

QUOTATIONS

DARWIN AND DOWNE HOUSE

DOWNE HOUSE, in which Charles Darwin lived for nearly forty years, is now a gift to the nation, entrusted to the British Association for the Advancement of Science. More than a quarter of a century ago Andrew Carnegie thought of buying it and putting up a sum of money to settle, as he phrased it, one way or another, the question of evolution. But those whom he consulted felt bound to advise him that, as a business proposition, the idea was unsound. Later on Sir Arthur Shipley, Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, where Darwin had passed his undergraduate career, urged that some way should be found of making Downe House a national possession. But the times were unpropitious. A few years ago Professor H. F. Osborn, of New York, again propounded a scheme for transforming Darwin's home into an endowed center for evolutionary research, and suggested that part of the funds might be supplied from America if the Royal Society would adopt and develop the idea. The council of the society, after friendly and detailed consideration, came to the conclusion that a very large sum of money would be required to transform a comparatively small country house into a research institution and to provide for its staff and maintenance. Even if the sum were available, it could be spent to greater scientific advantage in the development of some of the existing research institutions. At Leeds last year Sir Arthur Keith, then president of the British Association, issued an appeal, with the authority of the council, for the more modest object of preserving Downe House simply as a memorial of England's greatest naturalist.

The appeal had a swift and fortunate response, for Mr. Buckston Browne, a distinguished London surgeon, offered to buy the house, provide funds for its maintenance and make it a gift to the nation in the custody of the British Association. With the generous cooperation of the Darwin family, the end has been achieved and the house and the eighteen acres in which it stands are now vested in the British Association. Some of the actual pieces of furniture used by Darwin in his study have been presented by the family, and Mr. Buckston Browne is collecting other pieces of the same period so as to reproduce as closely as possible the actual environment in which "The Origin of Species" and many other great books were written. All the editions of Darwin's books are being got together, and as soon as the lease can be acquired from the present tenants Downe House will be opened to the public. There is a superstition that

the aura of evil deeds lingers in the premises in which they were committed. If there be no supernormal vestige left by great men, at least our imagination is quickened and our sympathies attuned to gracious memories by seeing the simple surroundings in which they thought and worked. The rooms in which Darwin wrote, the garden paths on which he paced, and the simple greenhouses in which he conducted his experiments, if only because they are homely and undramatic, can make us realize the possibilities of human achievement. For there patience and genius, the most faithful devotion to pedestrian fact, and the most daring imagination combined to bring about a stupendous revolution in human thought. Access to Downe House will preserve for all time the inspiring personality of the man who, in the words of Mr. Punch's inspired epitaph, was

Recorder of the long Descent of Man,
And a most living witness of his rise.

—*The London Times.*

A RELATION BETWEEN THE INCIDENCE OF COMMON COLDS AND NUTRITIONAL HYDRATION

THE subject of colds has been of personal interest for over twenty-five years, inasmuch as it was noticed in early youth that I seemed to catch colds more frequently than others in my environment. The hypersusceptibility probably has a constitutional or hereditary basis. However, the rôle of nutritional factors has been emphasized in the last twenty years, as colds never developed during periods of experimental fasting or undernutrition. The fasts of from one to forty-one consecutive days now total over five hundred days. Periods of undernutrition have been longer. Colds never developed during the fasts, although I then often felt extremely uncomfortable upon exposure to cold or cool drafts—evidently because of the lowered heat production at such times. But a fact for which no explanation suggested itself until about a year ago was the almost invariable development of colds shortly after the prolonged fasts. That is, these colds came on with the liberal post-fasting feeding, but before the pre-fasting nutritional level was restored. Moreover, they developed when the general state of well-being seemed to be better than the pre-fasting physical state.

An explanation for this peculiar susceptibility to colds after fasting was suggested by the finding that the colds were caught when post-fasting edema or hydration was most prominent. Some edema was observed after all my longer fasts and also after