

Answers to Correspondents.

The Editors will be pleased to answer any queries under this heading, but should the answers be required by post a fee of 10 cents must accompany the inquiry. All queries must be accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

**Ignoramus:**—Malthus was neither bad nor foolish. He is one of those whom men love to talk about and laugh at simply because they never take the trouble to find out his real theory, which is now to a large extent adopted by most civilized governments. Malthus wrote in the end of the last century, at a time when the poor laws were doing their utmost to increase the prevailing misery, by aiding all those who did not work hard enough to keep themselves, the help given being proportionate to the number of children each man had. In fact, the poorer classes were simply kept like horses, with no inducement whatever to thrift and industry. Malthus, a kind-hearted clergyman, set himself to try and remedy this state of things; and the main theory of his essay, published in 1798, is this:—"The natural course of things will cause population to increase faster than the means of supporting them, therefore the efforts of the legislator and the moralist should be directed towards improving the character of the people, and towards discouraging rather than encouraging a rapid increase of numbers. He advises delay in marriage, and argues that, without strong and lasting attachments, the married state is generally more productive of misery than of happiness, and that for the formation of such attachments, time must be given to find out kindred dispositions."

Malthusianism has become an essential part of all modern social systems, just as Darwinism is of all modern science; and anyone who laughs at either without understanding it is either a fool or an ignoramus indeed;—you, sir, are an enquirer, and no enquirer is either fool or ignoramus.

**Any:** Kissing is by no means a universal habit, it is quite unknown among the New Zealanders, Tahitians, Papuans, Australians, Somals of Africa, and the Esquimaux. On the other hand, some races of monkeys appear to have discovered and appreciated this very delightful method of expressing "affection and esteem." When a new chimpanzee was introduced to the older resident at the London Zoological Gardens, the keeper describes their behaviour thus:—"They sat opposite, touching each other with their much protruded lips (if this isn't kissing, I should like to know what you call it); and the one put his hand on the shoulder of the other. They then mutually folded each other in their arms. Afterwards they stood up, each with one hand on the shoulder of the other, lifted up their heads, opened their mouths, and yelled with delight."

As to the first mention of kissing in the Bible, you can easily find it in Cruden's Concordance, which I have not got handy just at present.

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