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NOW READY.

## *The International Scheme of S. S. Lessons*

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## Notes of the Week.

THE 18th day of May, 1843, is memorable in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland. The religious movement that made so impressive a manifestation that day has produced indelible results. Its influence was felt throughout the world. It will soon be fifty years since the Free Church of Scotland began to exist as a separate institution. Many great changes have taken place in the course of these years. Most of the fathers of the Disruption have passed away. Few remain. But the Church, which by some was reckoned at first a perilous experiment, not only survives, but flourishes with increasing strength. It is proposed to mark the jubilee year by wiping out all the debt of the Church property.

LAST week the death of the Hon. Adam Crooks, formerly Ontario Minister of Education, was announced. Over a year ago it became painfully apparent to his friends and physicians that owing to an insidious disease, his mind had become clouded, and that his days of usefulness were over. He was placed under treatment in an American institution specially designed for the cure of patients suffering from mental aberration. From the first but little hope of improvement was held out, and now the end has come. Mr. Crooks was a man of high and honourable character and greatly esteemed by all who knew him. He received his education at Upper Canada College and Toronto University, where he took high honours. He entered public life as M.P.P. for West Toronto in 1871, and held office in the Ontario Government till his health failed. The first restrictive license act passed by the Legislature bears his name, and in his official capacity he rendered good service to the cause of education.

THE East is usually reputed to be the abode of wise men. Many such are known to reside in Montreal, but it is equally apparent that some of their fellow-townsmen act very foolishly. No sooner has the small-pox epidemic, which has wrought such havoc, subsided than obstinate doctrinaires set about the formation of an anti-vaccination league. When the advantages of such an obvious, precautionary measure have been so clearly demonstrated, and the unreasoning prejudice against it was being beneficially modified, these men must step to the front and once more seek to arouse slumbering animosities. Men are entitled to their opinions, however absurd they may be, so long as they are harmless; but when their adoption means danger to their dupes and to the community at large, it is high time that they should be looked after. Instead of taking up the role of objectors, let them propound a better scheme for the prevention of the loathsome disease than that now adopted by all reputable physicians, and when they succeed in doing so, they may, for the first time, expect a respectful hearing.

THE Congregational ministers of Chicago have taken the pains to inform themselves directly concerning the views entertained by socialistic agitators, who are very active in the large centres of population.

Those bent on the overturning of the social fabric are invariably foreigners. The native American is too practical to concern himself with the irrational theories of misguided enthusiasts or the lurid denunciations of more culpable schemers, who contrive to live at the expense of their deluded followers. A German socialistic editor responded to the invitation to meet with the Chicago Congregational divines, to whom he expounded his views with refreshing frankness. He said there were half-a-million Socialists in the United States who believed in anarchy and a resort to force to accomplish their levelling process. He said that marriage, as practised to-day, was simply concubinage, and that when the socialistic revolution occurred free love would prevail. That the half-million alleged Socialists are prepared to endorse the views of this radical editor does not appear; but when workingmen bend their energies to the promotion of their moral, spiritual and social well-being the vocation of the professional agitator ceases.

DR. F. R. BEATTIE, of Brantford, has an able paper on The Design Argument—its Scope and Import, in the last number of *Knox College Monthly*. The following extract will indicate the position he very properly takes: A review of the history of theistic discussion will show that the value of this argument has been variously estimated. At times, perhaps, too much has been expected from it, for it is to be remembered that it is not the only line of proof by which the belief in the divine existence is established. In modern times the design argument has fallen into bad repute in certain quarters, and then the theistic position has lost useful elements of proof. The Cartesians, in their zeal for ontology and cosmology, almost ignored teleology, and Descartes himself thought the design argument of little value. Then Kant in his famous "Critique" did much to destroy its good name during the last century. It is a hopeful sign of the thought of the present generation to find this argument receiving earnest and respectful attention, for, in some respects, it is the most convincing of all the proofs of the divine existence. During the present century vast advances have been made in scientific research. Sometimes the facts brought to light thereby have been used as weapons against teleology, and in certain quarters the scientific spirit has been inclined to look on final causes with but ill-concealed scorn. Theism, however, may really rejoice in every advance true science makes, since in every established scientific fact she finds new material to fortify her position.

MR. JOHN HALLAM, who has paid a recent visit to England, in a communication to the *Globe*, notes the changes coming under his observation. He speaks very plainly and forcibly on a much needed social reform. I find, he says, the working classes are getting more alive to their own interests. The evil that is crushing thousands in Great Britain is rum, beer and whiskey, notwithstanding the numerous counter-acting aids. The grim fact stares Christian England in the face that the sufferings of the poorer classes are mainly due to drink. I was told by some mill-owners that if only fifty per cent. of the money spent for intoxicating liquors was spent upon the actual necessities of life, such as clothing and proper food, every cotton and woollen mill in England could run full time, and every man, woman and child would be comfortably clothed and fed, and every one capable of working would have full employment. When will the day come when the people will see the subject in this light? What are the preachers of the Gospel of Christ and social reformers doing in this line to accomplish so desirable an end? The people have good times in their own hands. Fair Trade, Free Trade, National Policy and other remedies will do nothing in comparison with giving up spending their hard-earned wages in drink, and spending the money in everything that will make their wives and families comfortable and happy without degrading their manhood. But there are signs of improvement; the

masses are beginning to think and act for themselves. Who would have thought twenty years ago that workingmen could have been elected to be municipal councillors and school trustees?

EDINBURGH, says the *Christian Leader*, has lost one of the most genial, as well as useful and highly respected of her citizens, and the Free Church a modern elder, by the death, on Thursday last, in his sixty-fifth year, of Mr. David Dickson, J.P. The author of a practical little pamphlet on the duties of the eldership, which has been reprinted in the Australian colonies, he exemplified in his life the high ideal of the office presented so impressively: that anonymous messenger to his brethren; and not only in the New North congregation, of which he had been session clerk since 1853, but also in the General Assembly, and on many of the Church's standing committees, he will be greatly missed. The oldest elder of the congregation to which he belonged, he was also its historian; and from his able pen proceeded the sketch of Dr. C. J. Brown, which appears in "Disruption Worthies." In the municipal affairs, as well as the educational and philanthropic institutions, of his native city, Mr. Dickson took a warm interest. For several years he sat in the town council, and under the provostship of his friend, Mr. Duncan McLaren, he occupied the office of city treasurer. A member of the school board, he interested himself warmly on behalf of the poor; and one of his latest contributions to our columns was a touching appeal founded on his intimate personal acquaintance and sympathy with struggling but high-spirited parents, who found it almost impossible to pay school fees, and yet could not endure to be branded as paupers. Along with his brother, Mr. William Dickson—whose name is also honourably identified with the Free Church—he had for well on to half-a-century conducted the wholesale stationery business which they inherited from their father. One of his sisters was the wife of Dr. Andrew Bonar, the biographer of M'Cheyne, and another was married to Rev. Mr. Grant of Cavers.

A FEW weeks ago we called attention to the fact that Fulton County, Georgia, had by a good majority voted for Prohibition. Those interested in the drink traffic are very unwilling to accept the result. The *New York Independent* says: The liquor men in Fulton County, including the city of Atlanta, have made a desperate effort to set aside the result of the recent election in that county. The Prohibitionists won the day by a majority of 228 against the rum-sellers and their allies. These rum-sellers first applied to Judge McCay, of the United States Court, for an injunction forbidding the Ordinary from declaring the result of the election; and the judge, after granting a temporary injunction until he could hear the arguments on the merits of the case, declined to make the injunction permanent. They then applied to Judge Clarke, of the State Superior Court, and he has just rendered a decision similar to that of Judge McCay. The Ordinary at once signed and filed the election returns; and this leaves nothing to be done but to publish the result of the election once a week for four successive weeks, and then Prohibition will be the law in Fulton County, Georgia, unless the Supreme Court of the State should in the meantime interpose its authority, and otherwise determine. If local option finally triumphs, as we hope it will, in Atlanta, which is the stronghold of the rum-power in Georgia, then it will ere long sweep the whole State. It has already conquered the larger part of the State: and what remains is to still achieve a like success in those counties that contain the principal cities thereof. The principle of local option has been a grand success in the South, and is still marching onward to greater victories. It has done far more for the temperance cause than the political party action of the Prohibitionists in the Northern and Western States. We think that these Prohibitionists would do well to study the temperance campaign at the South. It certainly has been an effective movement, and promises well for the future.