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**THE MORTALITY OF ACUTE LOBAR PNEUMONIA.**

Within the last twelve months or so attention has been drawn to the mortality rate of pneumonia, and several essays have been published mainly with the aim of demonstrating that the mortality for the last fifty years was steadily on the increase, and one of the writers attempted to prove that the present plan of treatment was mainly to blame. Hartshorne's figures were so arranged as to show an increase in the mortality from 6.25 per cent. in 1845-1847 to 31 per cent. in 1884-1886. The statistics of Osler collected from the Montreal General Hospital, as well as from others, show a different result, viz, in 1848-1850 a mortality of 37.9, and in 1878-1880 a mortality of 32 per cent. More recently Drs. Townsend and Coolidge of Boston have examined the records of the Massachusetts General Hospital from 1822 to the present date, making out a mortality for the whole number of cases taken of 25 per cent., but showing that the mortality has gradually risen from 10 per cent. in the first decade to 28 per cent. in the present. They argue that this increase is deceptive, and for the following reasons, all of which were shown to be a cause of a large mortality: (a) The average age of the patients has been increasing from the first to the last decade. (b) The relative number of complicated and delicate cases has increased. (c) The relative number of intemperate cases has increased. (d) The relative number of foreigners has increased.

We may add to the above considerations some others which suggest themselves to us. Improved methods of diagnosis have enabled us to exclude other diseases producing symptoms re-