

IN REGARD TO STATE BOARDS OF HEALTH, the following facts deserve to be better known : After thirty years of effort by the medical profession, Massachusetts, in 1869, legislated into existence the first State Board of Health and Vital Statistics organized in the United States. This prolonged effort was no doubt used in conciliating that legal maxim which declares that "no law can successfully precede its public sanction," and serves to explain, at least in part, the preëminent success of this board. However, the Governor did exercise, in the choice of members of the board, an amount of discretion very unusual to politicians when acting in medical matters ; and the legislature, beginning with an experimental appropriation of \$3,000 for the first year, has rapidly trebled it. The acknowledged superiority of this board is sufficiently proved by this fact, among many others, that it did at once recognize that the greatest obstacle to sanitary progress was popular ignorance, and therefore that its primary duty was to teach the people. Hence, it at once organized a corps of reliable correspondents throughout the State ; it solicits reports from, and issues circulars of information to, all the doctors, preachers, teachers, county and State officials, newspapers and journals in Massachusetts ; and, in addition, it issues and freely distributes more than 10,000 copies of the most valuable annual health report ever published in this country. Thus, by enlightening the public, it has gained its favor, and has thereby increased its own power and the bounty of the legislature. So great is this power that it triumphed over a financial combination of fifty slaughter-houses, and converted these health and life-destroying nuisances into sanitary blessings ; it made war in Boston on the pestilence-breeding "houses of the poor," and thus so alarmed the politicians, who loving their country much, love votes, even of the sick pauper, more, that the board summoned to its support a mass meeting of the people, and was sustained.—*Dr. Chaille on State Med. at meeting of Am. Med. Assoc. from Sanitarian.*

CONTAGION OF PHTHISIS.—The repeated observation that perfectly healthy girls from perfectly healthy families, after long nursing of a phthysical patient, becomes phthysical themselves and rapidly perish, led Dr. Tappeiner, of Meran, involuntarily more and more to the belief in the contagiousness of phthisis, especially to its infection by inhalation of sputa diffused in pulverised form in the air of a chamber inhabited by a phthysical patient. In order to determine this question experimentally, he kept animals in a space or chamber in the air of which phthysical sputa in fine particles was suspended. The sputa from patients with cavities in the lungs was rubbed up in a mortar and put into an atomizer whence it was diffused into the chamber. In the experiments, 1—4 the animals inhaled the air twice a day ; for an hour at a time ; in the experiments 5—8, the animals breathed the air but once a day for an hour, and were then put into the open air. In the last three experiments the animals breathed the sputum