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## FIRST NATIONAL BANK

### FEW NOW DIE OF OLD AGE.

Why This is So and Why the Patriarchs Lived So Long.

Scientists who see today how few people live to be 100 years old find themselves at a loss to explain how Methuselah managed to live 969 years, while Noah reached the respectable age of 950 years. Recently, however, a discovery has been made which helps to explain this mystery.

When the causes of short life nowadays are counted up it is found that most of the deaths are due to disease. Very few people die from old age. And the reason why people die from any one disease is that they have been weakened by other illnesses which they have had or which have been handed down to them by their ancestors. For example, one widespread social scourge which weakens the constitution of many men and women today was probably unknown in primitive times.

To some of these diseases the human race has become so accustomed that it is immune. Measles will kill off a whole infant tribe, but among the white races it is only an annoying childhood malady. But the variations of disease increase far more rapidly than the immunity.

Noah and the patriarchs didn't have nearly as many different kinds of diseases to face because they hadn't had enough ancestors to hand them down a variety. Consequently their constitutions were not constantly being weakened as are ours today. For example, there is no reference in very ancient literature to a cold in the head. The Greeks and Romans seem to have been the first peoples to suffer from it.

The real reason why the patriarchs lived longer than we do now was because in those days the fount of humanity was fresher. While immunity to certain diseases has been handed down to us by our parents, we have also received the weakened vitality which was theirs as a result of their fight against disease. Sooner or later the race will become immune to tuberculosis, but with that immunity will come the diminished power as a result of mankind's long fight against the white plague.—Washington Post.

### NATIONAL OFFICIAL BOOKS.

They Are Named by Colors and Cover a Wide Range of Uses.

British government publications are called "blue books," because they are usually bound in blue paper covers and because blue is the officially recognized color in parliament and law. In a few departments, however, "blue" books are printed in yellow covers to distinguish the department. Diplomatic correspondence with foreign countries and short acts of parliament are often left unbound, or "white," because there is no strict rule for binding any documents less than an inch in thickness.

In addition to the "blue book" there is the "red book." This contains a list of persons who hold appointments. The only other color used by England is black. A black book contains an exposure of some abuse, the name "black book" originating from the famous "black book" compiled in the reign of Henry VIII to expose the abuses in monasteries.

In France the chief color for government publication is yellow. Although the latest French government report has been called a "black book," in reality it is published in yellow covers. It forms, in fact, one of a long set of "yellow books" which France has been issuing annually ever since the year 1861 upon the affairs of the country for the use of politicians and historians.

The chief color of Russian government publications is orange. Belgium uses gray, Italy green, the United States blue and red, Spain and Austria red and Germany and Portugal white or drab.—New York Press.

### THE HUMBLE BARNACLE.

It is One of the Most Curious Forms of Marine Life.

Barnacles, which constitute a most curious form of marine life, do not, so far as known, perform any important function in the economy of nature, either constructive or destructive.

Curiously enough, naturalists assign barnacles to that great subdivision of the animal world which includes insects—i. e., arthropods ("joint footed"). Barnacles pertain to that class of crustaceans which includes lobsters and crabs and constitutes the order of cirripedia, a term that means "curled feet."

Barnacles are hatched from eggs. The young in no respect resemble adults. When the newly born barnacle emerges from its egg it shows itself as a free swimming little creature with one eye, six legs and one shell. It undergoes the operation of molting several times and finally appears with two eyes, twelve legs and two shells. When it has attained this stage of development it roves no longer, but attaches itself to some convenient object by means of its antennae, secreting a sort of cement whereby it gives itself quite fast. It is then that it undergoes a metamorphosis that completely changes its appearance. It loses its bivalve shell and its eyes and acquires its characteristic feathery legs. Furthermore, it takes on an entirely new shell.

Three orders of barnacles are listed. Members of one order are attached to the shell directly to rocks, timbers or other convenient objects. Those of another order are attached to floating objects by means of a long stalk. The barnacles of the third order are parasitic upon crabs and other marine creatures. When extended from the shell the curled, feathery appendages are in constant motion, serving to create currents in the water which convey to the curious little creatures their food, consisting of many species of minute forms of life.

"Sea acorns" are nothing more than barnacles of the genus Balanus. There are a number of varieties of these, having shells of white, greenish white, pink or purplish color. These barnacles attach themselves to rocks, shellfish, the piling of piers and sometimes even to whales. The base of the shell is glued fast to the supporting object, there being no stem.

Ship barnacles are true wanderers of the deep, since the same species are frequently upon the hulls of vessels proceeding from the most remote and widely separated regions. They present an odd appearance, for the shell is attached to the end of a flexible stalk, which varies in length from an inch in some species to twelve inches in others. Generally speaking, the shell of the ship barnacle is of a white or bluish white hue, and the stalk is brown or slate colored.—Chicago Herald.

Patience—So she married an actor? Patrice—Oh, yes! "Was he a good actor?" "Oh, yes; he acted as if he loved her."—Yonkers Statesman.

To apply to others in charity the knowledge one has used against oneself in judgment—this is the hard thing to do.—Malloch.

### OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL.

New Washington Compared With the Great Centers of Europe.

In a paper prepared for the National Geographical Society Lord Bryce, former British ambassador to this country, considers Washington in comparison with the leading capitals of the world. After speaking a warm admiration for the ideal site of the city—a beautiful amphitheater between hills that are rich with woods—and declaring that the surroundings of the American capital yield only to Constantinople, with its Bosphorus, among the great capitals of the world for charm of setting, our friendly critic contrasts Washington with its rival cities abroad.

"Whereas nature was most lavish in the artistry with which it modeled the site for future Washington," he says, "Berlin stands in a sandy waste, perfectly flat, with here and there a swampy pond or lake, and washed by a sluggish stream. The German capital is stately. Its streets are broad. They are bordered by many noble buildings, but the environs never can be beautiful because of an ungracious nature. Petrograd, the great Russian capital, has but one beauty—that of its splendid river, Neva. Besides this stream, there is but a flat, often waterlogged, surrounding country, here and there dotted with stagnant pools and swamps, and stretching into an almost limitless distance, devoid of feature.

"The landscapes around Paris are agreeable, but have nothing at all striking, nothing nearly so fine in the lines of their scenery as the hills that inclose the valley in which Washington lies and no such charm of such a still wild forest as Washington affords. Nor is the Seine a stream which can be compared to our Potomac. So, too, is the scenery of London, Madrid and Vienna behind that of Washington.

"The Thames, the Wien and Madrid's thirsty little streamlet cannot begin to compare with the beauty of the broad Potomac. Chief among the advantages of these foreign capitals over Washington is their quality of being ancient, an old age which gives to them a certain number of picturesque buildings, crooked old streets, stately churches and spots hallowed by the names of famous men who were born there, died there or worked there. This advantage the American capital can hope to overcome with time."

### Bismarck on the Throne of France.

Bismarck on the throne of France! Bismarck was once spoken of in that connection, and by Napoleon too. It was during the detention of the dethroned emperor at Wilhelmshohe in 1871, when Napoleon and some members of his staff were discussing the probability of Napoleon reascending the French throne and news of the doings of the commune was brought in.

"Horrible—too horrible!" exclaimed le petit emperereur.

And then, after a long silence, he resumed, "I know a man who, if on the French throne, would be master of Germany in six months."

"His name, sire?" asked his nephew, Prince Murat.

"Bismarck," replied the emperor as he turned on his heel.

### Fools Ask Questions.

When Mr. Selby Henry was an undergraduate his father told him, as a warning, of a man he had known in his own university days. This luckless student, though sitting for his "Little Go," had left quite unheeded the valuable advice given by St. Paul to the youthful Timothy, "Give attendance to reading." He was confronted with a paper so stiff that he could not answer a single question and in a fit of desperation wrote across it eight words, folded and sent it up. When the examiner opened it he read, "Fools ask questions which wise men cannot answer."—T. P.'s London Weekly.

### Ancient Ropes.

Ropes made of various kinds of fiber and leather are of very ancient date. Ropes of palm have been found in Egypt in the tombs of Beni-Hassan (about 3000 B. C.), and on the walls of these tombs is also shown the process of preparing hemp. In a tomb at Thebes of the time of Thothmes III. (about 1600 B. C.) is a group representing the process of twisting thongs of leather and the method of cutting leather into thongs.

### Jesting With Death.

Lord Chesterfield, when he had only a short while to live, was, on the advice of his physician, taken out for an easy drive. As the equipage was proceeding slowly along it was met by a lady who remarked pleasantly, "Ah, my lord, I am glad to see you able to drive out!" "I am not driving out, madam," answered Chesterfield; "I am simply rehearsing my funeral."

### SAVED BY THE KING.

An Incident in the Career of Holbein, the Famous Painter.

There happened an affair in England which might have been fatal to Holbein if the king had not protected him. On the report of his character a nobleman of the first quality wanted one day to see him when he was drawing a figure after the life. Holbein in answer begged his lordship to defer the honor of his visit to another day, which the nobleman took for an affront. He broke open the door and very rudely went upstairs. Holbein, hearing the noise, left his chamber and, meeting the lord at his door, fell into a violent passion and pushed him backward from the top of the stairs to the bottom.

Considering, however, immediately what he had done, he escaped from the tumult he had raised and made the best of his way to the king. The nobleman, much hurt, though not so much as he pretended, was there soon after him, and upon opening his grievance the king ordered Holbein to ask pardon for his offense. But this only irritated the nobleman the more, who would not be satisfied with less than his life, upon which the king sternly replied:

"My lord, you have not now to do with Holbein, but with me. Whatever punishment you may contrive by way of revenge against him shall assuredly be inflicted upon yourself. Remember, pray, my lord, that I can whenever I please make seven lords of seven plowmen, but I cannot make one Holbein even of seven lords."—"Life of Holbein."

### Wind and Temper.

There is a closer connection between wind and temper than at first sight appears. A coldish wind has a bracing effect and, on the whole, is beneficial. In countries where hot winds occur periodically, on the other hand, these are regarded as a nuisance, if not a curse. Every one almost gets cross, weary and done up and has a headache daily. In Egypt the season when crimes are commonest is when the hot khamsen blows. Nearly always during a severe sirocco the Arabs in Algeria were restless, if they did not attempt an actual rising. The solano, which now and then rushes across the Mediterranean in fiery blasts from Africa, upsets every one in Spain and is the worst wind in that country.

### Cutting the Gordian Knot.

The phrase "cutting the Gordian knot" alludes to an ancient tradition. The story was that Gordius, a certain king, made a knot in the harness of his chariot so hard and intricate as to baffle every attempt to undo it. The oracle of the day having declared that he who succeeded in solving the complication would become the conqueror of the world, Alexander the Great determined to attempt it. His first efforts failing, he determined to make short work of it, and, drawing his sword, with one stroke he cut the knot which nobody could untie; hence the expression "cutting the Gordian knot" came to represent the solution of any difficult situation by heroic means.

### Presenting Arms to a Cat.

About the middle of the last century a very high English official died in a fortress at a place that is one of the centers of Brahmanic orthodoxy, and at the moment when the news of his death reached the sepoy guard at the main gate a black cat rushed out of it. The guard presented arms to the cat as a salute to the flying spirit of the powerful Englishman, and the coincidence took so firm a hold of the locality that up to a few years ago neither exhortation or orders could prevent a Hindu sentry at that gate from presenting arms to any cat that passed out at night.—Bombay Times.

### The Arbitrament of Battle.

A housemaid was left in charge of two small boys. "Well, Mary," asked their mother on her return, "how did you get on with them? Were they good?" "Oh, yes, ma'am," said Mary; "very good indeed, ma'am. Only at the end they would fight so." "Fight?" the horrified mother cried. "But why did you allow it? What were they fighting about?" "If you please, ma'am," said Mary; "they were fighting to decide which of them was behaving best!"

### The Cleanest Town.

The cleanest town in the world is said to be Brack, in Holland. It has been famous for its cleanliness from time immemorial. The yards and streets are paved with polished stones intermingled with bricks of different colors and kept so scrupulously clean that a lady could in fine weather walk anywhere in white satin slippers without fear of soiling them.

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