with some measure of hope to the unsophisticated aborigines of the west, who can yet be dazzled with the pomp and circumstance of the decayed grandeur of mediæval times. If the correspondent had it in his mind to present the Papacy in an attractive and imposing light his success is somewhat indifferent; in supplying a sensational advertisement to the Wild West Show he has no doubt earned the perpetual gratitude of its proprietors. The Papal recognition of the Show adds no real dignity to the Roman Church, and besides it may lead to future embarrassment. What if Barnum should take it into his head to desire a similar benediction for "the greatest show on earth?" True, his Holiness may plead that Barnum has no claim to be reckoned among good Catholics: but then are Col. Cody's claims in this respect sufficiently well-founded to entitle him to exclusive prominence by receiving the Papal benediction for himself and his western braves? However it is a matter between the Pope and the showmen. The former's blessing of the Wild West combination, though perhaps amusing, is about as harmless as his maledictions on modern civilization.

#### Books and Magazines.

INTO ALL THE WORLD. A Sacred Cantata. Words by E. E. Hewitt. Music by John R. Sweeney. (Philadelphia: John J. Hood).—This is from beginning to end a missionary cantata, and in its performance must be very effective. It is clearly printed and published cheaply.

CANADA HEALTH JOURNAL. A Monthly Review and Record of Sanitary Progress. Edited by Edward Playter, M.D. (Ottawa).—By the diffusion of valuable information, theoretical and practical, this monthly seeks to promote "public health and national strength and wealth."

CULTURE AND PRACTICAL POWER. An address delivered at the opening of Lansdowne College, Portage la Prairie. Second Edition. By Nicholas Flood Davin, M.P. (Ottawa: W. T. Mason).—Mr. Davin's lecture is brilliant and suggestive, and will be read with pleasure by all into whose hands it may come.

THE ARENA. (Boston: The Arena Publishing Co.).—The *Arena* certainly affords a free field for the discussion of vitally important questions from all points of view. The leaders of religious thought, and the advocates of the most pronounced agnosticism write for its pages. The contents in consequence are of a varied character. The March number is one of decided interest.

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT STUDENT. (Hartford, Conn.: The Student Publishing Co.).—The March number contains several valuable papers. Professor Charles Elliott, D.D., of Lafayette College, who translated the Minor Prophets for Lange's Commentary, writes a lucid introduction to the study of the Book of Jonah. Another able paper is by Rev. Henry Rogers, M.A., on "Alleged Pentateuchal Anachronism." The other contents of the number will greatly interest students of the sacred Scriptures.

OUGHT THE CONFESSION OF FAITH TO BE REVISED? (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co.).—Anyone who wishes to understand the full bearings of the discussion of the Confessional Revision question will find the subject ably treated in this paper-covered little volume. Those who favour and those who oppose Revision will find able champions of their respective views in Drs. DeWitt, J. Van Dyke, Warfield and Shedd. The discussion is interesting as it is able.

WITCH WINNIE. The Story of a King's Daughter. By Elizabeth W. Champney. (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier).—Though this story may be chiefly interesting to girls, it will be no less interesting to all who can appreciate and admire genuine unselfish benevolence. Efforts for the uplifting of those who have fallen by the wayside of life always command respect and the special work of the King's Daughters is entitled to the highest commendation. Readers of this well-written story will gain a knowledge of the work and spirit of the movement that draws its inspiration from the heart of Christianity.

THE TREASURY FOR PASTOR AND PEOPLE. The pastor who occupies the place of honour in this month's issue is Dr. Harsha, of the First Presbyterian Church, Omaha, whose career is briefly sketched and from whose pen there is an excellent sermon on "Christ the True Interpreter of History." Bishop W. Stevens Perry, D.D., adduces "Proofs of an Historic Episcopate." There are a number of sermonic outlines by widely known and influential preachers, and varied collections of valuable and suggestive short papers that will be highly prized by Christian workers.

THE TEACHER REPRODUCED IN THE PUPIL. An address delivered before the Provincial Sunday School Convention, Montreal. By Principal D. H. MacVicar, D.D., LL.D. (Montreal: George Bishop).—Mr. Bishop, the superintendent of Mountain Street Church Wesleyan Sunday school, says in his prefatory note to the neat little pamphlet, "I have deemed the following address of such special value that I now place it in the present form within reach of Sunday school teachers and others." Whoever reads this vigorous, clear and common sense address will come to the conclusion he has discriminated rightly in the value he attaches to it.

FROM W. A. Wilde & Co., Bromfield Street, Boston, we have received copies of their admirable series of Peloubet's quarterlies. The object of these is to help in the study of the International lessons. There is the "Little Ones' Quarterly," by Miss Mary J. Capron, for infant departments; the "Children's School Quarterly," by Mrs. M. G. Kennedy; "Intermediate Sunday School Quarterly," by Rev. F. N. Peloubet, D.D., and "The Sunday School Quarterly," by Rev. F. N. Peloubet, D.D. In addition to several interesting features this last contains a selection of hymns with music suitable for each lesson.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co.).—The opening article of the March number is a paper upon the "Trial, Opinions, and death of Giordano Bruno" by William R. Thayer; this is followed by a paper by Charles Worcester Clark on "Woman Suffrage, Pro and Con," George Parsons Lathrop shows us "The Value of the Corner," and there is an admirable paper called "Loitering through the Paris Exposition," which tells, among many other interesting things, of all the concerts given at the cafes of the Exposition by the various nationalities—Gypsies, Javanese, Hungarians, and many more. The whole paper is full of interesting sidelights on this great fair. Dr. Holmes is particularly amusing in "Over the Teacups," and seems to wish that people would write less poetry. He closes with some odd verses on the rage for scribbling. Mr. James' story and Mr. Bynner's serial are continued, and Mrs. Deland allows her hero, from conscientious scruples, to decline to save a drowning woman,—a novel position for a hero! A paper by John Trowbridge on "Dangers from Electricity," will be read with interest. The reviews, clever as usual, bring this well composed number of the magazine to an end.