

**Disarming the Conscientious Objector.** The anti-vaccinationists have hitherto advanced, as the chief reason for lodging "conscientious objections," to having their offspring inoculated as a precaution against deadly and loathsome small-pox, that other diseases may be communicated to the children by the use of impure lymph. A recent discovery will be the means of disarming the "conscientious objector" of his principal weapon. The *Insurance Observer* is responsible for the statement that a Mr. Stanley Kent, of St. Thomas's Hospital, who is said to have been "working at vaccinia since 1893" has found "the specific organism upon which it depends," and has also "prepared pure cultures of the germ, and used them for vaccination."

When the last defences of the unbelievers in inoculation have been swept away by the disciples of Jenner, insurance companies will be more than ever justified in declining to issue a policy to any person who has not been vaccinated.

**Very properly Aggrieved.** As an item of news from the Queen City, the daily papers report that the members of the Board of Fire Underwriters are "kicking." We presume this somewhat ineloquent statement from Toronto is intended to convey an idea of justifiable indignation. The bare recital of the treatment accorded to the fire underwriters warrants action on the part of the latter calculated to arouse the citizens to the necessity for the work recommended by the insurance men as necessary for the proper equipment and protection of Toronto. Twelve months of delay and neglect, added to broken promises, and failure to submit any plan of reform, is enough to make any self-respecting Board of Underwriters manifest anger and annoyance, even to the extent of kicking the lethargic aldermen who are responsible for the unsatisfactory condition of things in progressive Toronto.

**British Butchers and Canadian Meats.** Since the discovery that certain butchers in the city of London have been selling Canadian and other imported meat as "prime English" and defrauding their customers by pocketing the difference in price, several of the leading newspapers have been roasting the British butchers to such an extent that some of them have confessed to misrepresentation, and to taking advantage of the pardonable ignorance of the ordinary purchaser of a sirloin of beef or a saddle of mutton. The admission of the butchers "that such a practice might exist," but "that it might not operate to the disadvantage of the buyer, or give the retailer larger profit than he would gain if he really sold English meat," is not accepted by the newspapers as satisfactory. The dishonest butchers are being reminded that Great Britain is a Free-trading country, and that

the consumers of meat, especially among the poor of the great city of London, have a right to profit by the open market. Altogether, the life of the butcher is not a happy one during this storm of indignation at the discovery that he has been cheating the stomachs and picking the pockets of his customers, and it is more than likely that the selling of Canadian or other imported meat as the "best English" will be made a punishable offence.

At the same time, it becomes a matter of congratulation if the meat exported from the Dominion of Canada is good enough to be mistaken for the roast-beef of old England. If the sheep from Ontario can successfully masquerade in a London butcher's shop as the luscious mutton of the Downs of Sussex, there is cause for rejoicing at the success of Canadians in stock raising.

**Consumption Considered.** One of the most important and significant meetings held in London during the closing days of last year was that of the Society for the Prevention of Consumption. Some of the most distinguished scientists were present, and, by special invitation of the Prince of Wales, who presided, the meeting was held at Marlborough House. In addition to speeches by the Prince, the Marquis of Salisbury, the Earl of Rosebery and others expressing approval of the objects of the Society, an address was delivered by Sir William Broadbent, describing the methods by which the new Society propose to fight the dreaded disease with the assistance of the public and the medical profession. Sir William Broadbent stated that the tuberculous evil, although contagious, is preventible. The methods to be adopted are thus stated:—

1. Inasmuch as the disease is spread by the blowing about of the dried expectoration of consumption in which the bacilli are present in enormous numbers, sufferers and their families are to be educated to see that their sputum is promptly destroyed by fire, or sterilised. If this is done, there will be little need to isolate patients, as their breath does not contain bacilli, nor does the air of their rooms, except through dried sputum.

2. As cattle are extremely subject to the disease, and especially dairy cows, to organize a rigid inspection of all dairies' milk and meat, to prevent the introduction of the germs into the body by these means.

3. To provide Sanatoria in which patients can be treated at a low or nominal cost immediately upon the recognition of the disease.

That a movement is at last being made to extinguish consumption is merely another indication of the belief of scientists in sanitary reform. The meeting at Marlborough House has been the means of arousing public interest to an unusual degree, and statistics have been published showing the death rate by consumption in England reduced from 120,000 in 1863 to one half that number in 1897.