

in purer air than they had been accustomed to live in ; and in addition to the snail, which did neither good nor ill, they partook freely of new milk and cream, rich foods likely to be important adjuncts to the cure. Of late the idea that pulmonary consumption is a parasitic disease is revived. The lung infested with hosts of a specific bacillus is supposed to be destroyed by them or by the secretion which they eliminate ; and the mode of cure is expected to be found in a lymph or poison which shall kill the bacillus without injury to the patient.

At the present moment the general press is filled with reports and anticipations of such a kind that the uninitiated in the mystery of disease are beginning to see an immediate future when phthisis pulmonalis, which next to alcoholic disease stands highest as a cause of mortality, will practically be wiped off the black-board of death, and one of the most fatal maladies of past ages be known no more. This were indeed a consummation devoutly to be wished. For the success of the mode of treatment attributed to Dr. Koch, but claimed already by some rivals of his school, can be proved by one proof alone, namely, the effect of the practice on the death-rate.

Up to this time pulmonary consumption has had a high, though declining, death-rate, on which no defined line of *curative treatment* has had any obvious effect. The figures which indicate the death-rate will show therefore, from date, the effect of the new mode of treatment. In order to arrive at perfectly correct returns, many details will, however, have to be taken into account. First and foremost, it must be remembered that consumption is now on the decline from sanitary improvements alone. In 1881 the late Sir Edwin Chadwick joined me in making a calculation, by which we estimated the mortality from consumption in England in the year 1880, in order to compare it with the mortality of the disease in England during the year 1847, the space of thirty-three years being marked by moderately advancing sanitation. From that comparison we learned that pulmonary consumption had decreased in the proportion of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the deaths from all causes ; that is to say, 12.57 persons died from it in 1847 to 9.12 in 1880. During the past ten years the