

**A HANDBOOK TO POLITICAL  
QUESTIONS OF  
THE DAY: WITH THE  
ARGUMENTS ON EITHER SIDE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649041237

A Handbook to Political Questions of the Day: With the Arguments on Either Side by Sydney C. Buxton

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**SYDNEY C. BUXTON**

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A HANDBOOK  
TO  
POLITICAL QUESTIONS  
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BACON gives a list of subjects for books which he has not time to undertake himself, and which he recommends to posterity; among them, "a collection of studied antitheses; or short and strong sentences on both sides of the question on a variety of subjects."

BACON, "*De Augmentis Scientiarum.*"

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By SYDNEY C. BUXTON.

THIRD EDITION.



LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.  
1881.

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232. e. 554.

LONDON  
BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.



## PREFACE.

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IN 1866, my father—Charles Buxton, M.P.—published a small book, entitled “Ideas of the Day on Policy,” the aim of which was to show what were the actual principles at that time swaying public opinion on the more important questions of the day.

That this book has been of use to many, by way of reference and help to the better understanding of political questions, I have often been assured; and it seemed to me, that, without infringing on the plan of the “Ideas,” there was room for a handbook on somewhat similar lines, which might be not altogether useless. Instead of the arguments being reduced to ideas, the arguments themselves, which govern each question, might be placed side by side, with the view of clearing the ground, and with the hope that some student of politics might be the better able to accept the true and reject the false, and so arrive at just conclusions.

In carrying out this intention my plan has been to give

the main and real arguments advanced on each side of the chief questions of domestic Policy. Each argument is capable of illustration, and in different minds branches out into varying forms; but my endeavour has been to sketch the central stem only, from which all these various forms proceed. Where I have thought it advantageous I have prefixed a short paragraph explanatory of the subject discussed, bringing it up to date.

No doubt many important arguments are overlooked, but in some cases an argument, supposed by the critic to have been omitted, may be really contained in one of those set out. I have endeavoured to be perfectly impartial, and to give every genuine argument which can be advanced on either side of each question; it is probable, however, that I have fallen short of entire impartiality.

It will be seen that occasionally arguments used by some are cheek by jowl with those used by antagonistic others, and yet they are equally advanced to prove the same point. This is unavoidable, so long as men with different aims and views attack or defend the same citadel from opposite quarters.

During the fourteen years which have elapsed since the "Ideas of the Day" was published, many of the questions then prominent have sunk into the obscurity of realisation; while a large number of questions, then either not hatched,

or thought to be too callow for notice, now strut full-fledged before the view. Again, some subjects there discussed have remained stationary, while others have advanced a few, or many stages, on the road to accomplishment.

It may be of interest to tabulate the questions under these four heads; and we find that amongst the subjects dealt with in the "Ideas" and since decided, are, Church Rates, Irish Church, University Tests, Revision of the Bible, Education (in one aspect), Reform (from the aspect then considered), Limited Liability, Strikes, Charitable Trusts, Purchase, Competitive Examinations, etc. Of subjects not there discussed, but now before the public, are, Burials Bill, Education (in certain aspects), County Franchise, Women's Suffrage, Registration of Land Titles, Distress, Tenant Right, Local Taxation, Local Self-government, Local Option, Gothenburg System, Sunday Closing of Public-houses, Sunday Opening of Museums, Reciprocity, Home Rule, Irish Land Questions (in their present aspect), &c. Of subjects which have remained almost stationary, may be quoted, the Permissive Bill, Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister, and Abolition of Capital Punishment; among those which have advanced in popularity, but are not yet accepted, are, Disestablishment, Abolition of Intestacy and Entail, and