

INTERNATIONAL LESSON SCHEMES

Specially prepared for Presbyterian Sabbath Schools for 1892. Filled, pre-paid at 50 cents per 100 copies. Address—

PRESBYTERIAN PRINTING & PUBLISHING Co.,
5 Jordan Street, Toronto.

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN,

— PUBLISHED BY THE —

Presbyterian Printing & Publishing Co., Ltd.,

AT JORDAN STREET, TORONTO.

Terms: \$2 Per Annum in Advance.

ADVERTISING RATES. Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line; 1 year, \$3. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None other than uniform advertisements are.

The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23rd, 1891.

OUR publishers expect an addition of TWO THOUSAND new names to THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN list for the coming year. Old subscribers, who help to bring about this desirable result can get their own renewal for ONE DOLLAR. The way to do it: Secure two new names at \$2 each; forward \$5; and have your own subscription credited for another year.

AN exchange says that a young Jewess who had embraced Christianity expressed a desire "to read Church history in order to find out how and when Christians became so unlike Christ." Painfully suggestive.

TO our readers between the oceans and to those beyond we wish a merry Christmas, a happy New Year and many happy returns. To some THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN has made weekly visits for twenty years. With others we are just becoming acquainted. For one and all, old and young, far and near, we wish the best blessings our Heavenly Father bestows.

EVERY speech in Presbytery on Summer Sessions should begin with an expression of gratitude to God for giving the Church such a magnificent Home Mission field. Every speech on the remittant the appointment of a Foreign Missionary secretary should begin with thanks for the extension of our Foreign work which makes the appointment necessary. If any Presbytery groans about "increasing burdens," its replies to the remits should not be counted.

THE Presbytery of Maitland is of the opinion that a mission secretary should be appointed to superintend the Home and Foreign Mission work of the Church, and that Dr. Cochrane is the right man for the joint secretaryship. The suggestion is well worthy of consideration. If it is possible to hold the balances evenly between the two funds and impartially advocate the claims of both, Dr. Cochrane is as likely to do it as any man in the Church. Still we doubt very much whether the plan would be a wise one. If the Church grows in numbers and in missionary spirit as it should do, each of the Schemes will soon provide work enough for any one man.

THE practice of referring questions to the people is growing too fast in our municipal bodies. There may be questions that it is eminently proper to refer to a direct vote of the people. The practice, however, if persisted in will soon make municipal councils a sort of agency for passing questions on to the polls. Too often it is nothing but a cowardly dodge to shirk responsibility. Men are sent to the council chamber to transact the business of the people, not to pass difficult questions to another tribunal. The British system is to settle the question and let the man, not the question, go to the people. It sounds well to talk about "the sovereign people," and "trusting the people," and "the voice of the people," etc. Yes, it sounds well to talk that way, but too often the talker is merely working a cowardly plan to avoid personal responsibility.

THE advocates of political union with the United States will not fail to make the most of the fact that twice in thirteen years Constitutional Government has broken down in Quebec. Viewed from any standpoint these failures are deplorable. If the advisers of the Crown in '78 and at the present crisis were so hopelessly corrupt that they had to be dismissed, though possessing the confidence of a majority in the Legislature, then there were two governments sustained by the people but unfit to live. If the Lieut. Governors wrenched the constitution from partisan motives there were two alleged representatives of Royalty using the name and power of the Queen for the basest of partisan purposes. Look at the facts any way you please and they are deplorable. There is just one thing more deplorable and that is that men can be found professing to be patriotic Canadians who rejoice over the state of things at present existing in Quebec. Assuming Mercier to be guilty of everything charged against him, the public feeling should be one of mingled alarm and shame. The man who chuckles over Mercier's misdeeds and the country's shame is no better than Mercier.

TWICE during the last thirteen years the Lieut. Governor of Quebec has exercised the Royal prerogative in a manner that it has never been exercised by the Queen nor any Governor directly appointed by her. During the half century of her beneficent reign Victoria never dismissed advisers who had a majority of the representatives of the people, nor did any Governor or Governor-General appointed by her perform that constitutional feat. Were the game not so dangerous the spectacle of a second or third-rate French politician exercising powers that her Britannic majesty never used would be supremely ludicrous. Disguise the unpleasant fact as we may, the question that lies at the root of this crisis is whether Quebec is capable of self-government. Supposing Mercier and his friends are disposed of at the polls, the new government will have to face a debt of thirty-five millions, an annual deficit of over half a million, a credit impaired, if not lost, and a people excited enough to take each other by the throat at any moment. The prospects certainly are the reverse of bright. It is idle for people in the other provinces to say all this is in Quebec. Quebec is part of the Dominion, and no small part of it either. Painting Mercier black is simply blackening a Canadian supported by a large number of Canadian people.

CHRISTMAS! Again over all the globe the Christmas bells will ring out their joyous peal. Musical voices will blend harmoniously in singing to the praise of the Babe of Bethlehem. Kindly impulses and generous feelings will for a season—alas, too brief—be in the ascendant, and we can at least have a faint impression how much better this world would be were the spirit and the precepts of Him who brought peace on earth and good will to men made the guiding principles of our daily lives. But to that the purposes of the Eternal are tending. May each Christmas season, as it calls to mind the Saviour's advent, see advances in His cause and kingdom on the earth. May the festive gatherings in all the many homes into which THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN enters throughout the wide Dominion and in far off lands have their joys sanctified by the presence and blessing of the Divine Elder Brother, and may all whose outlook has been darkened by clouds of suffering and trial have the gracious presence of the Brother born for adversity. Through the gloom may they see the clear shining of His love. May the glorious dawn, to which the divine purposes tend, speedily appear, when

The Temple again shall be built
And filled as it was of yore;
And the burden be lifted from the heart of the earth
And the nations all adore.
Unto the throne of heaven
Morning and eve shall rise;
Unto, but not of, the Lamb
Shall be the sacrifice.

OUR good Methodist friends often tell us that Presbyterianism is changing. We hope it is if the change is in the direction of improvement. Of one thing, however, we are certain: Methodist practices are rapidly changing. The other week a writer, no ordinary one, as the style abundantly shows, found a place in the official organ of Methodism for the following:

I would draw the attention of our governing bodies to one or two things that, in my opinion, require check and control.

One of these is the method recently introduced at some of our camp and revival meetings of calling on all present to pray aloud at the same time. It is not Scriptural, and it certainly is not edifying. Young women converts are encouraged to screech at the top of their voices when engaged in prayer, and to wear a galvanic grin, and clap their hands when exhorting, to show that religion has not made them sad. Unfortunately, they are not solicited to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Better this, say the apologists for noise, than the stillness of death. But order and decency do not imply death; all true spiritual life is rhythmic, not discordant. Of the physical phenomena encouraged by some at these meetings, it is unfit to write. Disgust, pain, sorrow are the emotions awakened by these proceedings in the breasts of all right-thinking and intelligent people.

Again, it is now the growing fashion for the minister and his people to call in the aid of the travelling evangelist. Nothing else will draw; and the abnormal craving for excitement must be satisfied. By-and-bye the reaction sets in. Regular services seem prosy. Something is the matter. The minister is dull and old professors are but stumbling blocks. The heating and the cooling process has done its work: the metal has grown hard and brittle. Heat is again needed. The groundwork of the truth—the teaching and the enforcement of duty—must stand aside and give place to renewed evangelistic effort. "Working for the Lord" is the watchword, but the "work" consists largely in loud ejaculations, sickly jingles of song, or prayers, that in their coarse familiarity shock the reverent. These are the flashy livery of the live saint, while the "robe of righteousness," if of quiet colours, is despised. Regular pastoral work seems profitless and tame under these lurid lights, and ordinary circuit labour is yearly growing more grinding and difficult. The religious character of the people is beginning to lose its old-time sturdiness, and the mushroom growths of easy conversion too often wilt and crumble under the glare and pressure of the world.

Brother Dewart is a man of courage, but we doubt very much if he would have inserted the foregoing fifteen years ago. It is true, however, every word of it. Last week the *Guardian* had the following in an excellent editorial on "Noisy Demonstrations at Revivals":

We think it is a grave mistake for those who conduct evangelistic meetings to stimulate or encourage shouting, physical demonstrations, or promiscuous noise and confusion, as if these things had some moral and religious value, or were signs of a work of grace. Not only is there no spiritual value in noisy confusion, it is unfavourable to serious thought and solid religious experience. We must not forget that conversion is a mental and spiritual process, which in its very nature requires sober thought. It is necessary that the sinner should consider his ways, fully resolve to turn away from his sins, and exercise an intelligent trust in Christ for salvation. This process may take place under a variety of outward circumstances. But it will hardly be claimed that noise and confusion have any special adaptation to aid in promoting a clear apprehension of saving truth. On the contrary, such surroundings increase the danger of mistaking a transient excitement of feeling for an experience of converting or sanctifying grace. Subsequent reaction and declension are general in proportion to the preceding degree of physical demonstration and excitement.

Intelligent, devout Methodists will no doubt feel grateful to the *Guardian* for such timely and Scriptural teaching. Noisy demonstrations never did Methodists any real good and have done others much harm. Too many hardened scoffers took their first lessons at noisy religious meetings. The most intelligent and influential Methodist Churches would not tolerate for an evening some of the practices of the early days.

LET PUBLIC WORSHIP BE DEVOUT.

PRESBYTERIANISM has ever insisted that in the conduct of public worship everything should be done decently and in order. It has no ornate system of worship, no liturgical forms, no priestly exaltation. Its very simplicity has hitherto been its chief characteristic. All systems, even the very best, are liable to abuse, a liability that has ever to be guarded against. Two very opposite tendencies in the Churches of to-day are discernible. On the one hand is to be seen a striving, after a gorgeous and ornate ritual that differs but little from the outward magnificence of Roman Catholic ceremonial, and on the other an effort to reduce public worship to the level of a meaningless routine. The straining after novelty, effect, sensation, is doing much in these days to rob public worship of its true character in many of the Churches. It was the aim of our reforming Presbyterian forefathers to make the services of the sanctuary as unlike as possible the ostentatious ceremonial of the system they discarded. They sought to follow in its simplicity the New Testament model. In the sublime simplicity of Presbyterian worship there is nothing to offend a devout soul, but here as in other ways there is a possibility of degenerating into a cold, lifeless and meaningless formalism, and that is something that should be carefully shunned.

Examples are not wanting to show that a devout demeanour in the house of God is not incompatible with an irreverent and sinful life. It is not ritual or its absence that is the cause of true devotion. The soul of the worshipper must go out in adoring love toward God, and hold communion