

THE reports of the triennial meeting of the W. A. Diocesan Branches are now ready and will be forwarded to the Dioceses by Mrs. Denne, General Recording Secretary. Persons desiring single copies can send direct to Mrs. Denne, enclosing 10 cents, payment for report and postage.

Books and Periodicals Dept.

Pagan and Christian Rome. By Rodolfo Lanciani. Profusely illustrated. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 8vo. \$6.00.

"It has been contended and many still believe that in ancient Rome the doctrines of Christ found no proselytes except among the lower and poorer classes of citizens. That is certainly a noble picture which represents the new faith as searching among the haunts of poverty and slavery, seeking to inspire faith, hope and charity in their occupants; to transform them from things, to human beings; to make them believe in the happiness of future life; to alleviate their present sufferings; to redeem their children from shame and servitude; to proclaim them equal to their masters. But the gospel found its way also to the mansions of the masters, nay, even to the palace of Cæsars. The discoveries lately made on this subject are startling and constitute a new chapter in the history of imperial Rome."

With these words Lanciani begins his most interesting book on Pagan and Christian Rome which has just issued from the press of Houghton, Mifflin & Co. The author proceeds through the book to tell of recent developments, many of them witnessed by his own eyes, brought to light by excavations in different parts of Rome. He endeavours to show the religious character of Rome during the rise and early progress of the Christian religion; and this he does by comparing inscriptions upon recently discovered tombs with various hints and expressions that are to be found in whatever history or letters he could find to hand. He tries to rescue the monuments of early Christian art from that obscurity in which they have too long been imbedded. "None of the four or five hundred volumes," he says, "on the topography of Rome speaks of the basilicas raised by Constantine; of the Church of St. Maria Antiqua, built side by side with the Temple of Vesta, the two worships dwelling together, for nearly a century; of the Christian burial grounds * * * and of the palace of the Cæsars transformed into the residence of the Popes. Why should these constructions of monumental and historical character be expelled from the list of classical buildings? And why should we overlook the fact that many great names in the annals of the empire are those of members of the Church, especially when the knowledge of their conversion enables us to explain events that had been, up to the latest discoveries, shrouded in mystery?"

This sufficiently explains the plan of the work and shows the interesting subject of which the author proposes to treat. The book is a mine of wealth to the archaeologist, and long hours would he willingly devote to it. On almost every page there is a cut of some kind or other, besides numerous full page photogravure illustrations on highly polished paper. Human bodies have been discovered in a state of perfect preservation, lying in marble coffins of great beauty and in other tombs skeletons have been found with jewellery and relics of all kinds lying near them. In some cases these relics and jewels, coupled with the inscription on the coffin, have been the means of forming a very good idea as to the character and rank of the person with whom they were buried. What tales these old sarcophagi, and monuments, and walls, and churches could tell, to say nothing of the mortal remains that have been discovered in or near them—tales of love,

of marriage, of neglect, of shame; of heroism, martyrdom, devotion; of wild ambition and disappointed hopes; of dark schemes and lofty aspirations; of lavish wealth and cruel poverty; of highest privileges and lowest servitude! All these speak to us now only through the medium of conjecture; but even from that we can learn a great deal, and the book under review opens up much regarding the matter which has hitherto been unknown.

A Handy Book of the Church of England. Rowsell & Hutchison, Toronto. By the Rev. Edward L. Cutts, D.D., author of "Turning Points of Church History," &c. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London. Crown 8vo. Cloth boards, 5s.

A work which aims at meeting inquiries upon the main points of the Church's History and present position. It covers a large area, and ought to be in the hands of all Church workers, as well as in those of general readers.

Besides the above most useful work the S.P.C.K. has issued this year, as in former years, a goodly array of beautiful and interesting books for young and old. Among these we may mention *Round the World on a Church Mission*, by Rev. G. E. Mason, which gives much information on the work of the Church in the Colonies and elsewhere; *The Book Genesis*, shown to be a true history and the first book of the Hebrew Revelation; *A Chain of Love*, a book for devotional reading. *A First Book on the Church*, an excellent little book (1s. 6d.) for distribution in a parish, showing the true position of the Church as compared with Romanism on the one hand and dissent on the other; *Our Worship*; a little book (1s. 6d.) showing our plan of worship in the Prayer Book, and what may be gathered from it; *How to Make Common Things*, a charming book for boys of a mechanical turn of mind; a number of pleasing tales, suitable for Sunday school prizes and library, such as *Another Man's Burden*, *Sailing and Sealing*, (a tale of the North Pacific), *Jack's Little Girls*, *A Promising Boy*, *Don Carlos*, *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*, (a tale of the Polar Seas), *A Little Captive Maid Ray's Discovery*, &c. *The Dawn of Day*, bound volume for 1892, is in itself a splendid book for the young, at the price only of one shilling, and the "Penny Library of Fiction," and "Penny Booklets for the People," give startling tales of healthy tone for the expenditure of a few cents.

The Illustrated London News, (American edition). Ingram Brothers, New York. Price 10c.

To get the "Illustrated London News," that time-honoured illustrated paper at the low rate of \$5 a year (in advance), is a privilege of which many should avail themselves. It is printed from the original blocks used in London, with letter press and paper of superior quality. The large, full page portrait of the late Sir Richard Owen, in the number for January 7th, is a striking picture, and that of "The Holy Family," full size, (double page) is a fine engraving, and suitably framed would adorn any wall; the full page "Christmas Stories" is also a fine production. The engraved illustrations, which are chiefly employed in this periodical, strike us as far superior to the photogravure and other similar styles of pictures so much in vogue at the present time. A portrait of the newly consecrated Bishop of Nyassaland, (Rt. Rev. Wilfrid B. Hornby, M.A.) is given in the number for January 14th. The Chess column, as of old, continues to hold its place each week, and all current matters of interest are to be found in the other departments of the paper.

The Dominion Illustrated Monthly: Montreal, Sabis-ton Litho. and Publishing Co.

The new year begins with a very interesting number, freely illustrated. "Cricket in Canada," (continued), and "Choir Singing in Toronto," and the "Railway Clerks in Canada," will be read with much interest by the friends of the different departments treated by them, while the stories and poems will be found agreeable to all.