To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*

DEAR SIR,

The division sign $\div$ and the proportionality sign : are in commor use in schools, in school text-books and in school examinatior papers, while the solidus / is little used. On the other hand the solidus is in general use in the wider mathematical world whereas the division and proportionality signs are rare. I can see no good reason for this difference, and I suggest that the division and proportionality signs should be replaced by the solidus in schoo work. Can it seriously be asserted that the beginner would find it more difficult to comprehend

$$8\tfrac{1}{3}/3\tfrac{1}{3}, \qquad AB/AC = BD/DC$$

than

$$8\tfrac{1}{3} \div 3\tfrac{1}{3}, \qquad AB:AC..BD:DC?$$

One advantage of the solidus is that it enables the printer to print a literal fraction in the line of text without disturbing the spacing of the lines. Its use in school text-books would materially improve the appearance and reduce the cost.

Yours etc., F. C. POWELI

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*

DEAR SIR,

While the real part of the dinner served to members of the 195$ Annual Conference held in Southampton will doubtless live in the memories of the diners, I agree that the imaginary part is worthy of more permanent record and wider distribution. I should be sorry, however, to see thus permanently recorded an even more purely imaginary attribution of authorship, which I must— reluctantly!—disclaim. It was after my talk on Plaited Polyhedra that an elegantly constructed Scotch Terrier (woven, perhaps rather than plaited, of strips of cardboard) was found outside the room of Dr. Maxwell, who promptly christened it Fidohedron so I was suspected of that also—again incorrectly So we are left with two mysteries; but the fun that the occurrences provoked was all part of the extremely happy atmosphere that pervaded the Conference throughout.

Yours etc., A. R. PARGETEI

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*

DEAR SIR,

For some time I have been dissatisfied with the treatment of machines as found in many current textbooks. We frequently find definitions like these following which are quoted from a widely used