

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

ELSEWHERE is given in this number of the JOURNAL a portion of a new edition of a pamphlet "On the Cause and Prevention of Tubercular Consumption in Mankind and the Domestic Animals," compiled and written by the editor of this JOURNAL. Although we have already given much on this subject, the pamphlet alluded to contains all that is practically useful in relation to it, up to date, including some quite recent knowledge, and we think it will prove acceptable and useful to our readers. It will be completed in the two or three next issues of the JOURNAL.

DR. KOCH at the Berlin Congress, relative to the prevention of tuberculosis, said that after a long search for growth-hindering remedies he has at last hit upon a substance which has the power of preventing the growth of tubercle bacilli, not only in a test tube, but in the body of an animal. I can only say this much about them, he continues, that guinea-pigs, which, as is well known, are extraordinarily susceptible to tuberculosis, if exposed to the influence of this substance, cease to react to the inoculation of tuberculous virus, and that in guinea-pigs suffering from general tuberculosis even to a high degree, the morbid process can be brought completely to a standstill, without the body being in any way injuriously affected.

DR. KOCH regards his discovery as only a therapeutic agent, and not it appears as a substance to be inoculated with the view or hope of "conferring perfect immunity against the disease," as the New York Medical Record reports it. He only claims "the possibility of rendering pathogenic bacteria in the living body harmless without injury to the latter." This is a very great deal, to be sure, and is of vast importance. We are inclined to think this is all that scientific investigation need or should aim at. We believe in the principle of complete prophylaxis—prevention—the destruction of the bacillus—the infection, outside the body when possible. Dr. Koch's discovery will probably aid greatly in making this possible.

HOWEVER HARMLESS a foreign enemy may be, we prefer that he remain in his own country and not invade ours. So with the infections of disease. We would prefer to keep them outside our body and for this we must destroy them. The time will come when even vaccination for small-pox will not be necessary—the infection will be virtually destroyed—the disease stamped out.

RELATIVE to other diseases which run a more rapid course Dr. Koch is not so hopeful. He says: "It is true, I look for relatively smaller therapeutical results in the case of diseases with a short incubation period and a rapid course. In these diseases, as for example in cholera, the chief reliance will always have to be placed on prophylaxis. I am thinking more of diseases of less rapid course (like tuberculosis), as these offer more points of attack to therapeutic enterprise.

ON INFECTIONS of many other diseases Dr. Koch's remarks are interesting. Lamenting that in many infectious diseases "bacteriology has left us completely in the lurch," he says: "We know nothing as to the generating factors of influenza, whooping cough, yellow fever, cattle plague, pleuro-pneumonia, and, it appears, scarlet fever, measles and small-pox and many other undoubtedly infectious diseases. . . . I am inclined to think that in the case of these diseases we have to deal, not with bacteria, but with organized generators of disease, which belong to quite different groups of micro-organisms. This opinion is all the more warranted by the fact that peculiar parasites, which belong to the lowest order of the animal kingdom—the protozoa—have, recently, as is known, been found in the blood of many animals, as well as in the blood of human beings suffering from malaria.

M. OLLIVIER has recently reported cases of contagious tuberculosis at Neuilly. A family of seven occupied a house on Rue du Pont. In two years, five out of the seven were attacked with tuberculosis; two are dead and three seriously ill. Inquiry showed that the house had formerly been occupied by a family suffering from tuberculosis. In 1887 a child died in it from that disease; the first case, supposed to be the origin of contamination. Dr. Ollivier concludes from this, and other cases, that it is dangerous to inhabit a house which has been previously inhabited by tuberculous patients, unless it be thoroughly disinfected.

THE British Medical Journal reports the following: On February 19, while Dr. Gutzman was holding an autopsy in the case of a patient who died of acute military tuberculosis, the nail of his right middle finger was slightly raised from the matrix. A pricking sensation was experienced at the tip of the finger, but no wound could be seen. The hand was thoroughly disinfected in a sublimate solution and alcohol, and the incident forgotten. On March 20th the