

BACTERIA.—Dr. Arthur Downes and Mr. T. P. Blunt presented to the Royal Society (England) the result of some very interesting observations on the effect of light upon bacteria and other organisms. The experiments were carried out in great detail, and their record is too lengthy to be given in full. The deductions to be drawn may be summed up as follows: 1. Light is inimical to the development of bacteria and the microscopic fungi associated with putrefaction and decay, its action on the latter organisms being apparently less rapid than upon the former. 2. Under favorable conditions it wholly prevents that development, but under less favorable ones it may only retard. 3. The preservative quality of light, as might be expected, is most powerful in the direct solar rays, but can be demonstrated to exist in ordinary diffused daylight. 4. So far as the investigation has gone, it would appear that it is chiefly, but perhaps not entirely, associated with the actinic rays of the spectrum. 5. The fitness of a cultivative fluid to act as a nidus is not impaired by insulation. 6. The germs originally present in such a liquid may be wholly destroyed, and a putrescible fluid perfectly preserved by the unaided action of light.—*Exchange*.

BY THE CODE OF LAWS, approved in 1650 by the General Court of Connecticut as the laws of the Connecticut colonies, which remained in operation until 1686, and were nicknamed by the Americans as the "Blue Laws," it was ordered that no person under the age of twenty-one years, nor any other (however old) who had not already accustomed himself to the use of tobacco, should be permitted to smoke, or snuff, or chew, unless he brought a certificate from a *physician* that it was useful for his health. Anyone who smoked either in his own house or publicly in the streets was to be fined 6d. for each offence on the testimony of a single witness. It was ordered also that "such fines should be paid without gainsaying." This law remained in operation, so far as it applied to smoking in the public streets, until within living memory in the city of Boston and elsewhere, the fine for disobedience having been raised from sixpence to a dollar.

SUICIDES IN FRANCE.—The statistics of suicide in France, just issued (and which do not differ materially from those of former years) show that nearly six thousand persons committed suicide last year throughout France, which gives a percentage about double that of