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NOW READY.

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

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## Notes of the Week.

SAYS the Glasgow *Christian Leader*: The Presbyterian ministers of Toronto have published a resolution discountenancing literary associations and those having social interests in view in connection with congregations. THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN very properly tells them that they have made a grave mistake.

THE authorities of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, have decided to introduce on the first of January next the twenty-four o'clock system of marking time, as advocated by the eminent Canadian engineer, Mr. Sandford Fleming. The hours will be numbered from midnight to midnight and from one to twenty-four. The new system will soon spread over the United Kingdom, and then to other countries, and though a little awkward and clumsy at first, will, like standard time, be found much more convenient and desirable when people become accustomed to it.

THE recent attempt to destroy London Bridge by dynamite has called general attention once more to that peculiarly savage method of seeking to promote political agitation by murder and devastation. The strong feeling that these outrages have evoked, and the vigorous utterances of American public men and leading journals have cowed into silence the ferocity that exulted in such reckless and inhuman crimes. The bitterest Fenian papers now find it politic to disavow this cowardly mode of warfare, and complain that it has a weakening effect on the Parnellite movement.

THE Canadian bar has lost a distinguished member in the death of Mr. James Bethune, Q. C. He was born in Glengarry in 1840, where he received his elementary education. He studied at Queen's College and Toronto University graduating as LL.B. in 1861. He studied law under the Hon. Edward Blake, with whom he subsequently became a partner. He was for a time actively engaged in political life. He earned the reputation of being a man of sterling integrity and uprightness. His strength of character gave him an individuality that commanded general respect. Mr. Bethune was an esteemed elder of St. Andrew's Church, Toronto.

THE Rev. John Smith, M.A., of Berwick, thinks there is a fatal incompleteness in education if something is not done to inculcate total abstinence as a prime condition of health. He says: We have now such a consensus of scientific opinion on this subject that teachers can no more be reproached for pressing private opinions when they teach temperance truth than when they explain the doctrine of the tides, or carry their classes over the *pons asinorum*. Were teachers throughout Scotland to fall in with this, in a few years they would so flood society with young temperance reformers that we would carry with a rush every position in parliament and in society.

THAT standing disgrace, the St. Stephen, N. B. lottery swindle, has at last been broken up. Its chief promoter, a Philadelphia man, has been arrested on a charge of obtaining money under false pretences, and it is expected that others implicated in the nefarious and demoralizing rascality will also soon be under arrest. The swindlers are said to have paid the Govern-

ment \$30,000 a year for postage, and the postmaster at St. Stephen derived a larger income from his office than any postmaster in Canada. The concern was never known to have a drawing or to give a prize. The unprincipled men who conduct these enterprises are deeply culpable, but they are not the only parties to blame. The inordinate love of unearned gain supplies a steady procession of dupes on whom they can easily operate.

A NEW museum is about to be added to the other attractions of the French capital. M. Guimet has presented to the State the valuable collection which he has devoted years of travel in acquiring. It consists chiefly of objects used in religious worship in the different countries of Asia, and by the African and Indian tribes. The collection is of vast extent, and is said to be the most unique in the world. It includes specimens of almost every variety of Eastern pottery and porcelain. A special library goes with it, consisting of manuscripts and printed works referring to the various Pagan religions. A still more remarkable appanage of the museum is the school of Oriental *Savants*, which M. Guimet has founded and supports at his own expense. He has brought a number of Buddhist and Brahmin priests from China, Japan, India and Ceylon, who pass their time in translating into French the sacred books of their religion.

THE *Brookville Recorder* says. At a meeting of medical men some time ago in Montreal, Dr. Sullivan, of Kingston, gave some interesting statistics as to the death rate in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. In the former it is 11.81 per 1,000, in the latter 19.07, and in British Columbia it is even higher, being 20.38. Thus Ontario with a population of 600,000 more than Quebec has actually 3,000 fewer deaths. The difference is largely due to the immense infant mortality in the sister province. It is estimated that each child is worth \$40 to the State, so that the loss of so many lives each year means a heavy loss to the Province. The mortality is largely caused by such diseases as small-pox, measles, scarlet, typhus and typhoid fevers, the spread of which might be more curtailed if proper sanitary precautions were taken. In Ontario much more attention is paid to such matters, and the result is a lower death rate. In view of the possible coming of the cholera next year, too much attention cannot be paid to sanitary matters, and every precaution should be taken to prevent its spread. It finds no lodgment where care and cleanliness are observed. Let us preserve our record in the matter of the death rate.

THE Methodist Centennial Conference at Baltimore concluded its labours last week. An interesting incident was the reception of a despatch from the Rev. O. L. Taylor, the oldest Presbyterian minister in the United States, congratulating the Conference on the occasion of their centennial celebration. Dr. Taylor is now in Rochester, and was one hundred years old on the 16th inst. A report on the question of establishing an Oxford league was after considerable discussion adopted, of which the principal features are that each church may provide its own plans of organization and the literature it shall introduce to its members; the pastor of each church shall be *ex-officio* president with power to appoint an assistant. The league is destined to encourage the reading and study of the scriptures, benevolent and missionary work by members and social intercourse for the mutual advantage of those who belong to the organization. The death of the Rev. Dr. Rice, senior superintendent of the Methodist Church in Canada, was announced in the Conference, and resolutions of respect to his memory were adopted. The pastoral address of the Bishops read at the close of the centenary conference, is a Christian congratulation on the state of the church, a review of its doctrine and future mission. It is addressed to the Methodist people of the United States and Canada, and urges the maintenance of family religion. It speaks of the Sabbath as the pillar of Christian civilization, and says a spiritual church without the Sabbath is an impossibility. A love feast closed the proceedings of the Conference.

THE Rev. Dr. Rice, Senior Superintendent of the United Methodist Church, died in this city on Monday afternoon. His trouble, which was one of a painful internal nature, dates from last April. He rallied sufficiently, however, in June, to be able to attend the opening of the Conferences at London, Guelph and Toronto. He continued to improve during the summer, but about two weeks ago, he was taken seriously ill, and remained unconscious most of the time until his death. He was born in the State of Maine in 1817. While yet a child the family removed to New Brunswick, and his sympathies all his life were strongly British. The earlier years of his ministry were spent in that Province, and were marked by great energy and devotion to his work. In 1847, at the time of the reunion of the Canadian and British Conference, he, along with the Rev. Enoch Wood, came to Toronto and did valuable missionary work in various parts of the Province. He was for a time Treasurer, Steward and Moral Governor of Victoria College, and after that President of the Hamilton Ladies' College. He resigned this position in 1878, when he went to engage in pastoral work in St. Mary's and afterwards at Winnipeg, where he acted as Chairman of the Manitoba missionary district. Dr. Rice had much to do with the Methodist union. He was Chairman of the Conference in 1874, when the union with the New Connexion Church took place. He was President also of the Conference of 1882 at Hamilton, when the resolutions were passed, and again he presided at Belleville in the following year, when the union was ratified, and was appointed at that meeting Senior Superintendent of the United Methodist Church. As might be inferred from his long, arduous, and successful labours, Dr. Rice was a man of great energy and force of character, and in the whole Methodist Connexion no man commanded more deservedly the respect of all its members.

THE question of church music is, as we learn from the *Christian Leader*, engaging considerable attention in Scotland at present. The Rev Thomas Pearson, of the Established Church, has been giving Sunday evening lectures on "Ecclesiastical Music" in the parish church of Cupar. He expressed a regret that the three Presbyterian churches had not united to produce a uniform psalmody and hymnal for Scotland. As showing the vagaries of untutored precentors he mentioned a psalm tune, the fourteen notes of which had been expanded to seventy two to suit the taste of a leader of psalmody. In an amusing sketch of the action of the opponents of new tunes, he recalled the case of Gideon Duncan, an Aberdeen weaver, who invoked the powers of the court of session to protect his pious consciousness from strange and unhallowed vocal sounds. Prof. Bruce says it is a mistake in congregations to think that choirs are a necessity. He has heard deplorable singing all over the country through bad singers being allowed a place in choirs. Only a few leading voices should be employed, and care taken by ministers and office-bearers that no inferior singers be admitted. An instrument should be used as an aid to the singing because it prompts, sustains, and guides the expression of the song of the congregation. This being a transition time in church music, prudence, judgment and firmness are required in dealing with it. Mr. D. S. Salmond, of Glasgow, lecturing on "Church Praise," at Arbroath, to a large audience, pleaded for congregational singing to the exclusion of both organ voluntaries and mere choir performances. In certain circumstances he recommended the introduction of an instrument. But he thought arguments both for and against organs had generally proceeded on wrong lines. It was a musical question and nothing more. While keeping fast to the idea of congregational singing of praise as alone admissible in the Sabbath services of the sanctuary, Mr. Salmond yet maintained strongly the lawfulness of oratorios and "singing the Gospel" on other occasions. Weekly displays of fine music in church would pall on the taste if even they could be got good enough, which was impracticable. It had been tried, but church choirs were poor in comparison with musical societies and professionals.