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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1898.

An Unjust Attack on Sunday-schools.

Mr. Edward Bok, the editor of a very widely circulated American magazine, The Ladies' Home Journal, in the March number makes a sensational and unjust attack upon the modern Sunday-school and Sunday-school teachers. In order to give still wider currency to this unjust and ungenerous attack, he prints it, with other selections, in an editor's sheet which he sends to his very large number of exchanges for reproduction. We think that one of two things is true. Either Mr. Bok has written this article without due investigation and does not know what he is talking about, or if he does know he is guilty of a wholesale libel upon a great army of devoted, self-sacrificing, and successful workers, who

are unable to defend themselves against his attack.

We quote as follows from Mr. Bok's article, head-lines and all:

DECAY OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

The Average Sunday-school of To-Day is a Rebuke to Intelligence.

"I have in mind," he says, "not less than twelve different men who are acting as superintendents of our Sunday-schools. Not one of these men has even a suggestion of force; not a spark of personal magnetism, not a personal possession which goes to draw children to him or to the school over which he presides. In five of these cases the men have been failures in business; by men in the outer world they are passed over, and yet the church places them in positions which call pre-eminently for every element which they so distinctly lack." Mr. Bok concludes his discussion with the assertion that "the average Sunday-school of to-day is a rebuke to intelligence and a discredit to the church."

Mr. Bok might have known—must have known, unless he was wilfully ignorant—that some of the most eminent and successful business men in the United States are engaged in Sunday-school work. There is, for instance, B. F. Jacobs, a successful real estate agent, of Chicago, one of the originators with Bishop Vincent of the International Lesson System more than a score of years ago, who has ever since given to it his best energies. John Wannamaker, late Postmaster-General of the United States, the head of two of the greatest business enterprises in Philadelphia and New York, has one of the largest Sunday-schools in the world; John T. Wattles, the publisher of the Sunday-school Times, also, we believe, superintends a very large Sunday-school. The late Mr. Reynolds left a very successful business to devote himself exclusively to Sunday-school work. Dwight L. Moody won his first laurels in Sunday-school work.

In our own country, such successful business men as Mr. J. W. Flavelle, Mr. Fudger, Dr. J. J. MacLaren, Dr. W. B. Willmott, Public School Inspector J. L. Hughes, J. W. St. John, M.P.P., Dr. Stewart, W. H. Pearson, the late Senator Ferrier, for fifty years superintendent of James Street school; the late Lieutenant-Governor Willmott, who said if he had to choose between the Lieutenant-Governorship and the superintendency of his

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