

disease. Then for something like 20 days the fly was unable to do so. Then for a prolonged period, the limits of which had not been ascertained, the fly was again capable of transmitting the disease. Other experiments were made to ascertain whether the blood of natives who were under the arsenic treatment (which had at any rate a controlling influence on the disease in prolonging life) was capable of transmitting the disease through a fly. It was suggested at one time that the arsenic might prevent patients from being such dangerous factors in spreading the disease as untreated patients. The experiments showed, however, that flies feeding on such patients might also become infected and transmit the disease.

### German Peasants' Physique.

An interesting report on the economic condition of Germany's agricultural class has been published by Dr. J. Kaup under the title "Nourishment and Vitality of the Country Population."

The report contains a great mass of statistics and explanations by the author, from which it appears that the physique of the large German peasant class is steadily deteriorating owing to inferior nourishment. This, as a general fact, is not new, but its exact extent has hitherto been doubted. Judged by the army test, the urban population also as a whole decreases in physical efficiency; but it appears that in certain individual army corps districts where there is no proven physical deterioration in the towns, there is a marked deterioration in the country. Between 1902 and 1908 the percentage of physical efficient among men of agricultural class resident in the country fell from 60.5 to particular provinces.

A further sign of unhealthy conditions in the country is that infant mortality despite better education and hygiene, has as a whole not fallen; and that in some districts it has even increased. Also the birth-rate in the country, particularly in Prussia and Thuringia, falls off, while the death rate diminishes more slowly than in the towns.

According to Dr. Kaup, these and many other unsatisfactory phenomena are due to the deterioration in the feeding of the country population. This is not necessarily due to a falling-off in general prosperity, but to the fact that in the last two

decades the peasants have taken to selling wholesome products produced on their own farms, and consuming instead surrogates, colonial wares, alcohol and other products of small food value. The inducement of high prices for milk and dairy products has resulted in the farmers consuming less milk; and to this is attributed the unfavorable infant mortality rate.

In Brandenburg, Westphalia, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, and the Rhine province, the consumption of milk by drinking among the peasant producers has fallen to a minimum; surrogates have almost entirely replaced butter; and the once favorite dishes made with milk have vanished altogether. The money received by farmers and peasants for the milk which they refuse to consume goes on products of little nourishing value, hence a general decline of physique. This decline is so serious a problem that there are even social reformers who propose that the State should forbid the peasants to sell their milk until they have first properly fed their children.

As such State interference would probably have no result, Dr. Kaup attacks the Protectionist system which is the cause of the evil; and points to England as a model for imitation. He points out that the British system of freedom of import for food is the only way of ensuring the sufficient supply of milk which is absolutely essential for the health of the population. During the last twenty years the import of butter into England nearly doubled, and the result is that no strain is put upon the native milk supply, and that four-fifths of the milk production is consumed for drinking, much to the benefit of the population.

Germany, owing to the taxation of food products, is unable to get a cheap supply of dairy products; and this results in the native dairy farms having to supply milk both for butter and for drinking. The high prices which result make it increasingly more difficult for the rural population to consume the milk they produce; hence the serious deterioration in physique, high infantile mortality, and other unfavorable phenomena with which Dr. Kaup deals.

### Royal College of Surgeons, England.

The quarterly meeting of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons was held