

## Contemporary Thought.

PROFESSOR FREEMAN, urged thereto by his friends, replies in the April *Contemporary Review* to an article by Frederic Harrison in the January *Nineteenth Century* in which the apostle of Positivism called the historian of the Normans and early English "A Pedantic Nuisance." "When a man does his best to make his words answer to his thoughts, and his thoughts answer to the facts," says the distinguished professor, "the trouble that he has taken is a reproach to those who have not taken the same trouble; but the reproach is taken away by calling the man who has taken such needless pains a pedant." This is a very interesting number of the *Review*, other papers besides Prof. Freeman's being by Holman Hunt, on "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood," by R. H. Hutton on Matthew Arnold, and by Leonard Courtney, Samuel Laing and Michael Davitt on the Irish question.

THE alternative as to whether man was created or developed can no longer be raised, now that we are exercising the free use of our reason. Man's dentition has to be judged from our experiences made in the mammalian group. Hence, first of all, it is a reduced dentition. True, we do not know the definite stages by which it was attained in man, any more than we do in the case of the anthropomorphoids, and all the other apes of the Old World, but we shall not hesitate to maintain that the ancestors of man possessed a fuller number of teeth, as long as deductions are justified from the observation of facts. Our teeth have decreased in number during the course of our geologico-zoological development; we have lost on either side, above and below, two incisors, two premolars, and one molar. By this we transfer ourselves back to those periods from which the jaw of the otocyon has been preserved. Baume, our eminent odontologist, in a recent work which we have repeatedly referred to, has successfully followed and pointed out cases of atavism or reversion in the human jaw, by tracing cases of "surplus" teeth—and certain dental formations met with in the jaws in a large percentage of cases—back to those portions of the jaw in the animal ancestors of man which have disappeared in the course of ages.—From "*Teeth of the Coming Man*," by Oscar Schmidt, in *Popular Science Monthly*.

A GRAVE question with American readers is the effect that international copyright would have on the prices of American books. Would it make books dearer; and, if so, to what extent? Many attempts have been made to alarm the public mind on this question, and some of them have been disingenuous if not distinctly dishonest. In the first place, no concessions made to foreign authors would or could affect the price of school-books or text-books, cyclopedias, and other books of reference would probably experience no change; and all the great authors of the past—the whole noble host of poets, historians, essayists, and novelists, that give such brilliant lustre to the English name—would be as accessible in cheap editions then as now. The books thus exempted may be fully summarized as follows: School-books and text-books; standard authors—the entire literature

of the past; American fiction, and popular literature generally; American histories, travels, science, books of investigation and learning, cyclopedias, dictionaries, books of reference, manuals for mechanics, etc.; foreign books of science and learning; magazines, reviews, periodicals of all kinds. This list includes almost everything that enters into education, or that concerns the student or scholar. Increase of price, should there prove to be an increase of price, would fall solely on new books of a popular character—almost exclusively, in fact, upon reprints of English fiction.—*Appleton's Literary Bulletin*.

LORD BEACONSFIELD was an adventurer in politics in very nearly the same sense as Mr. Gladstone is an adventurer, and as Canning was. He was not nearly so much of an adventurer as Burke, and he was not very much more of one than Mr. Pitt. That is to say, Mr. Disraeli was not cradled and rocked and dandled into legislatorhood; he has had no political sponsors in English politics, and he did not belong to any of the great houses which have governed Great Britain, on the whole for Great Britain's good, during the last few hundred years. On the other hand, he was so little of an adventurer that he entirely lacked, and never attempted to gain, the adventitious aids to political success which all the four distinguished persons above mentioned possessed. He did not come into public life as a nominee of a great man like Mr. Gladstone and Canning, or as a useful "devil" like Burke, or as a free-lance, subsidised by a party hatred to a great minister, like Pitt. There is no Duke of Newcastle, there is no Marquess of Rockingham, there is no Duchess of Marlborough, in Lord Beaconsfield's career. He fought the fight with a barely sufficient independence of property, and with a great deal more than sufficient independence of character. It is a subject of some amusement to the critics of his detractors that these detractors, at the very moment that they decry Mr. Disraeli as an adventurer, quote with pride and joy the heart-burnings of great Tory magnates over his friendship with their sons, and slings of Tory members of Parliament at the gradual progress of this astonishing *outarker*. What I wish to point out is that in English we don't call that kind of success the success of an adventurer: we call it the success of a genius.—*George Saintsbury in Magazine of Art*.

THE set in which young Trench found himself at Cambridge was calculated to foster all that was bright, all that was intellectual, in his nature. John Sterling; Frederic Maurice, afterwards to be associated with him at King's College, London; John Kemble, the "J.K." of Tennyson's fine sonnet; James Spedding, the recipient of Tennyson's lines on the death of his brother, and himself the original inspirer of some of the best among that poet's earliest lyrics; Venables; Charles Buller; Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton; Tennyson, and others, made a set of keen-witted and thoughtful young men not easily matched among university cliques; while the influence of Julius Hare was over them all as college tutor, inspiring and guiding in safe channels a true zeal for learning. . . . If we were to define Trench's place in modern poetry, it can only be by assign-

ing him to a group which others may place where they will on the slope of Parnassus. We should put him with Henry Taylor and Aubrey de Vere, not forgetting a certain intellectual kinship to his early friend Monckton Milnes. In philology it would be difficult to overstate the Archbishop's services. No books have given so great a stimulus to the intolligent study of the language as his little works on "The Study of Words," the "Select Glossary," "English Synonyms," etc. . . . The books are, and will remain, among the most fascinating and encouraging which can be placed in the hands of the young who wish to study their own tongue. They show, moreover, the widest reading and scholarship, and excursions into unexpected paths of literature in all languages. Yet, like most busy men, he was a great reader of the books of the day, not neglecting even the lighter sort.—*The Academy*.

It has occurred also to the writer to make many observations as to the circumstances under which tea and coffee are found to agree or disagree with different persons; in the first place, as Sir W. Roberts has pointed out, tea, if taken at the same time as farinaceous food, is more likely to retard its digestion and cause dyspepsia than if taken a little time after eating; and the custom adopted by many persons at breakfast, for instance, of eating first and drinking their tea or coffee afterward, is a sensible one; so also it is better to take one's five o'clock tea without the customary bread and butter or cake than with it. Indeed, while there is little that can be said against a cup of hot tea as a stimulant and restorative, when taken about midway between lunch and dinner, and *without* solid food, it may, on the other hand, be a fruitful cause of dyspepsia when accompanied at that time *with* solid food. It is also a curious fact that many persons with whom tea, under ordinary circumstances, will agree exceedingly well, will become the subjects of a tea dyspepsia, if they drink this beverage at a time when they may be suffering from mental worry or emotional disturbance. Moreover, it is a well-recognized fact that persons who are prone to nervous excitement of the circulation and palpitations of the heart have these symptoms greatly aggravated if they persist in the use of tea or coffee as a beverage. The excessive consumption of tea among the women of the poorer classes is the cause of much of the so-called "heart complaints" among them: the food of those poor women consists largely of starchy substances (bread and butter chiefly), together with tea, *i.e.*, a food accessory which is one of the greatest of all retarders of the digestion of starchy food. The effect of coffee as a retarder of stomach digestion would probably be more felt than it is were it not constantly the practice to take it only in small quantity after a very large meal: it is then mixed with an immense bulk of food, and its relative percentage proportion rendered insignificant; and to the strong and virous the slightly retarding effect on digestion it would then have may be, as Sir W. Roberts suggests, not altogether a disadvantage; but after a spare meal and in persons of feeble digestive power, the cup of black coffee would probably exercise a retarding effect on digestion which might prove harmful.—From "*Food Accessories and Digestion*," by Dr. J. Burney Yeo, in *Popular Science Monthly*.