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NOW READY.

## *The International Scheme of S. S. Lessons* FOR 1886.

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## Notes of the Week.

THE new Hebrew-Christian Church, recently opened in New York by the Rev. Jacob Fresman, is meeting with much encouragement. Last week a very interesting conference on Jewish Missions was held, in which Bishop Nicholson, Rev. William W. Clark, Dr. Wilson, Dr. George F. Pentecost, D.D., A. J. Gordon, D.D., Dr. DeHess, late U.S. Consul at Jerusalem, and others took part.

AT the last meeting of the Toronto Ministerial Association a communication was received from Dr. Wild, acknowledging the honour done him by electing him a member, and intimating that owing to the nature of his engagements he would not be able to attend the meetings regularly. Several brethren, absent from the previous meeting, made remarks indicating that the reception of Dr. Wild did not meet with their cordial approval. The Rev. T. W. Jolliffe read a paper on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, which elicited favourable comment.

BUT for Greek stubbornness the Balkan difficulty might have been settled, temporarily, at least, before now. Remonstrances by the combined Powers are unheeded by the patriotic Greeks. Their eagerness for war makes an immense drain on their resources, and it is causing a still greater loss to the Turkish treasury. Is Greece receiving aid and encouragement of which diplomacy is ignorant? Are the Great Powers, Russia, Germany and Austria, playing a waiting game? It is well known that Russia has not relaxed warlike preparations, and may only be waiting for a favourable opportunity to strike for further conquest.

THE seventh Monday Popular Concert last week proved as attractive and enjoyable as any that preceded it. It seems to be the aim of the managers to maintain a high standard of musical excellence as only by so doing can they accomplish the end designed by these concerts—to afford an opportunity of hearing music of the highest class and the cultivation and diffusion of good musical taste. The selections at the seventh concert from the works of Bach and Hummel, rendered as they were with great beauty of expression, proved very attractive. The vocal artist was Mme. Catherine Zeiss, who sang the parts assigned her with magnificent effect.

THE defeat of the Salisbury Administration has not produced the degree of excitement that might have been expected. The result of the late elections made it evident that its days were numbered. It was overthrown before an issue satisfactory to itself could be selected as a test of strength. The brief discussion of a side issue determined its fate, and the immediate outlook is decidedly uncertain. Mr. Gladstone in the present House cannot have a stable majority. The Irish Nationalist party will vote with him or against him, just as Mr. Parnell may choose to determine. The depleted exchequer of the Nationalists may restrain them from precipitating an early appeal to the country; but a strong Government cannot immediately be looked for. For this reason a permanent settlement of the Irish question is not so near as it seemed.

PRINCE BISMARCK is a statesman of the old autocratic school. In the Prussian Landtag last week he

delivered a characteristic speech of two hours' duration in defence of the expulsion of Poles from East Prussia. These descendants of a patriotic people are not so pliant as the Chancellor would like, so he boldly avows a policy of root and branch extirpation. He has resolved on the bold expedient of compelling Polish occupants to sell out to loyal Germans and thus remove from the soil those who cherished the traditions of a crushed nationality. The man of blood and iron also threw out significant hints that his measure would be pressed despite opposition. So thoroughly paternal has the arbiter of German destiny become that "in order to make this colonization sure permanently to benefit the Empire, colonists will be prohibited from marrying Poles."

It is stated that Mr. Finlay, Q.C., the new member for Inverness, publishes the text of a bill he has drafted with a view to removing the obstacles to the reunion of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland. Its chief provision is that the Church courts shall have the sole and exclusive right to regulate all matters spiritual within the Church, and that their decisions shall not be subject to any manner of review by the civil courts. It also invests the Church courts with the exclusive power to disjoin and erect parishes. *The Glasgow Mail* says the measure comes half a century too late. *The Glasgow Herald* believes it is "utterly visionary" to suppose that parliament will revoke the decision of the legislature which in 1842 rejected the claim of right as formulated by the fathers of the Free Church. The Master of Polwarth, who is contesting the vacant seat in Edinburgh against Mr. Childers, thinks the claim of right is a basis upon which it will be possible to work out the reconstruction he desires to see.

LAST week a meeting was held in Chickering Hall, New York, at which several able addresses were delivered by both clergymen and laymen in defence of the Sabbath. A noticeable feature of the meeting was the testimony to the value of the sacred day given by Mr. P. M. Arthur, Grand Chief of the Locomotive Brotherhood, and Archbishop Corrigan, of the Roman Catholic Church. In the note, apologizing for his absence owing to another engagement, the latter says. As I understand it, the movement for opening the museums on Sunday, though advocated in the interest of the working classes, is really the entering wedge of a larger and insidious design which aims at throwing open also on that day theatres, drinking-saloons and other places of amusement, and so gradually to do away with everything that gives the Sabbath a sacred character. If this view be correct, as there is good reason to believe it to be, the question becomes a very serious one, which deserves most attentive consideration.

AT occasional intervals a minor agitation in favour of early closing takes place. The principle is always regarded as right, and people are urged to do their shopping at seasonable hours; but the abuse continues, and is growing worse all the time. The movement to emancipate retail shopkeepers always fails for want of co-operation. If buyers and sellers would combine that no business should be done after a stipulated hour, there would be no difficulty in putting an end to what is unanimously considered a needless burden. Even if purchasers would make up their minds never to buy articles later than seven o'clock on ordinary evenings, and say nine on Saturday evenings, retail storekeepers would gladly close their places of business at the hours named; but purchasers seldom think of considering any other person's convenience except their own, and should a shop be kept open till midnight stray customers would keep dropping in till the door was locked. If storekeepers themselves would only agree, and honourably abide by agreement, the evil would at once come to an end. In all former efforts made to secure joint action it was found that some dealer whose selfishness was stronger than his honour violated the compact, and the rest in self-defence followed suit. In Woodstock the ministers have made a forcible appeal to the people to discountenance

late Saturday night shopping. The evil exists everywhere, and all sensible people when they think of it will seek its removal.

AT the sixty-fifth annual meeting of the Montreal Bible Society, representatives of the various Evangelical Churches being present, Principal MacVicar delivered a powerful and telling address. After quoting from a recent sermon by Father Giband, in which he denounced the Bible and called on his hearers to burn it, the Principal said: Seeing there is a strong, enormously wealthy, well-endowed, tithe-collecting, tax-levying, Bible-burning, confessedly intolerant corporation in the land, to which I make bold to say time-serving politicians bow the knee, and seeing that we hold the Bible to be the Word of God, the message of our Father in heaven to all, the charter of our freedom, the foundation of our best and most sacred institutions, and our guide to eternal glory, therefore, unless we be forsworn and traitors to our God, we are bound to circulate the Bible. If Father Giband was not ashamed to say to the vast majority of the people of this Dominion—for there was now a Dominion, and the quicker the little Province of Quebec and its people were taught this fact the better—that the Bible was full of lies; if he was not ashamed to slander two companies of the wisest and best men in England or America; if he was not ashamed to charge them openly with falsifying God's word, then neither were they ashamed to say that the Bible was full of God's truth, and it he is eager to burn it we, as the representatives of the Reformed Churches of Christendom, are unitedly resolved to publish it to all. Surely they had seen of late enough of ignorance and of superstition, making this city a laughing-stock and costing it millions of money, to cause them to determine to place the Word of Truth in every home in this Province. He proceeded to urge the claims of the Bible, because the best and greatest of men united to accept, defend and love it; it had conferred inestimable blessings on mankind, and because the Bible was the best instrument of mental and moral culture.

OUR United States neighbours permit great plainness of speech. The ravings of Justus Schwab and the blood-curdling atrocities of Johann Most are not interfered with. The Chicago dynamiters even can talk unmolested; but let any or all of these try to violate the law, they would soon find themselves in its firm grasp. Demagogues know the value of publicity, and they manage to get into the papers with a frequency that perplexes the uninitiated reader. It would be a mistake to suppose that many of the despatches and journalistic extracts, constructed with a view to the Irish vote in the United States, to which we are accustomed, reflect the opinions of the better class of Americans. The following, from the *New York Independent*, is not by any means an exceptional mode of expression: Now the question for Americans to decide is whether the demands that the Irish make of the English are just. Are their demands fair, or do they require too much? We hold that Ireland, if for no other reason than her geographical position, should remain a part of Great Britain. On that point all but the wildest fanatics are agreed. She should be satisfied with a system of local government analogous to the system we have in our States. Any reasonable steps she takes to bring about that result will have our moral support; but we could never support secession. Ireland should remain loyal to the Empire or be forced to remain loyal. She is as necessary to Great Britain as the South was and is to the United States. We, of the North, fought the South to maintain our integrity as a nation. Why, if necessary, should not England do the same? And what is true as to the course England should pursue is also true of the course that Ireland, Scotland and Wales should pursue if England attempted to disconnect herself from them. In Great Britain, as in the United States, unity is strength. Disruption would be disaster. But the demand for disruption is suicidal. The demand for local self-government will have general American sympathy.