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NOW READY.

## *The International Scheme of S. S. Lessons* FOR 1885.

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## Notes of the Week.

OF the four hundred ministers who on the 18th May, 1843, walked in the historical procession from the Assembly to Tanfield Hall in Edinburgh, it is said only a few now survive. Dr. Beith, of Stirling, is eighty-eight; Mr. Dewar, of Fochabers, the last of the Strathbogie heroes is eighty-eight; Dr. Mackay, of Inverness, is older; and Mr. Waters, of Burghhead, is ninety-four.

FATHER O'CONNOR, who conducts the *Converted Catholic* and carries on an increasing Evangelistic movement in New York, severed his connection with the Church of Rome, about six years since. A month ago three nuns joined his congregation. They were publicly received on December 28th. Fifty other conversions took place in New York in connection with Father O'Connor's work. Total conversions of about 400 are reported. Three of these converts had been educated for the priesthood; six had been in convents.

WHILE thoughtful, patriotic and Christian people in the United States are endeavouring to restrain the polygamous practices of the Mormons, the missionaries of that modern delusion are as diligent as ever. President Taylor and other dignitaries of Mormonism have been in Mexico. They visited the settlements in Guaymas and Sonora. The Mormons are carrying on proselyting operations among the Indians of Northern Mexico, among whom missionaries have been labouring for several years. It is not improbable that a number of Mormons may settle over the line in Mexico.

THE religious condition of Harvard College is under discussion in Boston. Since the venerable Dr. Peabody retired from the speaker's chair, says the *New York Sun*, three years ago, it has been vacant. It is generally acknowledged that it is not the policy of the college to elect a successor. Morning prayers have been conducted by various clergymen, and the regular Sunday evening service in the chapel has been maintained in the same way. Beyond these perfunctory services it is impossible to discover the least effort on the part of the college authorities to minister to the spiritual needs of the students. The college seems content to develop the mind and the body of the students, and leave their spiritual needs out of the problem of education.

REFERRING to a late meeting at Montreal where the treatment of the insane was discussed, a prominent French Canadian politician in *Le Canadien* says: If the public were only aware of a tithe of the incredible things of which Beauport Asylum has been the scene, there would be a universal shout of reprobation. What Dr. Tuke saw and wrote on the subject only furnishes a feeble picture of the reality. Who could ever have believed, for instance, that the patients had to sup on bread and molasses, or bread and water? Who could ever have believed that the patients of both sexes were allowed to live in the most odious and dangerous communion? Yet, if an investigation be granted, these facts will be established in the most incontrovertible manner.

From reports of various congregational meetings

held in this city and elsewhere, the condition of affairs generally is both gratifying and encouraging. Business has been depressed, many workmen unemployed and money scarce, but the ordinary revenues of most congregations have not to any great extent reflected the existing depression. This means more than that efforts have been made to meet the requirements of congregational revenue. It is an evidence that the maintenance of Gospel ordinances is recognized as a duty that ought to be discharged, even though it entail self-denial and sacrifice. It is an indication that the practice of retrenchment has in many cases not begun with the church. A number of congregations report an actual increase over the contributions of previous years. St. Andrew's and Knox Churches, Toronto, have with a praiseworthy generosity, made additions to the incomes of their respective pastors.

THE American Women Suffragists have been holding a convention in Washington recently. In the proceedings, so far as referred to in the newspapers, nothing very unusual in such assemblies appears to have occurred. The veteran leaders of the movement, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Miss Susan B. Anthony, were, of course, prominent figures at the convention. The chief sensation connected with the gathering occurred in a Congregational church, when Rev. Dr. Patton, President of Howard University, preached on "Women and Scepticism." His remarks were not as complimentary to certain historical women as some of the ladies present desired. At the close of the service they availed themselves of the privilege of telling the Doctor what they thought of him. Their language was not remarkable either for its elegance or fine feeling. Mrs. Stanton is reported to have said: Let me congratulate Dr. Patton. I have been trying for years to make women understand that the worst enemies they have are in the pulpit, and now he has illustrated it beyond question.

IN the presentment made by the Grand Jury at the late Criminal Assizes various things are pointed out that are worthy of serious attention. The number of forgery and embezzlement cases brought before them has suggested to the Grand Jurors the idea of cautioning parents, guardians and employers of youths to take a careful oversight of their habits. A kindly interest in the young and inexperienced certainly would do no harm and in many cases might be productive of good. Wages is not the only nexus between employer and employed. To save a thoughtless young fellow from rushing on the down track would be at least as gratifying to a good man as a handsome profit on a commercial venture. Defects in dealing with criminals were also pointed out. Keeping prisoners in jail in idleness and allowing those beginning a vicious career to associate with hardened reprobates, are serious blunders. It is not a pleasant reflection that Toronto Jail, the Central Prison, and Lunatic Asylum are greatly overcrowded, so that proper classification is rendered impossible.

BOTH the Dominion and the Ontario Parliaments are now in session. They were opened last week with the customary ceremonials. The speeches from the throne differed in no respect from the usual addresses which serve as a formal prelude to the regular business of the session. Neither at Ottawa nor at Toronto do the speeches foreshadow any very startling measures about to be submitted. There may be occasional sharp-shooting of a lively character in both Houses, but the sessions are expected to be neither eventful nor protracted. However, there is no telling. It is the unexpected that is said to happen. An extension of the franchise is promised. There is one move that all temperance reformers must be prepared for, and that is a persistent and importunate effort on the part of the liquor trade to secure what they call amendments to the Scott Act. The Government at Ottawa is to be interviewed on the subject. Temperance reformers owe it to themselves and to their cause that if the government yield to the blandishments of Boniface they shall not sin in ignorance.

County after county has by its vote shown that the Scott Act as it is harmonizes with the popular mind and will.

THE Toronto Caledonian Society offered first and second prizes for an original poem, appropriate to the celebration of Burns' birthday, which is duly honoured by all orthodox Scotchmen wherever they are to be found. A number of gifted sons of the heather sent in poems, several of them possessing sterling merit. The first prize was awarded to Alexander MacLauchlan, who has written many a stirring lyric in which the genius of the poet and the perfervid genius of the Scot are equally apparent. The second prize was also uncommonly good in its way—but it turns out that it was an original poem a long time ago, and written by another than the competitor for the Toronto prize for 1885. To the Rev. James Bain, of Markham, the credit of stripping this literary jackdaw of his borrowed plumes is due. It is not long since we called attention to a similar fraud. Eliza Cook's well-known "Song of Steam" appeared in a contemporary's poets' corner, bearing a name which fortunately we forget. The base dishonesty of plagiarism is understood by most people, except those who resort to it in the hope that it will bring them the admiration they do not deserve while it only brings them the contempt they richly merit.

AFTER the battle of Abuklea there was a period of intense anxiety and suspense as to the fate of the brave little band of British troops commanded by General Stewart. The formidable nature of the difficulties to be encountered and the vast number of rebels eager to annihilate the British made the anxiety all the greater. When full particulars of the perilous march to Gabut and the fighting to be done ere it was reached were received there was a general feeling of relief. The last reported features of the Sudanese campaign show that the valour of British soldiers is equal to that of the old historic days. Two days after the fierce battle of the 17th January an obstinate engagement was fought. This time the Arabs were unable to break the small but firm British square. Like advancing waves against a rock they came impetuously on, only to recoil every time until they gave up the attempt as hopeless. Communication with General Gordon is established, and it may be hoped that the most critical part of the campaign is now over. Brilliant victories, however, are always costly. Precious lives are sacrificed. General Stewart has been disabled by severe wounds, and there has been an unusual fatality among the war correspondents.

A SHORT time ago a paragraph went the rounds that in connection with St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, there had been a Presbyterian mean enough to descend to the weapon of the moral dynamiter—an anonymous letter. We were unwilling to believe it, but the following from the Kingston *Herald* puts all charitable doubt to flight. If any fault could be found with our contemporary's castigation, it certainly does not err on the side of undue severity: When the Rev. Mr. Archibald received a call to St. Andrew's pastorate in this city somebody with more malice than manliness wrote to him anonymously, exaggerating the extent of an opposition which a split in the congregation gave rise to. This letter had an important influence in deciding him to decline the position. After a deal of disagreement a very cordial invitation was lately given to Rev. Mr. Jordan, of Halifax, to visit Kingston, and preach with a view to a call, and again the anonymous letter comes into play, and has its influence in prompting hesitation on his part. While the citizens of all denominations will sympathise with the congregation of St. Andrew's Church in their troubles, they will hope for their sakes that the man of their undoubted choice will have that decision of character which enables the recipient of an anonymous letter to put it into the fire upon its receipt and thus utterly ignore its contents. The honest and sincere man with a grievance will come forward with it openly and like a man.