A Victorian Curate

A Study of the Life and Career of the Rev. Dr John Hunt

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DAVID YEANDLE

A Study of the Life and Career of the Rev. Dr John Hunt

The Rev. Dr John Hunt (1827-1907) was not a typical clergyman in the Victorian Church of England. He was Scottish, of lowly birth, and lacking both social connections and private means. He was also a widely and fluent intellectual, whose publications stood alongside the most eminent of his peers during a period when theology was being redefined in the light of Darwin's *Origin of Species* and other radical scientific advances.

Hunt attracted notoriety and conflict as well as admiration and respect: he was the subject of articles in *Punch* and in the wider press concerning his clandestine dissection of a foetus in the crypt of a City church, while his *Essay on Pantheism* was proscribed by the Roman Catholic Church. He had many skirmishes with incumbents, both evangelical and catholic, and was dismissed from several of his curacies.

This book analyses his career in London and St Ives (Cambs.) through the lens of his autobiographical narrative, *Clergymen Made Scarce* (1867). David Yeandle has examined a little-known copy of the text that includes manuscript annotations by Eliza Hunt, the wife of the author, which offer unique insight into the many anonymous and pseudonymous references in the text.

A Victorian Curate: A Study of the Life and Career of the Rev. Dr John Hunt is an absorbing personal account of the corruption and turmoil in the Church of England at this time. It will appeal to anyone interested in this history, the relationship between science and religion in the nineteenth century, or the role of the curate in Victorian England.
Appendix II

The Anatomist Curate

THE Rev. John Hunt, Curate of St. Botolph, Aldgate, is not, it may be fairly presumed, a man of much discretion, but that does not exactly justify a coroner’s jury in laying down ex cathedrâ the limits of clerical education. That function, one would think, if it rests anywhere, is vested in the Episcopal Bench, and not with twelve worthy tradesmen assembled to judge whether a stillborn child had or had not come to a natural end. Mr. Hunt, it would seem, is a curate who, whether from taste, original destination in life, or a conscientious conviction, thinks it expedient that a clergyman should study something beyond Latin and Greek and a somewhat superficial system of theology. He even ventures to believe that an English incumbent, who is incessantly brought by his office into contact with the very poor, with the diseased, the sick, and the dying, with crowds who defy habitually all the laws of hygiene, and a few who from time to time are left to perish for want of the skill they cannot command, would be made more efficient by a practical knowledge of medicine. As in many another ‘viewy’ person, however, Mr. Hunt’s wide ideas are not corrected by average common sense, and instead of pursuing his studies like a reasonable being in connection with some hospital or infirmary, he must pursue them in private, obtaining subjects secretly from his medical friends. Indeed, if the truth were known, we dare say that, though wise enough to perceive the value of surgical knowledge to a Christian pastor, he was priestly enough to be a little ashamed of pursuing a study so secular.’ At all events he pursued it privately in his lodgings, greatly, we suspect, to his landlord’s annoyance, and in one instance obtained from a medical friend a stillborn child for dissection. This body, with an infatuation of which one would think only a scientific...
A Victorian Curate

curate could be guilty, he would not keep in his lodgings, but deposited in the vault of his church, without concealment, but without clearly informing the sexton of the mode in which he obtained it. That official of course, full of the idea that a clergyman’s only business with bodies was to bury them, suspected unutterable things, there was an inquest, a protracted examination, a great deal of evidence nasty enough out of a dissecting room, though not damaging to Mr. Hunt’s character except for ordinary discretion and sense, and finally this special verdict returned by the coroner’s jury:— ‘That the deceased child was stillborn, and the jury, while admitting the right of the Rev. Mr. Hunt to study medicine, are of opinion that it would be better if he confined his studies to matters of a clerical character, to the exclusion of the study of anatomy.’

We do not know that we ever read a more curious exhibition of that middle-class quasi-reverential feeling which is fast reducing the English clergy to a position between that of men and women. The first impulse of every educated man on reading the verdict is probably to utter an anathema on its deliberate and formal impertinence, the jury having exactly as much to do with Mr. Hunt’s studies as with those of the Archbishop of Canterbury or Lord Palmerston, but the anathema would be unjust. The decent but ignorant people who usually sit on coroner’s juries never know, and cannot fairly be expected to know, the limits of their authority, while the coroner is far too rejoiced at getting any intelligible verdict at all to quarrel greatly with its form. Ignorant people always like to publish their ‘sentiments’ on any matter of interest, and this particular jury, we doubt not, really felt the ‘sentiment’ which they expressed. They really considered medicine, or at least its foundation—anatomy, a very unclerical study, and being entirely unrestrained by taste, judgment, or knowledge, they said so, characteristically enough guarding in the words of their verdict against any invasion of Mr. Hunt’s legal right. They did not know if they denied Mr. Hunt’s right of study what dreadful consequences might not follow to the unhappy curate, and being sufficiently fair people, as well as more than sufficiently stupid, they carefully protected that. He had a ‘right’ to study anatomy, only being in orders he had better not use it. Why not? Because anatomy is a wicked pursuit, or useless, or frivolous, or injurious to the mind? Not a bit of it. Even a coroner’s jury is not exempt from disease, and consequently is not inclined to deny that anatomy may be a valuable study, but it is in their
judgment as men of the world not consistent with the ‘clerical’ character, that is, with the total incapacity to do anything except preach or keep a school which the English middle class choose to think a qualification for the pastorate. The verdict is really directed not against this special study, but any study whatever not obviously essential to sermons. Not only is a knowledge of anatomy not ‘unclerical,’ but the most successful missionaries ever employed either by the Established or Nonconformist churches have been at once pastors and surgeons, have preached to the heathen in the morning and cured their ailments in the afternoon, have gained a hearing by distributing pills and secured converts who trusted them first because they cured painful sores. The world would be much the worse for the absence of Medical Missionaries. Dr. Judson, one of the most successful preachers who ever lived, was a skilled anatomist, and missionaries have been heard to regret keenly that knowledge of medicine is not made an absolute condition of selection. The use of such knowledge is at least as great in an English parish, where in hundreds of cases the poor man must either go without aid or obtain it from the only man in the parish who will give him the assistance of science without expecting reward in cash. Be he ignorant or well trained, the people still come to the pastor, and the only difference is that while if he has studied the ‘unclerical’ science he can relieve them skilfully, if he has not he is compelled to fall back on old women’s recipes, or the cram rules of some homoeopathic manual, or his own intelligence, which, as intelligence does not even teach a man where his own stomach is, is not worth a great deal. His wife’s practice is even more riskful, for women have a brave faith in drugs, and the minister’s wife is consulted in cases where palliatives are of little avail. We do not hesitate to say that the general study of medicine by English clergymen would do more to reduce the sum of English misery than any single change likely to occur in society, and that it would directly strengthen their strictly ‘clerical’ influence. There is no man to whom you listen so readily as the man who has assuaged your pain, no man who may pray by the bedside of the dying so heartily as he who has striven in vain to postpone the dread hour which he now strives to soothe. There are no two functions in life more directly en rapport than those of physician and pastor, but what need of long-drawn argument when an unanswerable illustration lies so close at hand? The verdict of this sapient jury amounts to an assertion that it is
highly ‘unclerical’ for a minister of Christ to qualify himself to imitate as closely as possible his Master’s walk on earth. The single secular office assumed by Jesus was that of physician—healer, and the fact that He had and could have no need of study cannot diminish in any degree the weight of His example. Mr. Hunt cannot heal without means, but that is a reason for studying how to use means, not a reason for neglecting them. He cannot forgive sins either, but a jury would hardly aver that he was therefore never to study theology, never lay bare the bones of the heart in order to heal its diseases.

We have assumed of course all through that the jury did not intend to imply, as their words might seem to do, that it is possible to study medicine to purpose without studying anatomy first, or that the practice of medicine may be praiseworthy while that of surgery is ‘unclerical.’ If they meant either of those absurdities their opinion is not entitled even to the respect of contempt, but we do not believe they did. They were simply expressing the feeling becoming engrained in the popular mind that a pastor should be ignorant of all but theology, that art and science are irreligious, that a minister should confine himself to preaching and visiting, with good books for his sole reading and gossip for his only recreation. There are parishes in England where the clergyman must study chemistry on the sly, and geology in silence, and there is scarcely one in which the sight of an easel in the vicar’s sitting room would not give deep offence. By an odd but explicable whim the study of astronomy, of all sciences the most absorbing, is exempted from censure, but it is the only one which would provoke from a party in the parish no kind of hostile comment. Such narrowness is, we are bound to say, almost confined to laymen, but it is lay opinion which in England creates the external law of the Church, and the opinion expressed so clearly by the City jury has two permanent and most pernicious effects. It forces on the clergy a kind of hypocrisy, an appearance of ignorance they do not feel, and it lowers throughout the country the clerical ideal. The true pastor to our minds is the man who, learned in all human learning, familiar with all human practice, physician and teacher, savant and divine, farmer and orator, uses those rich stores of capacity to higher ends than gain, who, touching life at all points, comprehends it in all, and derives from his comprehension the power of healing the physician obtains from
the study which the St. Botolph’s jury have taken on themselves to condemn. There must be anomalies, it would seem, in every condition of English life, but the limit of reason is surely passed when we contrive to create an opinion under which St. Luke would have been pronounced ‘unclerical,’ and St. Paul have been condemned by a jury for knowing how to make tents for the Roman army.

*Spectator*, 19 November 1864, pp. 1324–1325.

**An Inquest on an Inquest (Punch)**

An inquest was held on Tuesday last week by *Mr. Punch*, upon an inquest which had been held the day before by Mr. W. Payne upon a body. The circumstances of the case were these:—

A Clergyman, the Rev. John Hunt, Curate of St. Botolph’s, Aldgate, had systematically studied anatomy for the very best of reasons, among them because ‘he held it to be his sacred duty as a theologian to inquire into every quarter of Nature’s kingdom, to search out her mysteries, and see her glorious and miraculous works.’ He obtained, from a physician, the necessary means for acquiring anatomical knowledge, and in so doing neither infringed the Anatomy Act nor violated the decencies of life or death. That which he had procured for his purpose was the most unobjectionable thing for it that could possibly be conceived. However, a churchwarden, Mr. David King, found the thing in his possession, had suspicions about it, thought it formed a matter for investigation, ‘refused to allow the case to drop, and would not have hushed it up for £1000.’ Accordingly, he sent to the Coroner; an inquest followed; everything was quite satisfactorily explained. The Coroner, in charging the jury, was pleased to remark that ‘it was clear the rev. gentleman had pursued medical studies; but whether wisely, or not, it was not for him to say.’ He added, however, the following considerably more pertinent observation: —

‘Certainly in a country district a Clergyman might be called in to a woman to give her religious consolation, and it might so happen that she might become suddenly ill, and his medical assistance would be of great use.’

The jury then laid their heads together to consider their verdict, and the conclusion which they arrived at was as follows: —
‘That the deceased was stillborn, and the jury, while admitting the right of the Rev. Mr. Hunt to study medicine, are of opinion that it would be better if he confined his studies to matters of a clerical nature to the exclusion of the study of anatomy.’

*Mr. Punch*, after having pointed out the logical difficulty of accepting the statement that the ‘deceased’ was stillborn,’ said he would only remark that ignorance of natural knowledge, and especially of anatomy, was particularly objected in the present-day against the clergy, and greatly impaired their influence and usefulness. His jury would now consider the verdict of that other jury, and give their own thereon.

Without a moment’s deliberation the jury empanelled by Mr. Punch returned a verdict of ‘Snobbish Impertinence’. They added that, whilst admitting the lamentable fact that vulgar blockheads are eligible to serve on Coroners’ juries, they are of opinion that it would be better that such persons should cease to be so, and should be obliged to mind their own business, and confine their attention to their awls, or their geese, or to dispensing candles, red herrings, penn’orths of cheese, balls of twine, small parcels of sugar, tea, coffee, tobacco, snuff, vinegar, and pepper, and other groceries, or the like commodities, over the counter, to the exclusion of any office whose performance affords them an opportunity of making uncalled-for, offensive, and ridiculous remarks on the meritorious conduct of gentlemen.


Clergymen Made Scarce (*Punch*)

It used to be a saying, ‘Make the greatest fool in the family a parson.’ That saying still holds good, with a condition. Make the greatest fool in the family a parson, if he will let you. For he will not let you unless he is such a fool as the greatest fool in a very foolish family. That is, if you have not got a good fat living for him to step into as soon as he is ordained.
It is a bore to be obliged to wear a white ‘choker’\(^1\) when you prefer a black tie\(^2\) or bird’s-eye ‘fogle.’\(^3\) So it is to be obliged to refrain from going about smoking a short pipe if you wish to do so.\(^4\) It is a monstrous bore to have your personal habits controlled and your natural freedom limited in any degree by the opinion of old women, or the power of old womanly bishops. No consideration but a very high pecuniary one would induce a man who has the least respect for himself to submit to any such dictation.

Fancy yourself being in such a position as to be liable to the censure of a set of snobs constituting a coroner’s jury, because you, a curate, choose to study anatomy!

Then fancy your Rector, who ought to stand by you, and back you against those vulgar and impertinent blockheads, truckling to them and to their kind, and giving you the sack, to starve, or get your living how you can—that is, by begging or stealing, unless you possess a patrimony; for once a parson always a parson; and having once entered the clerical profession, no other is open to you; neither can you keep a shop or a public-house. But no. This last case is not to be fancied. No clergyman can be capable of the conduct supposed in it. The rumour that the rector of St. Botolph’s, Aldgate, has, under circumstances such as these above stated, discharged his curate, the Rev. Mr. Hunt, is evidently an invention of the Jesuits, designed to damage the Church of England.

*Punch*, 17 December 1864, p. 251.

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1. An ironic reference to the clerical neck-cloth, which is likened to the close-fitting and frequently broad necklace favoured by Victorian women (cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Choker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Choker)).
2. This could refer to either evening or day wear. Charles Dickens in *Our Mutual Friend* (1864–1865) describes the daytime wearing of ‘formal black tie’: ‘Bradley Headstone, in his decent black coat and waistcoat, and decent white shirt, and decent formal black tie, and decent pantaloons of pepper and salt pantaloons’, Charles Dickens, *Our Mutual Friend* (New York: Bradburn, 1864), p. 8.
3. Bird’s eye fogle was a modish slang expression (first attested c. 1828), meaning ‘a silk handkerchief with a bird’s-eye pattern’ (*Green’s Dictionary of Slang* 2011). A fogle could be worn as a cravat around the neck.
4. Smoking a short pipe was regarded as working-class. Cf. *The Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle* for 1842, p. 156.
Extraordinary Charge against a City Clergyman

A most protracted inquiry of a very extraordinary character was held on Monday by Mr. W. Payne, coroner for the City of London, at the Vestry-room, Fountain court.

The inquest was held on view of the body of a newly-born male child, and owing to the revolting rumours afloat, the proceedings created in the locality remarkable interest.

Mr. Clines, vestry clerk, attended to watch the case on behalf of the parish authorities; and the Rev. Mr. Roberton, incumbent of St. Botolph, Aldgate, and the Rev. Mr. John Hunt, curate; and Mr. Churchwarden King, C.C., were also present.

The first witness called was Walter Parkhole, 2, Spital-street, Mile-end, who said that he was steeple-keeper and gaslighter of the parish of St. Botolph. On the previous Friday at twelve o’clock he saw the body of the deceased child in the vault of the church of St. Botolph, Aldgate. It was wrapped up in a newspaper. Miss Hammond, the sextoness, brought him a message from the curate, the Rev. Mr. Hunt, to come to him in the Vestry-room. Witness accordingly went there, and Mr. Hunt told him that there was a parcel down in the vaults, and that he wanted the skeleton of a child. He said, ‘There is no other way of doing it but to boil it.’ Mr. Hunt gave witness a shilling to buy a saucepan to boil it in. Witness had the shilling now. He was to bring the pot to Mr. Hunt on the Saturday evening. Witness went out and told Mr. William Bigg and the sextoness.

By the Coroner: It was after that conversation that witness went into the vault and saw the body in a parcel. Witness took it up and put it in a shell lest the cats should get at it. Witness did not buy the pot as he did not think it right.

Mary Hammond, sextoness to the church, said that on the previous Wednesday the curate came to the church and said to witness, ‘Open the vault door, and let me down there.’ He said no more, and witness opened the vault and turned on the gas. The curate had a parcel, and he took it down into the vault and left it there. Witness thought it was

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6 The name is spelled in various ways in the different newspaper articles.
a bundle of clothes. Witness then locked the vault. The Rev. Mr. Hunt came on Friday to churchings and baptisms. He told witness not to let the steeple-keeper go away before he (Mr. Hunt) saw him. The steeple-keeper came out and told witness that Mr. Hunt had given him a shilling to buy a pot to boil the child in.

Mr. David King, C.C., said that he was churchwarden of the parish of St. Botolph. From information given to him on Friday last be locked up the vaults of the church. On Saturday he requested the Rev. Mr. Roberton, the Rev. Mr. Hunt, and Mr. Clines, the vestry clerk, to meet him in the vestry-room, and at three o’clock he met them there. He cautioned the Rev. Mr. Hunt as to any statement he might make, and asked him for an explanation of the charge. The rev. gentleman treated the matter with great levity. He said that the body was that of a fœtus and not of a child, and that he only wanted to boil it to get the skeleton. When asked ‘How and from whom did you get it?’ he declined to answer. A surgeon was then sent for, and from what transpired they sent to the coroner. Afterwards Mr. Hunt stated that he wanted the child for scientific and anatomical purposes.

Mr. Andrew Holman, M.R.C.S., said that he had examined the body of the deceased. It had been only very recently born. No marks of violence were visible, but there was a very peculiar appearance over the whole body. It was perfectly bloodless. The umbilical cord was not tied, as was usual when medical men were present at the birth. The general practice among medical men was to tie the cord before it was cut, in order to prevent haemorrhage. In the present case it was cut with a sharp, and not, as was usual, with a blunt instrument. Witness said to the churchwarden, ‘It is very suspicious; the child has bled to death.’ Upon making a post-mortem examination, he found that the child was a well formed seven months child. The lungs were gorged with blood. He believed the child must have been alive up to the moment of birth, but might have died during birth. It might perhaps have given one cry, but it had not fully breathed. The lungs sank in water. He believed that it was the first child of a woman, and that the poor creature had delivered herself.

The Rev. John Hunt, 4, George-street, Minories, was then sworn. He said that he was curate of the parish of St. Botolph. On the defence which he could make for himself depended the judgment of the public,
for a case in which a clergyman was concerned was not terminated by
the verdict of a jury. He was charged, be supposed, with having placed
under the church of which he was curate a human foetus, and with
having signified his intention to dissect the same. The first question the
multitude would ask was, ‘What has a clergyman to do with dissection?’
Most people would answer, ‘Nothing at all; his doctrine is to be derived
from the written Word of God.’ But others would remember that there
was also a book of nature, wherein he might see God too, and wherein,
with purified hearts and minds, communion might be held with the
Eternal. He might be in the minority perhaps of his own profession,
but he held it to be his sacred duty as a theologian to inquire into every
quarter of nature’s, kingdom, to search out her mysteries, and see her
glorious and miraculous works, for in studying nature he was studying
God. The greatest both in theology and science had declared that the
two studies should never be divorced, and that from their union the
best results might be expected. It had been urged against him that, as
a clergyman, he could have no acquaintance with practical science,
and that his only object in dissecting a foetus was the gratification of
an idle and improper curiosity. That he denied. He always had in view
the interests of theology. He had attended a complete course of lectures
of Mr. Savory, the eminent lecturer on anatomy and physiology at St.
Bartholomew’s Hospital, and that gentleman entirely agreed with him
as to the benefit a theologian would derive from those studies. He had
also attended other lectures at other hospitals. Dr. Hadlow, the medical
officer of the parish, knew that for weeks past he had been engaged in
close study of the homologies of vertebrate animals, and that he had
written an article since forwarded to a scientific journal. Dr. Thynne
gave him the foetus as a present. Having no convenience at his lodgings
he took it to the vaults and told Parkhole to bring a pot of warm water
for the purpose of dissection. He found afterwards that he could not
attend to it on Saturday night, and he therefore went earlier, when the
sextoness told him that Mr. Churchwarden King ordered the vault to
be kept locked. As the words ‘boil’ and saucepan are by no means
agreeable associated with the idea of foetuses, he must solemnly
declare in the sight of God and in the face of that assembly that the

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words were not used by him. He first heard them from the lips of Mr. Churchwarden King. It was too ridiculous to suppose that he was so ignorant of dissection as to think of doing what would only have defeated his object. He offered either to remove the foetus or to dissect it in their presence. Both proposals were refused. In conclusion the rev. gentleman complained bitterly of the conduct of Mr. King in bringing about the present inquiry. The breath of public suspicion, and distrust of his brethren in the ministry, or the disapprobation of his diocesan, might produce irreparable injury to him. He then called, for the defence,

Dr. Thomas Thynne, 140, Minories, who said that he had known the Rev. Mr. Hunt intimately. He had asked witness for a foetus some months back. On the Wednesday witness was called in to a woman nearly confined. The child was dead. Witness obtained the child, which was premature, and gave it to the Rev. Mr. Hunt. The mother had had a fall previous to her delivery.

Dr. Hadlow said that the Rev. Mr. Hunt lived in his house, and was always devoted to medical studies.

Dr. Barnes said that the Rev. Mr. Hunt had studied medicine with him.

The Coroner said that it was clear that the rev. gentleman had pursued medical studies, but whether wisely or not it was not for him to say. Certainly in a country district a clergyman might be called in to a woman to give her religious consolation, and it might so happen that she might become suddenly ill, and his medical assistance would be of great use. In the present case the church wardens had done their duty. The public mind would not have been satisfied without an inquiry.

The foreman then said that the verdict of the jury was as follows:—
‘That the deceased child was stillborn, and the jury, while admitting the right of the Rev. Mr. Hunt to study medicine, are of opinion that it would be better if he confined his studies to matters of a clerical character to the exclusion of the study of anatomy.’

The proceedings then terminated.

*Reynolds’s Newspaper*, 20 November 1864, p. 3
Singular Freak of a Clergyman

SINGULAR FREAK OF A CLERGYMAN.—An inquest has been held in the Vestry-room, Fountain-court, City, on the body of an infant child which was found in the vaults of St Botolph’s Church, having been placed there by the Rev. John Hunt, curate to the Rev. Mr Robertson [sic, read Robertson], incumbent. —From the evidence it appeared that the rev. gentleman gave Walter Porkhall, the steeple-keeper, a shilling to buy a saucepan, which Porkhall thought was intended to boil the corpse in. Horrified at the idea, he told the incumbent and the churchwardens, which ended in the inquest being held.—Mr Hunt tendered himself for examination, and treated the charge of boiling the child with scorn. He said he was fond of scientific inquiries, which he believed had a direct bearing on theological truth; and a medical friend of his, knowing his tastes, had presented him with this fœtus—for it was no more—for the purposes of dissection.—This was clearly proved to be true by the evidence of the accoucheur who had delivered the mother and made the present to Mr Hunt; and the jury being satisfied of the facts returned a verdict that the child was still born, but recommending Mr. Hunt to confine his attention for the future to studies bearing more directly on his sacred profession.

Bedfordshire Times and Independent, 22 November 1864, p.8.

Presentation of a Testimonial to the Rev. John Hunt

ST. IVES. —Presentation of a Testimonial to the Rev. John Hunt. The Rev. John Hunt, who has been curate of this parish during the last two years, being about to leave St. Ives, several his friends decided to present him with a testimonial as a token of their respect and esteem for the efficient manner in which he had performed the duties of his sacred office. On Friday evening week a public meeting was held in the Institution Hall, for the purpose of making the presentation to the rev. gentleman. Mr. Read Adams having been called to the chair, said he had both an agreeable and unpleasant task to perform; it was agreeable to have to present the testimonial to the rev. gentleman, but unpleasant to have to take leave of him. Mr. Hunt was a talented and able scholar of the Protestant Church of England, and a stern opponent of the Ritualistic and semi-Popery
practices which were being introduced into the Church; and it was because of this, and his refusal to preach Catholic doctrines that he was about leaving St. Ives. Addressing the rev. gentleman, he said he had the honour of presenting him with a purse containing 30 guineas, subscribed by fifty-two of the inhabitants of St. Ives, and he hoped he would enjoy long life and every happiness (loud cheers).—The Rev Jno. Hunt, in acknowledging the testimonial, said he was proud to receive it, and in looking over the list of subscribers he found, with but few exceptions, the names of all the principal church-going people of the town, and also those of several Dissenters. It is true that some of the subscriptions were small, but when he knew that the testimonial was in contemplation, it was his wish that it should be made up of small sums rather than a few large ones. It was more gratifying to him to find that his services had been appreciated by the whole parish than only by a few persons in it. He expressed the wish that no one might be allowed to give more than 2s. 6d., but this was overruled by those who had the management of the testimonial. It was at his own request that it should be in money, rather than as something which would be merely an ornament; not that he was in want of money, but because money was one of the most useful things in the world. He should not tell them how it would be spent but should keep it till some great occasion required it that he might, with greater gratitude, remember the gift. He then referred to the propriety of such gifts to curates when they do their work satisfactorily in a parish, as those curates who have only their own merits to depend upon, have but few chances of promotion in the Church. This\footnote{This} was great evil, and deprived her of the services of many able men, and there were in consequence not a sufficient number of educated men to supply the ranks of the clergy. To devise remedies for this must be left with those who have the government of the Church. He thought it would be well that if in every parish where there is a curate the parishioners would unite to provide his salary, and claim in return a voice in his election. The clergy of the Established Church well know that before long, if they are to keep their position, they must pay more attention to the will of the people. They must cease to come into their parishes as hierarchical autocrats. By the constitution of the Church of England they are the servants of the people. The churches do not belong to them, nor even to the patrons of the
livings. They are the property of the nation, and therefore the property of the inhabitants of the parish. He regarded this testimonial as being presented to him without reference to any other person. He knew some had been deterred from subscribing lest a wrong construction should be upon it, or wrong use made of it. This was a groundless fear, and would never have been entertained had they known as much about the history of this testimonial as he did. He should never regret having spent nearly two years in St. Ives, and he trusted they would never regret the graceful and becoming act which you have now performed. He wished he had been able to have done more, but being engaged in the completion of a work, it had deprived him of much of the time which otherwise would have been devoted to his pastoral duties. Allusion has been to what is now going on in your parish church; that subject is between you and your Vicar. It was not his (Mr. Hunt’s) business to enter into that. You must fight your own battles, or make the best truce you can. Several had come to him earnestly imploring his advice, and the only advice which he thought it his duty to give was, whatever you do, do it as Christians and as gentlemen. It is well known that the Vicar publicly condemned his (Mr. Hunt’s) doctrines by silencing him in the pulpit, as soon as he had taken possession of the living. He (Mr. Hunt) had defended himself firmly. The Vicar has followed a decided course, but there has been no approach to any misunderstanding or unchristian feeling between us, and trusted the time had come when men could discuss theological subjects with calmness, but with firmness, without reference temporal to interests, and without exciting angry passions. We have set you this example in St. Ives, and he hoped they would all follow it. Whatever differences you may have with your Vicar, you will always find him ready to reason with you. Do not be outdone by him in Christian feeling. Give him credit for right motives, and whatever practical good he does. Jesus has taught us, in the beautiful parable of the man who fell among thieves, that it was the Samaritan with the erroneous creed who showed mercy, while the orthodox Jew passed by on the other side. Christian charity is better than orthodoxy. There are good men of all creeds, yet their goodness need not blind us to the falseness of their creeds. Their hearts are better than their heads—their lives better than their doctrines. The rev. gentleman then referred to the cause of the present excitement in the church, which was caused, he considered, by the semi-popish
practices which many of the clergy were introducing into it, and warned
his hearers to be on their guard not to be led away from the Protestant
Church of England, and went on to say we should ever be proud of the
word Protestant; it is the watchword of free arguing, free thought, and
free speech. It comes to us laden with the history of the struggles our
forefathers, when they fought for the right, and showed in the glorious
battle of freedom, that battle which

Once begun,
Descends from bleeding sire to son.
Which, baffled oft, is ever won.

It is a word pregnant with great things for the future, a word we must
never abandon. He animadverted, in severe terms, on Dr. Pusey and
his followers; and referring to Dr. Pusey’s work *Eirenicon*, he said it had
inflicted a blow on his cause which it cannot survive, for every one who
is capable of putting two ideas alongside of each other will see that he
and his disciples have not an inch of ground to stand upon. He then
went on to say that no National Church can exist in England which
does not recognise as branches of the Church catholic the great bodies
of Nonconformists. The future of the Church of England depends on
which of the two parties in the Church shall finally prevail—those
who follow Scripture and reason or those who follow Scripture and
tradition. If the latter, its existence as the National Church is doomed.
If the former, it may work the wellbeing of the nation and be the great
bulwark of sound religion and the enemy of superstition throughout the
world. The rev. gentleman concluded by saying he should not bid them
farewell, as he had promised to deliver a lecture during the winter for
the Mutual Improvement Society. And, after again expressing his regret
that he had been able to do so little amongst them, dismissed them with
the prayer ‘God be with you all.’ During the delivery of his address, he
was frequently and loudly applauded.


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*10 Cf. also Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette, 20 October 1866, p. 6.*
Lecture on St Augustine

ST. IVES.— Lecture. On Thursday evening last week, a lecture was delivered in the Institution Hall by the Rev. Jno. Hunt, formerly curate of this parish, on St. Augustin, Bishop of Hippo, Regius Confessor, and Doctor.’ There was a very good attendance, and the Rev. J. K. Holland presided. We regret to state that the audience was much annoyed by the disgraceful conduct of certain persons—who, from their position in society, ought to have known better—interrupting the rev. gentleman nearly all the time he was speaking by hissing, scraping of feet, and other discordant noises, the cause of which was not that they disapproved of the subject of the lecture or what the speaker said, but because of a personal ill-feeling towards him arising from a pamphlet published by him shortly after he left this town, entitled, ‘Clergymen Made Scarce,’ a portion of which seems to have given great offence to these persons. We certainly think it showed very bad taste on their part to assail the lecturer in the way they did, particularly as the subject and the opinions he expressed had not the remotest connection with the pamphlet in question. If they had any objection to the statements it contained, why did they not wait until the conclusion of the lecture, and then ascend the platform, and discuss the matter with the rev. gentleman, or invite him to attend another evening to argue the points in dispute; such a course would have been far more creditable to them than the one they adopted. Although the audience evinced its disapprobation of their conduct by loud and repeated cries of ‘Shame, shame!’ it had not any effect upon them. But the worst part of the affair remains to be told. Shortly before the audience began to assemble, one of the committee of the ‘Mutual Improvement Society,’ by whom the rev. gentleman was engaged, happening to go into the hall, found that a most filthy and sickening odour pervaded it, so bad indeed was it that it was almost impossible for anyone to remain long in the place; on searching about for the cause, it was discovered that some dastardly fellow had placed a quantity of asafoetida under the platform. This was speedily removed, and disinfectants being freely used, the effects of the cowardly act became partly neutralized. We hope that the perpetrator will be discovered and receive the punishment he so richly deserves.

Review of Religious Thought in England I

If the labour of writing this volume was at all commensurate with the labour of reading it, no one can charge the author with lack of conscientiousness. It has seldom been our fate to come across so ponderous and dreary a digest of theology. It is really a most remarkable monument of laborious care, to supply a fresh controversial manual for a public which by this time is almost satiated with religious discussions. As a matter of course Mr. Hunt begins by claiming credit for fairness and impartiality, while the first sentence of his work shows that nothing can be further from his intention than to take the impartial view of his subject. He writes in fact as a virulent Protestant, equally opposed to the High Anglican as to the Roman systems. Before he has got over his first page he falls foul of Dr. Pusey, the main reasoning of whose ‘Eirenicon’ he is content to dismiss in a foot-note, with a mere passing sneer; and this promising opening sufficiently indicates what the reader has to expect who can summon courage to pursue his weary task. We give Mr. Hunt, however, the fullest credit for diligence. His work consists mainly of voluminous extracts from writers of the Church of England and almost every conceivable sect of Protestantism, with his own comments thereon. Among such names as those of Cranmer, Ussher, Hooker, Milton, and Baxter, he has unearthed many whose names are quite obscure, and others whose works have been long practically consigned to oblivion. He shows a singular lack of any power of arranging these copious materials, and there seems to be not even the attempt at a summary or analysis of the disconnected matter which he has brought together. Possibly he intends something of the kind in a later volume, for which those whose taste lies in that direction are obliged, as the rest of us may be very well contented, to wait yet awhile.


11 Numerous reviews of Hunt’s work, especially his Religious Thought in England, were published. These show something of the impact of Hunt’s scholarship and its mixed reception.
Review of Religious Thought in England II

THE volume before us is a further instalment of Mr. Hunt's laborious task—the history of religious thought in England from the Reformation to the end of the eighteenth century. Mr. Hunt has now reached the end of the seventeenth, and given notices of the principal Deist writers in the beginning of the eighteenth century. So far as industry and impartiality can entitle a writer to praise, he is entitled to it in no common degree; and it may also be said with confidence that his book is calculated to be of great service to future students of English theological literature.

There is, however, a further question upon which we must dwell rather more fully. In his preface Mr. Hunt defends himself against certain criticisms—our own being apparently among the number—which had been directed against his first volume. Why, we asked on that occasion, had not a man who was so well qualified for the task gone a little further? why did he not trace the connection of doctrines prevalent at a given time with those prevalent at different times or in other countries? why, in short, did he not give us a philosophical account of the genesis of opinion, instead of a bare statement of facts? To this demand his answer is in one sense conclusive. He says that he intended only to collect and arrange materials, and not to give his own theories. He considered himself to be writing 'part of the history' of religion, and not 'the philosophy of the history of religion.' Of course there is nothing more to be said. Beggars must not be choosers. Mr. Hunt was under no moral or legal obligation to give us anything, and if, out of his mere grace and bounty, he throws us half-a-crown, it is perhaps ungrateful to murmur because it is not a sovereign. We will, however, add that the criticism implied a compliment. We should have liked a little more philosophy from Mr. Hunt, because we think him capable of being philosophical, and we regard it as a misfortune that a man who has collected so many valuable materials should not have chosen to construct an edifice with them. The misfortune is that somebody will very likely attempt to give us the philosophy without the material. Let us hope that Mr. Hunt will anticipate such a result by doing the work himself at some future period.

Meanwhile, however, Mr. Hunt, not content with claiming his indisputable liberty to abstain from writing a philosophical treatise, has put in some further pleas, of which we must venture to speak. He says
in the first place: ‘Merely to have given my own conclusions or my own theories would have been easier to me, and perhaps more agreeable to my readers.’ We take leave to dispute this altogether. If Mr. Hunt means, indeed, that it would have been easier to run up some flashy theory without troubling himself about the facts, he is speaking within bounds. But nobody ever asked him, so far as we know, to do anything so foolish. What he was asked to do was to form some intelligent theories on the mass of crude fact, and then to make the theory and the narrative of fact mutually illustrate each other. He was asked to give us a philosophical history, not a philosophy without the history; and to do this as it ought to be done would involve much severe intellectual labour in addition to, and not in the place of, all that he has actually undergone. It would therefore have been harder for him, though, as we fancy, much more agreeable to his readers. Mr. Hunt, indeed, speaks almost as if he doubted the possibility of such a performance. ‘It has been intimated,’ he says, ‘that there is a principle of progress or development to be traced in this history, but I have not been forward to trace it.’ The whole value of the history seems to us to depend upon the fact that there are such principles of development, whether supplied by the writer or the reader. Without it, a history of ideas is as barren as the old-fashioned history of events. It is of no interest to a rational being to be told that at one time a man wrote a book about justification by faith, and at another time somebody else wrote a book about the law of nature, without any attempt to show why particular subjects were interesting at given times and why particular methods of inquiry were in favour, any more than to be told that a battle was fought here and a treaty made there, without any attempt to trace out the political and social changes with which they were inseparably connected. The so-called history becomes a mere string of barren statements without any significance until they have been made a foundation for subsequent conclusions. Mr. Hunt’s view of his duties explains another sentence in his preface. ‘A history of ideas,’ he says, ‘could not be expected to have the same interest as a history of events.’ That is a matter of taste. In our opinion, a well-managed history of ideas would be far more interesting to any one with a soul above sensation novels. It would be more interesting because the facts can be more satisfactorily ascertained, because they

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12 subjects] subject
are generally more important, and because it is easier to trace the ‘principle of development,’ of which Mr. Hunt speaks, in a progress which is less dependent upon external accidents. As a matter of fact, few more interesting books have been written than some histories of this nature. The statement is apparently made under the impression that Mr. Hunt’s critics made unfair demands upon him, and imputed to him a dulness which was inherent in the subject. We confess—though it may make against our claims of impartiality—that we have in fact found Mr. Hunt dull. Yet we venture to assert that our weariness was not owing to any want of interest in the subject; on the contrary, we know of few subjects on which we should receive with greater pleasure the views of so intelligent a writer if only he would condescend to give them. The dulness is due to the simple fact that Mr. Hunt has chosen to give us, not a philosophy of the history, nor a philosophical history, nor even, to speak correctly, a history of any kind, but simply a collection of annals. A history would imply grouping of facts; some attempt in this particular instance to present a coherent and systematic picture of the theological ideas current in England during a given period; some attempt to tell us what were the topics upon which the thinkers of the time employed their intellects and the methods by which they endeavoured to arrive at a solution of the problems presented to them. Such a picture may be formed by the reader himself if he has sufficient memory and patience; but he will not find it prepared for him. Mr. Hunt has simply given us a number of careful analyses of the principal books written during the period he is considering. An abstract is proverbially dull reading, and a whole series of abstracts is inconceivably depressing after a time, even if, as in this case, they are intelligently and carefully performed. So far from there being any effective grouping, it is difficult to discover the principle on which Mr. Hunt has arranged his book. In a general way he roughly follows a chronological order; occasionally he becomes biographical, and puts together all the works of any given author, however distant may be the periods of their publication, and sometimes he follows the order of ideas and puts together all the books bearing upon one particular issue. Thus, for example, the controversy about Toleration and the Trinitarian controversy are followed out as continuous subjects, and towards the end of the volume the Deist controversy naturally absorbs all other topics. Yet Toland is separated from Shaftesbury, Collins, and Tindal
by many pages, including accounts of South, Bishop Bull, the theology of the Quakers, and various other subjects. Culverwell, whose ‘Light of Nature’ was published in 1652, precedes Wollaston, whose ‘Religion of Nature Delineated’ appeared in 1722, and next comes Shaftesbury, whose works had appeared from ten to fourteen years earlier than Wollaston’s. This is an arrangement by subjects; but in another chapter we have an account of Archbishop Sharp’s views on predestination, on the Sabbath, and on the Eucharist, Bishop Kidder’s appeal to the Jews, Patrick’s theory of the sacraments, Fowler’s Platonism, and Stillingfleet’s theories of Church unity, all following each other in succession, apparently on mere chronological grounds. We do not, of course, deny that it would be extremely difficult to arrange all these complex subjects in a perfectly clear and consecutive manner; and, equally of course, a writer who almost prides himself on being nothing but an annalist will care comparatively little for a confused effect produced upon the mind of the reader.

Our criticism comes, indeed, chiefly to this—that Mr. Hunt’s book is rather useful for purposes of reference than as a narrative of the ordinary kind, though even here we have one more criticism to add. Mr. Hunt, in his preface, says that some of his critics—we believe that we were again among the number—complained of a want of dates. He has endeavoured, he says, to comply with the demand; but he does not admit that the first volume was deficient. ‘Dates were not always given,’ he says, ‘but it was generally mentioned who was Archbishop of Canterbury at the time of any controversy or the public activity of any great writer.’ We confess that we had not noticed that help. But even if the Archbishop was generally mentioned, that still leaves considerable latitude. Sheldon was Archbishop for fifteen and Tenison for twenty-one years. Now, though Mr. Hunt does not seem to observe it, dates may be of great importance even in matters of this kind. Great books are frequently in close connection with great events. The writings, for example, on Toleration were prompted by the contemporary legislation, and such a book as Samuel Johnson’s on passive obedience can only be understood fairly by reference to a particular crisis. We may wish to know what writer had the priority in suggesting a particular argument, whether he was writing under circumstances, which made a full confession of faith dangerous, at what age he had arrived at certain
conclusions, and so on. We wish in using a book of reference to have such facts staring us in the face, and not to be obliged to make a vague inference from the contemporary Archbishop, or to be sent to hunt in a biographical dictionary. Again, when a reference is given it is not pleasant to be told that the ‘subject will indicate the chapter, which may be easily found from the table of contents;’ and that where the page is not given, ‘the substance of what is said will be found not far from the quotation.’ The practical result is simply that if you wish to verify some interesting remark, you must take the trouble of hunting through a table of contents and a chapter. The process may only occupy ten minutes; but when by a little trouble on the part of the author the ten minutes might have been reduced to one, you are apt to lose temper. An excess of clearness, rather than a defect, is a high merit in a book of this class.

However, with all its shortcomings, Mr. Hunt’s book will be a considerable assistance to students of theological literature. We have been forced to indulge chiefly in criticism of an adverse kind; but we should be doing the work great injustice if we did not fully admit its substantial merits.


Review of Religious Thought in England in the Nineteenth Century

THIS is an annoying book, because in some respects it is so good that it ought to have been better in all, and might easily be made so. Mr. Hunt has done well to continue into the present century his history of religious thought in England since the Reformation. It would be more accurate, however, to describe the present work as a history of books on or bearing upon religious subjects, since for the most part the author is content to examine the theological literature of successive periods of the century, and summarize its contents and tendency. No doubt this is a useful study in itself, and the record is one of great value to the theological student. But we should not ourselves describe it as a history of religious thought. The course of a people’s thought in religion must
be traced outside the limits of its expression, not merely in theological books, but in books of any sort. Mr. Hunt’s readers should understand the somewhat esoteric sense in which he employs his title.

Nor can we unreservedly commend the way in which the author has carried out his task. Mr. Hunt is painstaking and industrious indeed, but ponderous beyond belief or endurance. Compared with such a work as Dean Church’s history of the Oxford movement, or even Messrs. Abbey and Overton’s record of the English Church in the eighteenth century, Mr. Hunt’s book is painfully hard reading. Moreover, the space allotted to some teachers — notably S. T. Coleridge and Frederick Maurice — is absurdly inadequate; although, so far as he goes, the author’s summaries are very fairly accurate and impartial. Some of them — as the chapter on the Bampton and Hulsean lectures — are particularly well done, and furnish a most useful magazine of reference. Mr. Hunt need not have disclaimed partisanship with quite so much emphasis in his preface, for he allows his own sympathies to appear on almost every page, and even spends ink and paper in an attempt to show that the Thirty-nine Articles are Calvinistic! Surely they are not sufficiently definite for that: they are, of course, and were meant to be, a deliberately ambiguous compromise. In a future edition many exasperating little mistakes will call for correction — e.g. Disciplina Arcana (p. 126); Denison was Archdeacon of Taunton, not Frome (p. 172); where is Well Street? (p. 209); and what are archaicisms? (p. 214). Mr. Hunt’s own errata seem to indicate a desire to improve the English language.


Review of Religious Thought in England in the Nineteenth Century

Religious Thought in England during the Nineteenth Century. By the Rev. John Hunt, D.D. (Gibbings and Co.)—Dr. Hunt quotes a saying of Goethe (referring to a question of natural history that was being hotly debated), ‘I do not judge; I only record,’ and adopts it as his own rule.

13 The original, of which this is a not very accurate translation, is ‘Ich lehre nicht, ich erzähle’, a translation by Goethe of Montaigne (Zur Morphologie: Principes de
It is easy to see, however, that if he is neutral, his neutrality is benevolent to parties and individual thinkers who have advocated liberal views. The first chapter is given to a brief account of various divines who really belong to the eighteenth century rather than to the nineteenth, Paley to Vicesimus Knox. It is impossible, however, to keep strictly to time limits, and these and other writers to whom Dr. Hunt devotes some of his pages have to be considered if we are to understand the religious history of the time. No account of the evidential controversy would be complete without a notice of Paley, however far we may have moved from his standpoint. Chap. 3 introduces us to Simeon and the Evangelicals; and in chaps. 4–5 we hear about the apologetic writers of the early half of the century; while in chap. 6 we have a reference to the Establishment Controversy, illustrated by the story of the Disruption in the Scottish Church. Further on we find a description of the Tractarian movement, and of the development of Coleridgean thought which went alongside with it. A separate chapter is devoted to ‘Essays and Reviews,’ and another to Unitarianism, Old and New. Chap. 19 is given to an account of various sceptical writers, among whom we are somewhat surprised to see the author of ‘Ecce Homo.’ Dr. Hunt should be aware that ‘Ecce Homo’ was an accommodation to circumstances. It was certainly intended to strengthen belief, not to weaken it. It is impossible that a volume so comprehensive should do equal justice to all the writers whom it seeks to represent. Of Dr. Hunt’s industry, intelligence, and candour there can be no question. The press might have been more carefully corrected. ‘Catagorise’ disfigures the preface, and on p. 10 Bishop Porteus (born in 1731) is said to have promoted a petition in 1722.


Dr. Hunt’s Travels.

The Vicar of Otford, the Rev. Dr. Hunt, gave an interesting lecture on his travels at the National Schools on the 4th inst. In the course of his remarks, the Rev. gentleman said:—‘There are certain reasons why men

travel—one is to see the country, another is to learn the language, and a third is to see something different from what they see at home.

We English may be very great people, but we live in a small island. The world outside of us is very large. To see the manners and customs of many men, and many nations makes a man very learned. As to languages, I have been learning them for many years. I taught German, French and Italian when I was 20 years of age—but to know a language in a book is a very different thing from speaking it. When I had to speak German I had not the word at hand, which I wanted. I had to look in the dictionary for it, and when I found it I had to think a long time till I ventured the next word. When I was in France, I found they called their mothers mères, and their daughters filles. They run all the words together. I should have known them if had word for word, but they so jumbled them together, they seemed like monkeys talking gibberish. When I tried Italian, which is an easy language, German came in my head, and I talked German to them better than I talked to the Germans. Now for my travels.

In the first place I went from here to Westgate, from thence I might have gone to Dover, but the Archbishop had a garden party, and we must appear amongst the grand people. We went to the Archbishop’s, where we were archiepiscopally treated. Then I learned that the man whom I had engaged for my duty was the same man whom ten years ago the last Archbishop would not allow to come. He was

in the black books

at Lambeth. After a day’s toiling in the burning sun, we found another, of whom the Archbishop approved. We bought our tickets to Basle, at the Belgium State Railway Office, in Regent St., and proceeded by train to Dover. A very interesting journey, which, as you have all, I doubt not, enjoyed, I shall not say anything more about. We got on board the steamer bound for Ostend, and stayed on deck until a servant of the ship asked for 2s. from me, because I was a second class passenger, and the second class passengers were below. I remonstrated that a second class passenger had a right to be on the deck. Then he became facetious, and he said that at certain times I married people for a certain sum, but

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14 mères | meres  
15 Dover | Dover
at other times I charged much more. I promised I should marry him at any lawful time for 5s., provided he found a bride, so I did not pay the money. In four hours time we were in Belgium, and in half-an-hour more we were in Bruges. It is no great distance, but it is an altogether new country. Bruges was once a famous commercial town, when the population was four times what it is at present. Now it has little trade, the beautiful bells ring every quarter of an hour. The churches are many, and the people attend them with a regularity that would put us to shame. But by 12 o’clock religion is all over, and then they give themselves up to amusement. They are not accustomed to keep the whole day sacred. They begin their music and merriment, which goes on sometimes till past midnight. How the people can be so serious in the morning, and then throw it off by mid-day, is beyond our comprehension. We attended several churches, especially one of the Capuchins. The prostrations of the priests, their

bowings and crossings

were strange to us. But doubtless their belief is different. They believe that the Host is the actual body of Jesus Christ. At the end of the sermon an image of the Virgin Mary was carried around the church. The sermon was extemporary, and the congregation very devout. We left Bruges for Ghent. There was a fete on. I suppose it was some Saints Day, but the people hallooed and howled the whole night. We had no rest, and hastened away by the earliest train the next morning, leaving them to continue the fete. We came to Brussels and took the precaution not to have a hotel near the station. It is a beautiful city. We visited the famous Wiertz gallery. After a long day’s journey we came to Strasburg. We had some altercation with the porters about the money. Strasburg belonged to Germany, and our money was Belgian. Next day we arrived at Spiez. On our way there a gentleman asked in the train ‘If I were Dr. Hunt?’ I said I knew him, but I did not know his name. He answered that his name was Mulzenberg. He said I was not altered since he saw me 12 years before; I did not look a bit older than I did then. He asked where I was going, and I said to his house. This gentleman stayed with me 14 years ago to learn English. He was then a very young man, just engaged to be married, and the first thing he wanted to know was the English for the young woman he was engaged to. And I told him he must say
'The girl I walk with' or another form 'The girl I keep company with.'! His hotel was larger than it was years ago. When I was there last it was a very modest building, but the railway has come since that time, and he has added an immense building, that now he can accommodate 150 people. Mr. Mulzenberg, who was a slender young man when he was at Otford, has now grown a jolly hotel keeper. We crossed the lake in the steamer, and were taken up Beatenberg in a funicular railway. I called it a vernacular, being more familiar with that word. This is a railway that goes up a mountain. When got up, we had a glorious view of the Swiss Mountains, clad in everlasting snows, the Jungfrau, the Monk, and the Eiger, and many others. It was a glorious panorama of snow mountains, and we saw it in the middle of summer.

After this we set out for Gruyères. We could have gone by Berne, but we preferred

a romantic route.

We went by diligence two-thirds of the journey, and the rest by rail. We arrived late in the evening. You can imagine us toiling up a steep hill, twice as high as Otford Mount. At a late hour in the evening we arrived at our destination, had supper and went to bed. We awoke next morning, in what is said to be the oldest town in Switzerland. It consists of one street. An old Castle at one end is inhabited by a Geneva goldsmith. At the other end was the dwelling of some pigs and cows. We went one morning to see the pigs, when a young woman said to us that they were very 'dégoutant,' but made good 'jambon.' That is, they were very disgusting, but they made good ham. There were two fountains, and every day the women were busy washing. There was also a school for teaching the deaf and dumb to speak; the Roman Catholic Sisters bestow much labour on these unfortunates. We heard them speak, but we could not speak to them. They were deaf, so that their education was of doubtful benefit.

But the grand sight at Gruyères was the church. It was Roman Catholic, but there was no other place to go so we went there; we thought it better to go to the Roman Catholic Church than not to go anywhere. It

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16 Gruyères] Gruyeres (passim)
17 dégoutant] degoutant
18 jambon] jambor
is doubtless an open question. There are many things done in the Roman Catholic Church which we regard as a perversion of Christianity. But it was a delight to see the crowds that attended the services on Sundays. The bell begins at 6 a.m. in the morning and the church was thronged until mid-day. Down the steep hills and up the valleys of Gruyères came the cowherds, with a prayer book in their hands, and their sleeves washed white, to offer their early oblation. The church, which was large, was not only full to the door, but there were some praying outside. On a tombstone erected to the memory of a former Curé, it was written ‘He loved the sheep and the sheep loved him.’ It happened while we were there that the new Pope was elected. The priest told the young men to light bonfires on the tops of the mountains. When they were lighted it was a grand sight, but in the evening came such a storm of thunder, lightning and rain, that the fires were soon extinguished, and the very rocks seemed to rend and the trees to burn with fire. Before I leave Gruyères, I want to tell you something about my hat. You all know my hat. It is broader in the brim than most men’s hats. I mean my old hat, but they are all alike. It was coveted by a woman in Gruyères. Mrs. Hunt thought it was for her son, but to her amazement found she intended wearing it herself, with the addition of a feather, as her Sunday hat. From Gruyères we made a journey to Lausanne and Geneva. Lausanne we found a clean industrious Protestant town. Thence to Geneva. The rail runs along the edge of the lake through fields of vines, with the vast mountains of the Jura to the right. Geneva is the chief town in Switzerland. It is the town of anarchists and revolutionists.

The population is equally divided between Protestants and Roman Catholics. Here was one of the chief centres of Reformation. It was in Geneva that the great Calvin lived and laboured. We heard a sermon in the Cathedral, but it was a poor echo of Calvin. On the bridge, where Mont Blanc is visible, the mountain is seen like a great giant towering above its fellows. From Geneva we returned to Spiez. We arrived at Lucerne in the evening, and after staying a night we took the steamboat to Flüelen; here are mountains all round, and here is Pilatus, from which Pontius Pilate is said to have thrown himself down in remorse for

19 Gruyères] Gruyerès (passim)
20 Flüelen] Fluelen (passim)
having condemned the Just One; here was the Rigi, to which the ascent is by a funicular railway; here we have the legend of William Tell; the shooting of an apple from his son’s head. All the country is celebrated by Schiller, who has devoted a play to the subject. At Flüelen we prepared to go through the St. Gothard Tunnel, the largest in the world. We are now on the other side of the Alps, and settled at Giubiasco, a forlorn village near Bellinzona.

This is a new country and a different people. This is Italian Switzerland. The people are Italians. They are evidently poorer than those on the other side of the Alps; they are certainly not so clean; they work as hard and fare worse; the children are dirty, bare-footed wretches; the mothers are not much better, but though not able to buy shoes they wear clogs. The people called me the ‘learned man’ or the ‘English Priest.’ They all knew I was a clergyman and showed me great reverence. I was told they did not know the difference between Roman Catholic and Protestant, but they had great respect for all clergy. I was disposed to laugh at some of the pictures in the Churches and the holy houses. They were the work of country artists and often comic in their simplicity, but a young man warned me that they, the people, would be much offended if they saw me laughing either at their pictures or their images. ‘The people,’ he said, ‘are ignorant and stupid, but they are sincere.’ In a back street in Milan the people called after me ‘A Pope. A Pope,’ and I had the same salutation from some women in Rome. Even a troop of soldiers, on horseback, who passed me one day when walking outside the walls of Rome, all put their hands to their chin and shouted ‘Barba. Barba.’ At another place some girls were dancing to a hurdy-gurdy, who, as soon as they saw me, took to their heels and vanished.

Of Giubiasco I had pleasant remembrances. Ten years ago I spent a happy Christmas Day there, and I had pleasant recollections of the pheasants which we had for dinner. I went to the door of the hotel expecting to see my old friends, but they were not there. The servant had not understood what I said, so she ran to her mistress. She was equally confounded, but she sent for a German woman, who lived opposite, and she came when we conversed freely. The landlady began to talk, and in time we understood her. We learned the former landlord was dead, and the present occupiers were from Milan. The landlady

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21 Giubiasco] Giuliasco (passim)
was tall, handsome and young; she had been at Shanghai where she had learned some English, but had almost forgotten it. The landlord was a young man, with the Roman blood in his veins. We explored the old town; the houses had been good, but decay seemed written on everyone. The burden of life falls heaviest on the women of all ages. We saw them groaning under loads of wood which they carried home for fire. We had daily walks in the green lanes, gathering bramble berries, or what you call blackberries, which there are ripe in the month of July. One Sunday night was very riotous. The people drank in a large public room below our bedroom, played and sang all night, so we had no sleep. We had stayed a week and learned that the anniversary of the Canton was to be held on the week following, so we thought it best to move on and leave the merry making to the people themselves. In the early morning we went to Lugano to take the steamer on the lake. The lake Lugano is very beautiful; on either side there are choice villas on the slopes; the sail was enchanting. In leaving the lake we left Switzerland, and after a railway ride through the mountains we arrived at Menaggio, on Lake Como. This is a choice resort of visitors and tourists. On one side is Bellaggio, which is called Paradise, for its beauty; on the other side Cadenabbia, with its magnificent hotels; a little further on is Tremezzo, where we intended to take up our abode for a time. On my arrival I asked for a glass of beer, but it was not to be had. I then asked for a bottle, for which I paid about 1s. 6d. There was no draught ale to be had; wine is the chief drink and it is cheaper than beer. In the evening I sat in the front of the hotel, in the gardens on the edge of the lake and watched the moon, with its accompanying star-rise above the mountains. It was interesting to see it gradually rising later and later till it disappeared. On Sunday we went to Cadenabbia to church. Here we had an English Church, but in everything it imitated the Roman Catholic. The clergyman held up his hands at the celebration of the Eucharist, and the bell tolled at the moment when the bread and wine were supposed to be transubstantiated into something else. When the administration took place the clergyman gave me a wafer, which I did not eat. It was so like that given by Roman Catholics that I kept it as a curiosity. I would much rather have the real Roman Catholic thing than this poor imitation. After 10 days at Tremezzo we again sailed on Lake Como. The steamer we sailed by was called ‘Plinio,’ from Pliny, who was born at Como. This is an elegant little town which
I had visited before, but this time we made for Milan. The interest of Milan centres around the Cathedral. It is a magnificent building of pure marble, and seems as if every block had some design upon it. There we bought the tickets for a tour round Italy. We arrived first at Verona. You will have heard of the ‘Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ if you have not read the play. Here we saw the house of the family of Juliet, the supposed tomb of Juliet of the famous play. From Verona we went to Venice. We reached Venice in a great storm of rain. We asked for a gondola to take us to the hotel ‘Vapore,’ but the porter put our luggage in the gondola belonging to the hotel ‘Vittoria.’ It contained some other passengers whom I found to be Americans. The gondoliers followed with a few more strokes of the oars, and we reached the watery entrance of a very large hotel. We visited St. Mark’s, one of the wonders of architecture, where the campanile, or tower, fell two years ago. We were amused with the myriads of pigeons in the square where they came on our arms and shoulders to be fed. We visited the Bridge of Sighs, which crosses a canal and connects the Doge’s Palace with the prison house. Lord Byron wrote: ‘I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs.’ At the hotel we had large nets over our beds. These were to keep the mosquitoes from biting us. Our next town was Bologna. A fine old town full of porticoed streets, and from thence to Florence. This is the most beautiful city in Italy, and the most beautiful in its surroundings. We went four or five miles out by rail to the ruins of an old Etruscan town, Fiesoli. Here was lately unearthed the ruin of a theatre and a temple of Jupiter. It was a beautiful evening in September and the scene was

like a fairyland.

About here was the Vallombrosa\[22\] of the poets, a shady vale, where all was harmony and beauty. One Sunday morning we set out for the English Church, but when we got there it was closed for September. There are several bridges over the Arno, but one of them is a picture gallery, a mile in length. In the centre of the town we stood on the place where Savonarola, the Rreformer of Florence, was burned. We left Florence for Rome, but as it would be too late before we arrived there we spent a night on the way. We stopped at a place called Orte, but we

\[22\] Vallombrosa| Vallambrosa
found that there was only one Inn if it might be called by that name, where we could obtain accommodation and the place was so awfully filthy that we regretted having come out of the train. The bed we had was clean, and the food was plentiful, but everything besides was filthy in the extreme. Mrs. Hunt called for two candles; I told her the one we had was sufficient, but she would have another as she wanted a light to let her see to sleep. We were glad when the morning came, and we left for Rome. When I first entered Rome, a boy said if I would give him a penny he would take me to a barber where I could get shaved. The Italians cannot grow beards, so a man with a beard is a strange phenomenon. Rome is a place which no one can see but with feelings of awe for the mighty past. The woman, who sitteth upon the hills and was drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, is come to desolation. The prophecy of St. John in the Revelation is fulfilled. ‘The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold, and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand and full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication, and upon her forehead was written a name “Mystery of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and abominations of the earth.”’ When I went the first time to Rome I went direct to the Coliseum and sat down in deep meditation till the moon and the stars appeared overhead, and then I thought it was time to look out for a lodging. The Coliseum is a memorial of Ancient Rome in the days of its cruelty and persecution. Here the gladiators fought with each other and wild beasts, and here Christians were thrown to the lions to make a ‘Roman holiday.’

It is seated for 80,000 spectators who delighted in this scene of blood. When Charles Dickens saw the Coliseum, he said, ‘Thank God, it is a ruin. Beside the Coliseum stands the Roman Forum. I have said stands, but it would be more correct to say lies, for it lies in the dust. Here the Roman Orators harangued the people; here stood the statues and the temples of the gods, and by the side of the Forum the Palace of the Caesars. The Arch of Titus, on which is engraved the seven-branched candlesticks copied from the Temple at Jerusalem. At no great distance stands the Capitol, where Julius Caesar was stabbed, and the Mamertine prison in which St. Paul was said to have been imprisoned.
Time would fail me to tell of the Campus Martius, the Circus Maximus, the Ghetto, and other things both in Ancient and Modern Rome. I will just ask you to think of a power which conquered Gaul and Britain in the Far West and Mesopotamia in the Far East, and planted Colonies of Romans throughout the world. One day we went to St. Paul’s Gate. Tradition says that the great Apostle was led out by this gate to martyrdom. About five or six miles out of Rome he was beheaded. Where the head first fell there sprang up a well of hot water, where it rolled a well of tepid water, and where it lay finally a well of cold water. About three miles from Rome is the magnificent church of St. Paul without the Gate. At St. Paul’s Gate stands the pyramid of Caius Cestius, who lived in the time of Augustus. Behind the tomb is the Protestant Cemetery. Here was buried Keats, the poet; here were placed the ashes of Shelley after cremation, who was drowned in the Bay of Spezzia. We saw St. Peter’s, the greatest Church in the world, and we visited the sacred steps at San Giovanni Laterano. They are the stairs on which Jesus came down from the judgement Hall of Pontius Pilate, and were brought to Rome by Helena, the mother of Constantine. You ascend them on bended knees, kissing them all the way, and you are rewarded by a plenary indulgence. It was ascending these steps that this verse occurred to Luther: ‘The Just shall live by faith,’ and he turned and walked down.

We visited the Catacombs of St. Callixtus\textsuperscript{24} in the Appian Way.\textsuperscript{25} Underground we went with candles and read the inscriptions on the tomb stones. A Capuchin Friar, in his brown cloak, led the way, and we followed with lighted tapers. We were glad to see the end of it and return it to the light of day. The Appian Way is the road by which the brethren came as far as Appii\textsuperscript{26} Forum to meet St. Paul. Along this way the Romans had their sepulchral monuments, many of which still exist, the chief being that of Cecilia Metella.

After 10 days spent in Rome, we went to Naples. We took our hotel at the North of Naples, in Posillipo, looking out on Mount Vesuvius. It was smoking very gently; when I saw it before it reminded me of a tall smoking chimney in one of the manufacturing towns. While at Naples we resolved on a visit to the ruins of Pompeii. This town was buried in

\textsuperscript{24} Callixtus] Calistus
\textsuperscript{25} Appian Way] Appian way passim
\textsuperscript{26} Appii] Apii (passim)
ashes, at an eruption of Vesuvius in the year A.D. 79. It lies on the south side of the Mount, about 16 miles from Naples. The museum contains many articles of furniture, kitchen utensils, lamps, phials, and such like. There are also loaves of bread round like cakes, with a hole in the centre, so as to be carried on a pole. The same shape of bread, as is still, to be seen in Naples, and in the Museum are eight human bodies turned into stone recalling the story of Lot’s wife turned into a Pillar of Salt; one is a woman lying on her face with her right hand under her forehead; one is a little boy about six years old, lying on his side, and all have fear and terror depicted on their faces. In one place we saw the bones of a prisoner who had been chained, and could not escape. The houses are for the most part roofless, and some of those on which the roofs remained had bathrooms and other conveniences, evidently done up for a rich luxurious people. We took a cab and drove through the streets outside of Naples. As an instance of the poverty of the country, there were great holes on the road, into which we occasionally went down to the great danger of our lives. The cabman was a merry fellow. He proposed to come to England to be our servant, and we asked if he had a wife. He said he had, and such a beauty, so fat, as fat as the monsieur. And what would you do with her? Oh, I should shed a few tears and leave her. He asked Mrs. Hunt how old she was, and I know no woman cares to tell the truth concerning her age, but I believe she said 60 years. How many children have you he asked; I suppose she said six boys and six girls. And why did she marry such a young man. When we were drawing near to Pompeii, the cabman advised us where to lunch, and with an engaging smile said ‘Macaroni for me.’ We answered ‘Yes,’ and his face brightened at the prospect. You should see an Italian eating Macaroni; He twists it round and round on his fork, and then it is like a great many serpents hanging out of his mouth. The Neapolitans are the happiest people under the sun. They never care to work after they have earned four pennies in the morning, one for bread, one for fruit, one for Macaroni, and one for wine. The children are all playing in the street, boys and girls, with scarcely a rag upon them; They have their milk brought to them by cows and goats, which are milked at the doors, and those who live in high houses when they want a pennyworth of grapes or other commodities they let down a basket by a string and put it up again.
Appendix II

We saw a sight one Sunday at the hotel which

reminded us of Otford.

The landlord of the houses was to give a dinner to 20 old men only. They came to the table unwashed and unshaved. All women were forbidden, which they felt very much, and two or three times one or two made an effort to sit down with the men. One woman took up a bottle of wine and drank it off without ceremony to the great amusement of all present. The landlord saw her and chased her away.

One day we went to ‘Pozzuoli’ called in the Bible ‘Puteoli.’ Here St. Paul landed, after he had been almost shipwrecked and here began his journey to Rome. When the Christians at Rome where [sic] out as far as the Appii Forum and three Taverns to meet him and accompany him along the Appian Way to the great city. At Pozzuoli are the ruins of a temple of Serapis an Egyptian god, whose worship was forbidden at Rome. There is also the Solfatara, a crater extinct, beyond the memory of man. About five months ago it showed signs of life, and began to burn. Behind this is the Bay of Baiae, the winter resort of the old Romans. There is ‘no Bay’ says the poet Horace more delightful than Baiae, near to it is the lake Avernus—the Lake of Hell. It was here that Nero caused his mother to be put in a ship, and when they that were with her had gone far enough out in the sea they were to save themselves and leave her to sink. She managed, however, to swim ashore. When Nero heard of this he sent a soldier to stab her. We returned to Rome, went to Pisa, Genoa, Turin, Aix-les-Bains, Dijon, and Paris; Then with great joy to Otford.

Sevenoaks Chronicle and Kentish Advertiser, 5 February 1904, p. 8.

27 Pozzuoli] Pazzaoli (passim)
John Hunt, the Poor Man’s Friend

On Friday, 12 April 1907, shortly before midnight, the Reverend John Hunt, D.D., Vicar of Otford, died at the Vicarage (The Grange) in his eighty-first year.

This was the passing of no ordinary man, for, although he was a man of simple tastes, a lover of nature and all mankind, and happy in his parish ministrations, his name was known and honoured far outside the confines of Otford, outside the Rochester Diocese, outside the County of Kent, outside England.

John hunt was born at Perth, Scotland, on 21 January 1827. He took Holy Orders in 1855, having become a student at the University of St. Andrews eight years before, and after serving the Church of England in curacies in Deptford, Bishopwearmouth, Fulham, Hoxton, St. Ives (Huntingdon), Aldgate, and Lambeth. He was installed as Vicar of Otford in 1878, immediately following two years at St. Nicholas’s Church, Sutton, Surrey. In the same year, the University of St. Andrews conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

It has been said that Hunt was a thinker and writer who loved a simple country life. We read that ‘His mind soared in high spaces of thought and that this saved him from undue concern with many things that unprofitably disturb or absorb the minds of multitudes.’ We also know that he was a deeply religious man, who, until the end, had a great zest for the style of life which he led. We are told that he was humble, straight and honourable in all his dealings, and transparently truthful.

This paper, entitled John Hunt, the Poor Man’s Friend, was written by Harold W. Hart and dated in his own hand ‘6/10/58’. A copy of the essay was given to the Otford and District Historical Society for comments by the Committee. Duplicated, typewritten copies were sold in 1959 by the Rev. Francis Bunch, Vicar of Otford (1956–1984), priced 3d. Two copies are in the Otford and District Historical Society archive. I am most grateful to Mr Edwin Thompson for supplying me with these.

Contrary to my practice elsewhere in this study, since the original is unpublished, I have edited and annotated the text, correcting or improving spelling, punctuation, phraseology, etc. Only significant changes are noted in the footnotes.
What else can be said of him, of his desires, his difficulties, his successes, and his disappointments?\footnote{disappointments?} disappointments.

His Services to Literature

Firstly, it can be said that Hunt was a writer of great intellectual force. His first literary works, \textit{Poems from the German}, were published as early as 1852, to be followed, in 1853, by \textit{Luther’s Spiritual Songs translated from the German}. Some five years later, came \textit{Lectures on Wesley and Wesleyanism}.

What might well be termed his great works began with \textit{An Essay on Pantheism}, which was published in 1865. This is still considered to be one of the best treatments of the subject and was extremely well received by the Protestant churches, although it quickly formed an entry in the Papal Index. His next works, \textit{Contemporary Essays in Theology}, appeared in 1873.

These were followed by his \textit{History of Religious Thought in England}, which covered the period from the Reformation until the end of the Eighteenth Century. Some years later, a further volume appeared, which treated the same subject so far as the Nineteenth Century was concerned. These were received even more enthusiastically\footnote{enthusiastically} by philosophers, clergy, and teachers than was the \textit{Essay on Pantheism}. In addition, he wrote a number of articles on matters of a religious nature for various reviews and other periodical publications.

During the last decade of the Nineteenth century, he penned a number of poems. Most of these were of a simple and direct style, against a background of natural history, and appeared from time to time in issues of the parish magazine. One poem, ‘The Galilean King’, which he wrote after reading Renan’s \textit{Life of Jesus} is, however, in a style on a level with the best hymns in the English language.

Hunt’s work in the field of Literature was duly recognised by the Government, and in 1901, he was awarded the sum of £100 per annum in recognition of his services to theological literature. [2]
His Views on Sunday Observance

To anyone reading his pastoral letters, it becomes obvious that Hunt was a strict Sabbatarian. Perth, or rather his Scottish upbringing in the fifties of the last century, no doubt increased this feeling of veneration for Sunday in a man already of firm Christian principles, and it was his dearest wish to see church attendance representing all families in the parish who were members of the church which he served.

In 1891, he inaugurated the parish magazine, and in an introductory pastoral letter, he charged the parish with lack of church attendance. ‘After thirteen years’, he wrote, ‘your indifference to the services of religion has been to me a continual sorrow. The Sunday is spent in idleness, with no higher aspirations than belong to the cattle of the fields.’ Speaking of those who did not attend church, simply because others did not, he quoted ‘Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.’

This strong feeling in respect of Sunday observance was with him throughout his life, and, writing some years later in the magazine, he quoted ‘I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord and my work with God.’

He felt that a working man should be ashamed to be seen in his working clothes on a Sunday, unless it were a necessity, whilst as late as 1907, in a New Year letter, he wrote ‘years and time pass quickly’, and again, appealing to those who never sat under him, made mention of those ‘persons in the parish who never go to the house of God, who never pray, who never wish to be instructed in the ways of wisdom, and who put off these things until it is too late, when the Archangel shall have sounded his trumpet that time shall be no longer.’

On one occasion, he said that there was no Commandment more neglected than the Fourth, but it is not clear whether he was referring to the country generally or to Otford in particular.

His views on this question might well be rounded off by quoting a stanza from his poem ‘The Rector of Effingtree’:

37 Hunt went to St Andrews, aged twenty, in 1847. His Scottish upbringing occurred mainly in the 1840s.
38 Speaking of those whilst speaking of those
39 Exodus 23:2.
40 Isaiah 49:4.
‘The Church was old and in part decayed
The people that came were few,
The lab’ring folk lay all in bed
And the Squire was an idler too.’

His Views on the Church

In this, it is convenient to touch only upon his few criticisms, which were, however, always strongly voiced, without fear of consequences.

A Scotsman, and an Episcopalian, he was a staunch supporter of the Church of England and also incidentally of the Church Schools. He was strongly opposed to ritualism, and it must be remembered that he lived through the somewhat troublous times of the Oxford Movement. In actual fact, Hunt was brought face to face with the effects of this movement within the Church, as the Vicar of one of the churches where he had been curate was involved in some difficulties in connection with what might be termed ‘Luxuries of worship’.

He was, however, of the opinion that the times through which he was living saw a more sincere and spiritual Church than that which had existed during the first decades of the Nineteenth Century, or, for that matter, for many years, and he once said that the clergy had at one time held two or three livings and lived in none of them and that the minister of the period was usually more familiar with the faces of the dogs in the squire’s pack than with the faces of his parishioners. [3]

The question of benefices was another matter which engaged his attention, and he was a strong opponent of their sale, some of his articles in the reviews of the period leaving no doubt as to the stand which he took. Neither did he hesitate to bring Bishops to task where he considered that they were abusing the system. On the subject of High-Church dignitaries, he wrote that ‘for the most part, canonries and deaneries, to say nothing of bishoprics, have been held by men whose names sound like the very essence of emptiness’.

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41 Hunt was not a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church, but, having joined the Church of England, he accepted episcopal ministry.
42 This refers to Goldie at St Ives.
43 Church
44 High-Church dignitaries, high church dignatories
45 canonries and deaneries, to say nothing of bishoprics, Canonries and Deaneries, to say nothing of Bishoprics
His View on Temperance

Hunt was a believer in temperance, as was only natural, but he interpreted the word in its broad meaning.

So far as the parish was concerned, the first record of the Vicar’s views on the question appear to be recorded in some lectures which he made on the work of General Booth, and it is obvious that he was deeply affected by the General’s efforts on behalf of the submerged thousands’.

It does, however, seem that he was no particular admirer of total abstainers, and he certainly viewed with a tolerant eye the twin deities Beer and Tobacco, providing the words ‘in reason’ were coupled with them. It is recorded that, on the occasion of the Queen’s Jubilee celebrations in Otford, Hunt drank to the health of the Westerham brewers, who had supplied six gallons of beer to encourage the festivities. These Jubilee gambols must have appeared strange to the villagers, as we read that, on this occasion, Scottish dances were danced by some Scottish visitors, and that Scottish and, for some unexplained reason, but possibly in honour of the late Prince Consort, late even at that time, German songs were sung.

There is, however, no doubt that he viewed with marked disfavour anything in the nature of excessive drinking, and in one issue of the parish magazine, he printed, without comment, the following extract from a Brewing Trade circular, which certainly speaks very well for itself:

‘The market has been very dull during the last month and we have nothing but complaints from all sides. With regard to the Budget we think the Trade may congratulate itself that for once it has been left alone, and it is just possible, with the amount devoted to free education, that the working men, relieved of the expense of educating their children, may spend more on drink.’

His Views on Politics

In the political field, Hunt held Liberal views and was a Free Trader, although it is certain that he was not a member of the Party, holding the view that ‘a man should come to a political meeting with an open mind as a free man and not as a slave.’ His liberal views did, however, allow him to go to the lengths of taking the chair at local Liberal meetings, if
he thought that, by so doing, he would assist the proceedings; and from the records still in existence, it can be readily seen that his work in this direction met with marked general approval.

An ardent admirer of Gladstone, he took the opportunity of preaching a funeral sermon upon hearing of that great man’s death, taking as the text ‘Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel.’46

Speaking in 1898, on the reign of Queen Victoria, he expressed his opinion that the reign had been a prosperous one as well as a long one, and after mentioning railways, the telegraph, and other benefits to the public, remarked that the people of Britain were republicans in all but name. [4]

His Journeys Abroad

Turning to the European or foreign field, it can be said that John Hunt was a traveller who observed as he travelled. His visits to the Continent of Europe and to North Africa can be divided into two groups, the first being those undertaken in his earlier life and which were mainly in pursuit of theological study, and the second, those made in his latter years, when he combined education with a certain amount of relaxation. This first group received attention in his Contemporary Essays in Theology, whilst the remainder were on the lines of journals and appeared from time to time in the parish magazine. The first were for serious study, the second for general informative reading.

His earliest Continental travels concerning which information is available were made with the idea of studying at first hand the Old Catholic movement in Germany,47 and if anything is clear from his writings, it is that he held strong pro-German views. No doubt this was partly due to the fact that he was a staunch Protestant and as such associated Germany with Martin Luther, the Confession of Augsburg, and other Reformation highlights. In his Contemporary Essays he went so far as to write ‘Germany was the cradle of the Reformation. The Germans are Protestants. So are we. The name of Luther is a household

46 2 Samuel 3:38.
47 See Hunt, Contemporary Essays in Theology, Chapters XV and XVI, pp. 413–460, dealing with the period 1870–1872.
word in England. We pronounce it with feelings of reverence akin to
worship." This statement was, however, qualified to some extent by
the next paragraph where he wrote ‘In number, not more than half the
people are Protestants. That half is ... the more influential. It is among
the Protestants that the German spirit has had its best and highest
incarnations. Our interest in Protestant Germany makes us almost forget
that there is a Catholic Germany. This forgetfulness, however, will be
remedied as we become familiar with the ... recent vigorous protests of
German Bishops, Archbishops and Cardinals against what is properly
and strictly Romanism."

Hunt was, of course, referring to those dignitaries of the Old
Catholic Church who were endeavouring to make far-reaching changes
in Roman Catholic doctrine, the Infallibility of the Pope being one point
against which they were making a strong stand. His views on German
Catholics are interesting, and it would have been entertaining, had
he been alive at the time, to have heard his views on the fact that,
during Christianity’s struggle against National Socialism, the German
Catholics made a far stouter opposition than did the combined churches
of Protestant Germany.

In 1871 or 1872, probably the former year, Hunt travelled to Germany,
in order to become acquainted with the excommunicated professors of
Munich and the leading personages of the Old Catholic Church. His
interest in the movement was aroused chiefly by the fact that these
‘reasoning German Catholics’, as they were sometimes called, had
made a breech with the Church of Rome and had tabled a number of
modifications in Church government and also in the Church’s services.
So far as the latter are concerned, they were completely in favour of
suppressing the Roman confessional.

Hunt travelled out via Holland and made a point of stopping at
Rotterdam, the birthplace of Erasmus, after which he proceeded to
Germany by way of Dordrecht. Anyone reading his story of this journey,
which appeared in his Essays, will be instantly struck by his veneration

48 Hunt, Contemporary Essays in Theology, p. 81. This first appeared in the Contemporary
Review 14 (1870), p. 313.
49 The quotation has been corrected in accordance with the original.
50 dignitaries] dignatories
51 had he been] were he
of Germany and of things Germanic. ‘This year’, he wrote, ‘the English traveller embarks on the Rhine with a feeling of thankfulness that it is still German.’ — it must be remembered that the Franco-Prussian War was just over — ‘The Rhine’. he went on to say, ‘is the Highway of Europe, and Frenchmen cannot be entrusted with highways. I saw Germania ever present, with her sleepless eye and her powerful arm, keeping religious watch over the noble river.’ The word ‘religious’ can hardly have been meant literally, as the inhabitants of the German Rhineland are of the same faith as the majority of Frenchmen, Roman Catholics. [5]

Continuing his journey southwards, Hunt visited Friedrichsdorf, a village in the vicinity of Homburg, where a colony of Huguenots made a settlement after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. On arrival at Munich, however, he found that Dr. Frohschammer, with whom he was already acquainted, had left for Bad Kreuth. Therefore, to Bad Kreuth travelled the Doctor, remarking after arrival that it was a place ‘fortunately unknown to the English, frequented entirely by Germans, and where German life and manners reign in their uncorrupted simplicity’. In this Teutonic Eden, he found ministers of state, university professors, Protestant clergy and Catholic priests discussing differences of faith with, as he puts it, mutual understanding. Here he also met Dr Frohschammer, who had been excommunicated by the Roman Church seven years before, when a University Professor, for maintaining the independence of science and the right of free enquiry.

After staying in Bad Kreuth, Hunt returned home but travelled by a circuitous route, which included places as scattered at Munich, Augsburg, Constance, and Strasbourg. This somewhat curious route was no doubt dictated by points of religious interest.

In Constance, his hotel proprietor was a Frenchmen, and, wrote the Doctor shortly afterwards, ‘A Frenchman can cheat a guest with the dash of his pen, irrespective of consequences or conscience.’ The Landlord of ‘The Pike’ was likened to that voracious fish, and Hunt expressed the hope that he was collecting the milliards of Bismarck. The Frenchman’s reply is not recorded.

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52 Hunt, Contemporary Essays in Theology, p. 376.
53 Hunt, Contemporary Essays in Theology, p. 380.
54 Hunt, Contemporary Essays in Theology, pp. 393f.
Hunt also wrote that the only other trouble which he experienced on this particular journey was at the hands of another Frenchman, this time a railway employee in the ticket office at Strasbourg station. This official wanted from Hunt an English Sovereign in exchange for twenty francs, which was probably not a very bad exchange for the times. Writing of his journey, Hunt said that this was the first time that he had seen the image and superscription of Queen Victoria dishonoured. He told the official before a company of assembled Strasbourgers that it was a good thing that they would soon be under German rule, and he hoped that, under Bismarck, they would make such progress that English travellers would no longer be annoyed by French folly and French perversity.

What tactlessness, but after all, what courage!

The Old Catholics held a second Congress in the following year, this time in Cologne.

Dr. Hunt was cordially received by Professor Knooct and the other German delegates, also by the Abbé Michaud, late Vicar of the Madeleine in Paris, and by some Russian representatives. On this occasion, the Bishop of Lincoln, the Bishop of Ely, and the Dean of Westminster took part in the proceedings.

It is not possible in a paper of this size to deal with the matters on the agenda of the Congress; in any event, they would not be in line with the scheme of this paper, but there were a number of incidents which are worth recording, especially as Hunt was closely connected with them.

The proceedings of the first day, a Sunday, were followed by a somewhat secular evening, and we read that Hunt the Sabbatarian ‘almost trembled to recall’ how the time was spent, for, at the close of the meeting, two hundred or so of the delegates adjourned to the Casino for a banquet. Hunt was the only representative from this country present on the occasion, but he certainly found it impossible to conceive anything more incompatible with the English ideas of Sunday, as toasts were drunk and glasses rattled against glasses as the company toasted each other and the leading personages of the Congress. Even Bismarck was not forgotten.

On returning to his hotel, Hunt found about fifty persons making what he described as the usual obstreperous commotion which the

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56 1872.
57 The quotation is inaccurate. See fn. 31, p. 98.
Germans think a necessary accompaniment to a comfortable dinner. Were his pro-German feelings beginning to become a trifle less sure of themselves? These persons were also Congress Delegates, and some of them suggested that a visit to the theatre might be a pleasant way of rounding off the day. Hunt, who had attended the banquet, as he considered it part of the Congress, considered an invitation to attend a theatre on a Sunday evening, however pleasantly put, to be something definitely in the nature of a last straw, and he declined making one of the party in such a marked manner that the proposal was dropped.\(^{58}\)

Further shock was registered by the Doctor’s nervous system, when in a café one Sunday, a gentleman took a pack of cards from his pocket and approached the Herr Pastor with the idea of his joining in a pleasant game. So put out was the Doctor on this occasion, that he hinted the probable presence of an individual who was so troublesome to Luther that the Reformer once aimed an inkstand at his head.\(^{59}\) The Devil’s counters were repocketed.

At one of the meetings of this same Congress, held in Bonn, a servant came into the hall with a tray of rattling glasses, whilst the Bishop of Lincoln was reading prayers. The Bishop, in turn, made himself troublesome later in the day, by refusing cigars, with the result that, as none of the delegates wished to smoke before he, the Bishop, did, one and all were deprived of the consolation of tobacco.

On the following day, at the Wiener Hof in Cologne, the Germans counter-attacked by way of an early start and lit up, before the British contingent arrived, with the result that the Bishops had to make their speeches amid the rattling of plates and glasses and dark surging clouds of tobacco smoke. In addition to these distractions, whilst the Bishop of Lincoln was discoursing in French on the necessity for, among other things, Bishops, a hotel waiter was jostling aside the Dean of Westminster, in order to convey beefsteaks and Brauenerber to a German professor.\(^{60}\) The following day, however, saw a German defeat. Large ‘no smoking’ notices appeared all over the building.\(^{61}\) Lincoln had been at work. One

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does wonder as to the extent of the popularity of the British on this occasion.

Turning from Germany to France, there is no doubt that Hunt showed a lively interest in the French Protestant Churches, and his essay on the subject shows that he followed the proceedings of their assemblies and synods with close attention. It is also evident that he entertained the highest regard for most, is not all, of their leaders.

As has been mentioned earlier, Hunt did feel a dislike for things French, and this attitude of mind unfortunately showed itself in the essay from which the following is a quotation: –

“When we look\(^{62}\) at the frivolous and volatile creature who is the typical Frenchman of the present day, we can scarcely believe that Calvin and Beza were Frenchmen, and that their countrymen formed the Church of the Huguenots.”\(^{63}\)

This same essay does, fortunately, end on a happier note, for he says: ‘The Church of England has not forgotten its old helper and ally, the Church of the Huguenots. With their Evangelicals, our Evangelicals\(^{64}\) have the deepest sympathy.’\(^{65}\)

As regards Hunt’s later travels, these consisted for the most part of visits to Switzerland, Italy, Egypt, and the Holy Land, and his journals throw a deal of light upon the man himself, particularly on his love of children and the fact that he could play jokes, at the same time taking those against him in good part. [7]

There was one matter concerning foreign hotel registrations, which did, however, annoy him in the extreme. This was the police regulation under which it was necessary for hotel guests to state their age, but he managed to turn this against the authorities by making a point of entering his own age as 165. This information taken in conjunction with his long white beard and his venerable appearance caused, as can be expected, considerable curiosity and astonishment, and although there can have been very few who were taken in by this little deceit, there was never any unpleasantness.

\(^{62}\) we look\] one looks
\(^{63}\) Hunt, *Contemporary Essays in Theology*, p. 344.
\(^{64}\) Evangelicals, our Evangelicals\] Evangelists, our Evangelists
\(^{65}\) Hunt, *Contemporary Essays in Theology*, p. 375.
The beard caused considerable mirth when, one day on his travels, he encountered a party of Italian cavalry. His appearance was the immediate signal for the men to stroke their chins and call our Barba! The same beard was also blamed by Hunt himself for putting to flight some little Italian girls, who were dancing to a hurdy gurdy and among whom he made a sudden appearance.

There is one particularly interesting link between Switzerland and Otford brought about by his travels. One day, in a Swiss church, Hunt came across this version of the following words on a memorial to a Curé:

‘He loved the sheep and the sheep loved him.’

Hunt turned to his wife and asked her what more a minister could wish for by way of an epitaph. His words were obviously remembered, for they are inscribed on his own stone at Otford.

Finis

Towards the end of his life, he was a staunch opponent of the Education Bill wherein was the proposal to take over the Church schools whilst, although a minister of the Established Church, he looked upon the member of any congregation as one of his own flock, if he were approached for help of a material or of a spiritual nature. He gave freely to charities but was strongly against the publication of the names of the recipients and the amounts received. He provided a very large number of books for the church library. He contributed towards the cost of church repairs and renovations. His name was known far around for his treats to the aged. Perhaps one of the first improvements which he carried out after his induction at Otford, was the planting of the churchyard with varieties of trees, and a number of those existing at the present time, especially some of the yews, were planted by his hands.

Dr Hunt married twice. His first wife, Eliza, who died in 1890, was buried in Otford, where her name can be seen on one side of his memorial cross and his on the other. He married a second time Margaret Foote of Kelvinside, Glasgow, the ceremony taking place in 1899. This lady survived him.

On the last night of his life, he quoted Pope: ‘He can’t be wrong whose life is in the right’; but he could indeed have quoted instead some lines from his own poem ‘Age’:

66 Inscription on a tombstone in Gruyères (Clarke and Stoyel, Otford in Kent, p. 234).
'There is a calm at the close of life
When man's race is nearly won
And he rests like a warrior after the strife
With a sense of victory won.'

In conclusion, the inscription on one of his funeral wreaths might well be the last words of this paper. It read:

‘To the poor man's friend.’

John Hunt’s Obituary

Death of the Vicar of Otford

Dr. Hunt’s Sudden Demise.

In the early hours of Saturday last, the inhabitants of this ancient and delightful Kentish village were startled by the sad news that their esteemed Vicar, the Rev. John Hunt, D D., had died suddenly in the night. The rev. gentleman, who was in his 81st year, had gone to bed at his usual hour, and was then in the best of Spirits and, with the exception of a slight bronchial attack, was in good health. He was, however, seized with a sudden illness shortly after retiring to bed and despite the unremitting care of his wife he expired about the middle of the night, just prior to the arrival of his medical attendant (Dr. Desprez, of Shoreham). The deceased gentleman had been Vicar of Otford for nearly 30 years and was held in the highest esteem by all who came in contact with him; more especially by his poorer parishioners, for whose comforts he had been a most assiduous worker sparing neither time nor trouble in looking after the various charities &c. It was also a well-known trait in his character (though he was occasionally imposed

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67 ‘From the churchwardens and sidesmen of Otford, in loving memory of the poor man’s friend’ (recorded in his Obituary, p. 231, below).
68 Sevenoaks Chronicle and Kentish Advertiser, Friday 19 April 1907. I am grateful to Mr John Hunt for supplying me with the newspaper cutting and to Mr Edwin Thompson for identifying the source. A photograph of Hunt as an old man precedes the main text. The sometimes faulty spelling and punctuation have been retained.
Appendix II

upon) that he always helped the truly needy without regard to creed or character. It was sufficient if he thought they were in want, in fact, in all matters appertaining to the Parish and its welfare he was always prepared to do his best for the general good and was to those who knew him well, a level-headed, rugged kind-hearted Scotsman. Born at Perth, N.B., in 1827, he was educated at St. Andrew’s University, and ordained 50 years ago. He served the Church in various Curacies (the last being at Sutton, Surrey,) till the year 1878, when he was appointed to the living at Otford by the Dean (Dr. Stanley) and Chapter of Westminster. The living at that time included Dunton Green, and so remained until 1890 when, with funds raised by Dr. Hunt, a new Church was built at Dunton Green and handed over to the charge of the Incumbent at Riverhead. During the early years of his residence at Otford he was a well-known figure of the Religious Literary World. For 15 years he was on the staff of the *Contemporary Review* — the whole period of its existence. He was also principle [sic] contributor to Strachans [sic] ‘Day of Rest’. His first effort at literary work was a translation of Luther’s hymns. He published his essay on ‘Pantheism’ in 1866 (placed by the Pope of Rome in the Index Expurgatorious [sic]). Contemporary essays in theology in 1873; Religious Thought in England 1870–1873; religious thought in the nineteenth century 1896. An essay on the rise of Dissent, in a volume entitled ‘The Church: Past and Present’ edited by Professor Gwatkin, 1900. He received from his Alma Mater (St. Andrew’s University) the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1878 and a few years ago he was awarded an annual pension of £100 from the Civil List for Historical Research. The rev. gentleman’s life was essentially a busy one and only a few hours before his death he had prepared his sermon for the following Sunday, thus he may be said to have died in harness. The text he had chosen for his sermon was taken from I John iv., 8, ‘God is love.’ This was preached at the morning service on Sunday last by the Curate, the Rev. John Martin, and the following is culled from the Sermon after reading the text. It continued: ‘It is easy to credit tradition concerning this Apostle (John) that when advanced in life and unable to say much in his master’s name, he used to meet in the Christian assemblies and address them with nothing more than his favourite words “Little children love one another”, and it is difficult to restrain the imagination from dwelling with him on the Isle of Patmos, banished indeed from the
society of loving Christians, but only to be more favoured by the love of God, this is a lovely sentiment “God is Love”. It is worth all the wisdom of all the books in the world. If it is not wrong to say it, it is better than all the rest of the Bible put together. It is not said “God is holiness,” “God is truth,” “God is justice,” but it is said “God is Love.” Further on in the discourse the following passage occurs: ‘Some wells are dry in summer time, but the well of God’s mercy, the well of God’s love in Christ, is like those springs that rise in the mountain’s bosom.’ At the conclusion of the service the organist (Mr. R. Hoff) played ‘The Dead March’ in Saul, with great expression, the congregation standing in mournful silence, and with an expression of deep sorrow at the loss of a dear friend and guide.

The Funeral.

Yesterday, the remains of the dearly esteemed old vicar of Otford, were laid to rest in a brick grave at the south side or the churchyard, where his first wife was buried. The entire village was in mourning, shops being closed and blinds drawn in almost every house. Outside the ancient Church, the school children lined the path, the sad procession passing between the scholars to the tolling of the bell, in the old fashioned belfrey. The sacred building which was draped in black was crowded, many of the mourners being very old parishioners. Beautiful wreaths were placed in front of each of the reading desks and the choir stalls, and there were also many other floral tributes on the coffin. The impressive service was conducted by the Rev. Mr. Thorpe [sic, read Thorp], vicar of Kennington, (brother of the late Mrs. Hunt), the Rev Canon A. Hall Hall (Rector of Chevening), and the Rev. J Martin (Curate of Otford). Amongst the other clergy present were: The Rev. H. Somers-Cocks (who represented the Bishop of Rochester, who could not attend owing to indisposition); the Revs. H. Percy Thompson, J. P. David. E. S. Buchanan, H. T. Knight, G. F. Bell, C. A. Stubbs (Crockham Hill), H. D. Madge, B. P. Thompson (St. Lawrence, Seal), W. Jones (Knockholt), and Rev. Hancock (Woodlands). There were also present Major Wreford, Dr. Desprez, Mr. W. W. Knocker, Mr. R. Edwards, Mr. B. Lightfoot, Mr. H. T. Willins, Mr. J. J. Beale, Mr. H. Wellband, Mr. Booker, Mr. Greenlees, Mr, Turk, Mr. Isaacs, and others. Mr. T. H. Knight, churchwarden, had
made ample arrangements for the large crowd of mourners. The choir preceded the coffin as it was carried up the centre aisle, followed by the clergy. The chief mourners were Mrs. Hunt (Widow), Dr. Tom Hunt (nephew), Mr. Harry Hunt (nephew), Mrs. Franks, and Mrs. Swan. Mr. Hoff, who officiated at the organ, played Mendelssohn’s Funeral March, and the hymns were ‘Days and moments quickly flying,’ and ‘Now the labourer’s task is o’er’. The breastplate on the coffin was ‘John Hunt, D D., born 21st January, 1827, died 12th April, 1907.’

There were many beautiful wreaths, crosses, and other floral tributes sent, including one from the widow ‘In ever loving remembrance—from one who revered and adored her husband as a man apart—“The pure in heart see God”’; ‘In never dying remembrance of a Christian scholar and sage, who was in heart as a little child—J. Martin, curate’; ‘To uncle John, in loving remembrance from his niece [sic], Jane’; ‘To dear uncle John, in loving memory from Dorothy, and Greta’; ‘From the churchwardens and sidesmen of Otford, in loving memory of the poor man’s friend’; ‘In loving memory from Otford choir’; ‘In grateful memory of our vicar—from the teachers and children of Otford school’; ‘With kindest sympathy from Dr. H. S. and Miss Desprez’; ‘In deepest sympathy from Mr. Francis Mildmay, Shoreham Place’; ‘With deepest sympathy from Mr. and Mrs. R. Edwards’; ‘Miss Leveaux, with kind remembrance’; ‘With sincere sympathy from Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Polhill-Drabble’; ‘With deep sympathy from Major, Mrs. and the Misses Wreford’; ‘Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Leveaux, with kind remembrance’; ‘The Rev. H. A. and Mrs. Soames’; ‘With sincere regard from Countess Stanhope’; ‘In affectionate remembrance from M. and B. Alexander’; ‘In remembrance from Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cornwallis’; ‘From the trade of Otford, in kind remembrance and deepest sympathy’; ‘With sincere sympathy and kind respect from Mr. and Mrs. H. Wellband and family’; ‘With deepest sympathy and respect to our dear vicar from members of our Mother’s Meeting ‘O Lamb of God I come!’; ‘With Mr. and Mrs. Percy Arden Simmon’s deepest sympathy’; ‘With deepest sympathy from the servants at Otford House’; ‘With deepest sympathy, to Dr. Hunt, from his maids.’