

## Current Topics.

Memorial tablets have been placed on the London residences of Sir Isaac Newton, Sir Robert Walpole, and Hogarth, the painter. The house in which Peter the Great lived, while in the British metropolis, has been similarly marked.

—There has been an extended discussion in England on the question whether the Revised Version can be legally read in the churches of the Establishment. The general opinion is that it cannot be so read. Two legal journals give long opinions to this effect.

—In the Italian Chamber of Deputies a bill concerning the right of suffrage on all who can read or write was defeated by a vote of 220 to 154, which is a decided triumph for the government. An amendment in favour of universal suffrage was rejected by a vote of 314 to 39, and one in favour of female suffrage received but a single vote.

—A prominent "up town" Roman Catholic church of New York City is encumbered with a massive mortgage. High masses were offered for those who should contribute to its removal, but so few responded, the priest was disgusted. This kind of bait fails to secure its prey as enlightened reason takes the place of blind credulity.

—The recent court-martial of the Russian Nihilists at Kieff has resulted in the death sentence of two persons and the banishment to Siberia of the remaining eight. The Czar is reported to be surrounded by soldiery at his palace at Gatchina and access to the royal presence is well-nigh impossible. The strictest discipline prevails and every person entering the palace is carefully searched.

It is now two months since Messrs. Moody and Sankey left the Pacific coast, yet the gospel-meetings and the noon-day prayer-meetings have kept up with unabated interest; the former every night except Saturday, and the latter every day except Sunday. For each service the Hall is well-filled, and nightly there are many men remaining as inquirers. A great work of grace has been in progress during these past eight weeks, and at the Monday night testimony meetings many testify to an acceptance of Christ.

—The Dukedom of Albany, recently conferred upon Queen Victoria's youngest son, Prince Leopold, is a title which was associated with the Royal House of Stuart. James II. was Duke of York and Albany, and the County of Albany in this state was so called in compliment to him. It is thought that the Queen is reserving the more celebrated and historic title of Duke of York for Prince George of Wales, younger son of the Prince of Wales.

—A plan for the construction of a grand system of underground railways in Paris has recently been performed. If the scheme is carried out, a subvention of \$20,000,000 will be furnished by the state, the department of the Seine, and the city of Paris. The central terminus would be in the garden of the Palais royal, at a depth of about twenty-four feet, and from that point three main lines would branch off, so

as to reach and intersect the chief railway stations and other great points of the city, and a subsidiary line would run on the south bank of the river.

—Dr. Ginsburg has drawn attention to a coin from Gaza, now in the British Museum, which has upon it the representation of the Phœnician Zeus, in a chariot of fire, with the word "Yahu" (Jehovah) written above it in Old Phœnician characters. The coin is in every way remarkable. It shows that in the Greek period the inhabitants of Gaza had borrowed the name and worship of the God of Israel and had identified him with the Canaanite Sun-god. We are reminded by the impression of Elijah's chariot of fire, as well as of the comparison of the LORD to a "consuming fire."

—When the two sons of the Prince of Wales had an interview with Cete-wayo, the ex-king, received them with great cordiality, remarking that they were "fine boys"; and, after calling their attention to the picture of the Queen, which hung up in his room, asked them, in a very feeling way, to convey a message to Her Majesty requesting her to tell him what offence he had committed, and desiring to be allowed to visit England.

The autograph testimonial album to Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes, in honor of her allowing no intoxicating liquors at the entertainment in the White House when her husband was President, presented by the women of Illinois, has been finished. The work consists of six large volumes of 650 pages each. All through the volumes are scattered India-ink drawings. The inscription reads: "From the ladies of Illinois, who have admired the courage Mrs. Hayes has displayed in the administration of the hospitalities of the Executive Mansion. God grant that the influence of this signal and benign example may be felt more and more as age follows age in the life of this great Republic!"

Miss Gordon Cumming, the sister of the man who was in the habit of bagging six or seven lions and an elephant or two every day, in South Africa, has written a book on the Fiji Islands. It is most interesting. As regards the cannibalism, that is all over; but, now and then, a lingering regret for the human fleshpots is shown; as where we are told how "a horrible old ex-cannibal crept close to Mr. Langham, and then as if he could not refrain, put out his hand and stroked him down the thigh, licking his lips and exclaiming with delight, 'Oh, but you are nice and fat.'" They always eat human flesh with a sort of tomato sauce. One chief had eaten forty-eight; but becoming a Christian, was compelled to change his diet. Miss Cumming says: "Think of the sick buried alive; the array of widows who were deliberately strangled on the death of any great man; the living victims who were buried beside every post of a chief's new house, and must needs stand clasping it, while the earth was gradually heaped over their devoted heads; or those who were bound hand and foot, and laid on the ground to act as rollers, when a chief launched a new canoe, and thus doomed to a death of excruciating agony; a time when there was not the slightest security for

life or property, and no man knew how quickly his own hour of doom might come; when whole villages were depopulated simply to supply their neighbours with fresh meat." Just think of all this, and of the change that has been wrought, and then just imagine white men who can sneer at missionary work in the way they do. Now, you may pass from isle to isle, certain everywhere to find the same cordial reception by kindly men and women. Every village on the eighty inhabited isles has built for itself a tidy church, and a good house for its teacher or native minister, for whom the village also provides food and clothing. Can you realize that there are nine hundred Wesleyan churches in Fiji, at every one of which the frequent services are crowded by devout congregations; that the schools are well attended; and that the first sound which greets your ear at dawn, and the last at night, is that of hymn singing and most fervent worship, rising from each dwelling at the hour of family prayer."

## MR. RAIKES' LETTER.

The following is the letter of Robt. Raikes, to which allusion is made elsewhere. It was addressed to Rev. Wm. Llewellyn, Dissenting Minister.

My GOOD FRIEND, Most cordially do I acquit you of any neglect. Though your letters delight, comfort, and quicken me yet I see by the tremulous strokes of your pen that writing is a task, irksome, and tedious to you, know this that your correspondence is highly prized by me, yet I would not that you should sacrifice too much to my gratification. Therefore, write to me only when it is pleasant to yourself. I should not have delayed for so many weeks a reply to your last, but just as I received it a multiplicity of business came upon my hands that I had no leisure to reply to you. This evening I determined to devote an hour to my friend. I consider you not a common friend of this world, but one with whom I hope to pass a blissful eternity. Our relish for David's Psalms is exactly similar. I am never in so proper a frame as when I am reading or repeating passages from that heavenly composition. They are my chief comfort and consolation when any distress approaches. They furnish the language of thanksgiving when the heart rejoices. Transmit me your versification for perusal if you have made any progress. Whether you intend for publication or not, I should be happy to see the production of your pen. I have lately had a new flock of children come about me from a singular circumstance. I was showing my Sunday-school scholars a little time ago how possible it is for an invisible power to exist in bodies which shall act in other bodies without our being able to perceive in what manner they act. This I proved to them by the powers of the magnet. They see the magnet draw the needle without touching it. Thus, I tell them I wish to draw them to the paths of duty, and thus lead them to heaven and happiness, and as they saw the needle when it had touched the magnet then capable of drawing another needle, thus when they become good they would be made the instruments in the hands of God very probably of making other boys good. Upon this idea those children are now endeavouring to bring other children to meet me at the

church, and you would be diverted to see with what a group I am surrounded every morning at seven o'clock prayers at the Cathedral, especially upon Sunday morning, at which time I give books, or combs, or other encouragements. Sometimes they read to me a part of the Gospel for the day, which I explain in a manner suited and applied to their situations and comprehensions. They were reading that verse in St. Luke, the other morning, where our Saviour says, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation, The Kingdom of God is within you." Who can tell me, said I, what we are to understand by that expression, "The Kingdom of God is within you." They were all silent for some minutes, at last the boy who was reading said, "I believe it means when the Spirit of God is within our hearts." Don't you think this an encouragement to cultivate the lower orders of the people? I could recount numberless incidents of this nature that occur to me to render my scheme of botanizing in human nature pleasant and agreeable. But I have been already too tedious and prolix. I wish you lived near me. I should receive aid and new degrees of strength and animation from you. But alas! now nobody regards the design I work alone. It seems as if I had discovered a new country, where no other adventurer chooses to follow. But if you were here, I am sure I should not travel alone. Then at a distance remember I am often conversing with you, and therefore think of me if you cannot write; but above all, remember most fervently to pray for the vilest, feeblest, weakest of your fellow-creatures—for your friend.

(Signed) R. RAIKES.  
Glor. Nov. 8, 1795.

## CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA AND NEW BRUNSWICK.

The Congregational Union of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick meets in Noel, N.S., Friday, July 8. Would the friends from a distance kindly attend to the following directions: Come to Truro on Thursday, July 7th, thence to Maitland by express (15 miles), where carriages will be waiting to bring all on their way to our homes. We hope to see a goodly number with us. We are looking for a blessing. Come to us, therefore, brethren, in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace.

N.B.—Please send your name to me at once.

J. W. COX.  
Noel, June 15, 1881.

## CONGREGATIONAL YEAR BOOK.

We gather from a circular issued by the President of the Publishing Company that the Year Book will be ready about the end of August. The price at which it is offered (\$12 per 100, post free) is lower than any similar publication, and should place a copy in the hands of every church member through the Province; all should have an interest in the work of the Churches, and in the Year Book they have reports of the work of all our societies for the year. No time should be lost in ordering copies.

We see that the Company will also supply the admirable addresses delivered at the last two meetings of the Union by the respective chairmen, for \$3 per 100. Scatter these widely.