Franklin's 'Autobiography' after 51, and Irving's 'Alhambra' at 49. Hawthorne began his series of great romances with 'The Scarlet Letter' at 46. Mrs. Stowe wrote 'Uncle Tom' at 41. Mark Twain produced 'Innocents Abroad' before 40, but 'Tom Sawyer' and 'Huckleberry Finn' considerably later. Lincoln delivered the 'Gettysburg Address' at 54, Webster his 'Reply to Hayne' at 48. Prescott wrote the 'Conquest of Mexico' at 47; Bancroft's 'History' occupied him from 34 until 75. Motley wrote the 'Dutch Republic' at 42; Parkman did not begin his series of volumes on 'France and England in North America' until he was 42. The first and the second series of Emerson's 'Essays' appeared at 38 and 41, respectively. Dr. Holmes wrote the 'Autocrat' at 49, Dr. Hale, 'The Man Without a Country' at 46. John Fiske did his best work, as Mr. Stedman has done his, after 40. Mr. Howells had scarcely made a beginning of his characteristic work before 40; Mr. James had made a good beginning, but the most and the best of his works have come later.

Indeed, if one were to generalize at all from this data concerning works notable in themselves and most characteristic of their authors, the conclusion for American literature would not be that no work of the first rank had been done by men above 40, but that the period of life conspicuous for superior production was between 40 and 50, and that, as Bulwer-Lytton suggested, real maturity seldom comes before the age of 35.

Clyde Furst.

Columbia University.

Production and the Modern Use of Carbonic Acid.

To the Editor of Science: Referring to Science for January 27, there appears on page 151, a brief extract of a paper by John C. Minor, Jr., presented to the New York Section of the American Chemical Society on December 9. The title of this paper, as given, is the 'Production and Modern Use of Carbonic Acid.' In the abstract, however, there is no reference to carbonic acid; the paper appears to deal entirely with carbon dioxide, and I suppose this is another case of the common misuse of this term. I would suggest that you make some effort to correct this prevalent error, because if we should want to talk about the real carbonic acid, there would be no way of conveying the meaning intended, unless the chemical symbol be used, because as it is, CO_2 has monopolized for itself two names.

A. Bement.

Mont Pélée?

Although nothing is commoner than instances of mistaken etymology, it rarely happens that a single name admits of so many interpretations as does 'Mont Pelée sive Mont Pelé.'

Having gone through in my own mind all the possibilities of the name, from that of the Hawaiian goddess, with which I started, to that of Pelée = bald, a good name for a bare summit, I have come at last to believe that it is simply the Gallicized form (Pélée) of the Greek Peleus, the son of Æacus and father of Achilles—*Mount Peleus* has a likely sound and needs no explanation of its gender. The form Pélée for Peleus is found in Littré.

Harris Hawthorne Wilder.

Smith College.

Special Articles.

Natural Mounds or 'Hog-Wallows.'

The paper of Mr. A. C. Veatch reported in Science, No. 530, p. 310, is of much interest to those acquainted with the natural mounds or hog-wallows of California and Oregon. Such mounds are especially abundant along the east side of the San Joaquin valley in California, where they cover hundreds of square miles, and extend from the valley floor, where they are most abundant, up the slopes of the foot-hills to an elevation of more than five hundred feet. The underlying rocks vary from Pleistocene gravels, sands and clays to granites, schists and folded paleozoic slates. I have never found them, however, in the sandy river bottoms. In height they range from one foot to four feet, and in diameter from ten to more than fifty feet. They are equally abundant in eastern Oregon and in