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## Note and Comment.

Sir Edward Clarke got "a good one" on the holders of the Baconian theory the other day in an after-dinner speech. Adopting certain methods, it was quite easy to prove, he said, that Shakespeare wrote the Psalms. In the forty-sixth psalm the forty-sixth word from the beginning was "shake," and the forty-sixth word from the end was "spear." Nothing in the Baconian theory was half so conclusive as that.

The anniversary of the hundredth year of Nathaniel Hawthorne's birth comes on July 4 of this year. In commemoration of the interesting date, Dodd, Mead & Company are to issue "The Scarlet Letter," in a limited edition of 125 copies, on Japan paper. The letterpress is to be an exact reimpression of the original edition. The volume will have a special binding, and will form a worthy memorial of the most representative author of America.

The following brief characterization of Carlyle by Charles Reade is given in Mr. John Coleman's recent "Life" of the novelist: "Carlyle was a Johnsonian pedant, bearish, boorish, bumptious, egotistical and atrabilious. His Teutonic English was barbarous and cacophonous; yet, notwithstanding, every line he wrote was permeated with vigor and sincerity, and his 'Cromwell' is a memorial of two gentlemen—the hero and the author."

The trial of Lieutenant Bilse in connection with the revaluations in his book, "Aus Elner Kleiner Garrison," continues to exercise the public mind, and to cast a cloud over the army. It has again been brought to the fore by a lively discussion on the dismissal from the army of three high officers who acted as judges in the court-martial, and who are believed to have incurred the serious displeasure of the authorities on account of not having conducted the trial with closed doors.

An interesting report was lately received by the French Bible Society from its colporteur in Indo-China. In one town when the report went abroad that a foreigner was selling "Christian books" the people came running, children first and parents after them. In six hours he had sold 488 volumes. One old woman bought twelve copies of the gospel to give to her husband, children, nephews, and cousins. Arriving in another town during annual fair, the colporteur hired a stall and sold 1,250 volumes in one day. In a tour among the villages he sold in one place 518 volumes in another 1,102. Surely much may be hoped from such a distribution of the Bible or of portions of the New Testament.

From the very earliest times church doors and porches have been associated with curious usages and customs, most of which have now faded away and been forgotten. In olden days the church porch was the great meeting place of the town or village in which it was situated, and the custom still

survives of posting Government notices for the enrolment of the militia, and other public announcements, on the church door. In the deep porch in days gone by, the principal part of the marriage service was held; and it was not until the couple were man and wife that they passed into the church for the conclusion of the ceremony. Christenings were also celebrated there, and the child had to be sprinkled with water ere it was carried into the church—a symbol of its entry into the Christian faith.

Some unique features are to be introduced in preparation for, and in connection with, the Torrey-Alexander meetings next month in Brighton, England. Prior to the meetings every one of the 27,000 houses in the town and suburbs will be visited, and a booklet and an invitation programme will be left. In order to preserve the Dome for outsiders professing Christians will be requested to attend a prayer-meeting in another place during each mission service. A staff of young ladies will go into poor homes and take charge of the children, so that their mothers may be free to attend the meetings. During the mission hospitality is to be provided for all Anglican or Free Church ministers from lonely parishes, villages, or small towns in Sussex, who apply beforehand.

Dr. Schoo has observed says Modern Medicine, that when mosquitoes have access to acid fruits their bite becomes less poisonous, or wholly innocuous. And Professor Celli has observed that in portions of Italy where tomatoes are largely cultivated, the people are practically free from malarial infection, although the region is naturally very malarious. The juices of the plant constitute the natural food of the mosquito. It would seem, then, that the wide cultivation of acid fruits, such as tomatoes, strawberries, and other succulent fruits may be made an important factor in ridding the world of this very troublesome pest. How the use of acid fruits destroys the virulence of the mosquito bite has not yet been determined. It seems probable, however, that the vegetable acids may destroy the malarial parasite.

Civilization has not brought all blessings to Africa. While it has driven out some devils, it has opened the way for the entrance of others. Strong drink is Africa's withering curse, introduced by invading European civilization. The ships that carried the missionaries in the cabin carried the rum barrels in the hold. In 1884 the imports from Europe were nearly 8,000,000 gallons and from America about 1,000,000. The area in which liquor may be freely imported we have happily greatly circumscribed, and in this area increasing duties have been imposed, but the curse is still there. "It is my sincere belief," said Sir Richard Burton, "that if the slave trade were revived, with all its horrors, and Africa could get rid of the white man with the gunpowder and rum which he has introduced, Africa would be the gainer by the exchange."

The necessities of life are very few. If one has no ambition beyond an existence, the world readily adapts itself to him. The quails and the marra are reproduced every day. But life is more than meat, and the body has other claims than raiment.—The Presbyterian Journal.

Prof. R. M. Gerkes, says the *Eisleber Zeitung*, has described a series of experiments which he undertook for the purpose of testing the mental abilities of a turtle. For a dwelling the scientist gave his animal a sort of labyrinth, which he made out of a box by setting up two parallel walls and an oblique wall, thus making four rooms. From each one an opening led into the room, adjoining, but so that the single openings did not stand opposite one another. When the animal was placed in the outermost division at the left, then, in order to come to the outermost division at the right where its bed was placed in shadow, it was obliged to describe a W. Before the animal recognized the direct way, the journey required a rather long time and the turtle took many a roundabout course. Nevertheless, it learned the direct road with comparative quickness and at each new attempt came more swiftly to its destination. At the first trial, the animal strayed restlessly about in all directions for thirty-five minutes till at last it found its nest, in which it rested two hours. At the second trial, the turtle arrived at its objective point after fifteen minutes. At the third trial, the journey lasted only five minutes, while at the fourth trial the turtle lost its way but once, and reached the nest in three and one-half minutes. After this trial it seldom took a roundabout course. The briefest time in which it arrived at its resting-place was three minutes."

In these days in which so much is being written of the stimulant and beneficial action of the actinic rays of the sun, it is but natural, says the *Medical News*, that the reverse of the picture should also find a painter. Finsen, indeed, who has been the pioneer in the therapeutic application of these rays, was also the one to initiate the reaction, by his studies on smallpox and light, and on sunburn. Professor Fermi has pursued this latter line of investigation experimentally upon a large number of human subjects and with most interesting results. By exposing his material to the direct sunlight for the varying periods of time he was able, in a large percentage of cases, to produce the following set of symptoms, which often persisted over many days: Cephalalgia, dryness of the nasal mucosa, snuffing, coryza, pharyngitis, weariness, slight conjunctivitis, dryness of the lips, fever, pseudo-influenza, constipation, insomnia, epistaxis, various pains. This congeries of symptoms seems not very formidable, yet it induces the author to conclude, from the observed coincidence of meteorological conditions and of certain diseases, that exposure to the sun's rays is a predisposing factor in coryza, influenza, hay fever, and epidemic meningitis. A curious element to the fact that only 53 per cent. of the persons under experiment found the exposure disagreeable, while the others, notwithstanding the subsequent ill effects, enjoyed it.