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PHTHISIS ON THE DECLINE.

Evidence that the Complaint Is Succumbing to Medical Treatment. Mortality statistics collected in different countries seem to concur in giving evidence of a steady reduction in the number of deaths from consumption during the past half century. It may be plausibly suspected that the whole of the apparent gain is not real and that greater exactitude of diagnosis and a more precise use of the term 'phthisis pulmonalis" may explain away some of it. Still, we may thankfully believe that a large part is real. We obtain support in that conclusion by the general impressions formed by intelligent old people, who, almost without exception, assure us they hear and see far less of "consumption" now than they did in the days of their youth. It is of great interest to determine the influences which have been at work in bringing about this result. It may be said at once that attention to the now so fashionable doctrine of contagion has had no material share in it since until the last few years no sort of precautions on that score had been taken. It is possible, but perhaps not very probable, that the inspection of butcher's meat may have been influential in some slight degree. By far the most probable hypothesis is that the gain has accrued from the improvement in the general prosperity of the race which the nineteenth century witnessed. During it mankind were, on the whole, prosperous and in most civilized countries the houses, the clothing and, above all, the food of the community were improved. To speak of England alone, those who

can remember what it was sixty years ago assure us that the advance in the condition of the working classes has been very great. The food which is now obtained by all is more nutritious, more varied and less exclusively vegetable than it formerly was. The clothes are better and the houses are better. In spite of the fact that the age has witnessed the influx of population into cities and large towns and a partial abandonment of the country, the facilities for locomotion and the cultivation by both sexes of athletics and outdoor pursuits have probably secured without diminution the advantages of fresh air. As regards the use of alcoholic beverages, the age has witnessed vast improvement. While there has been no diminution in the quantity taken, it has been spread over a larger number. Excess has become disgraceful and is far less common than it was, while what may be called the dietic use has been maintained. Thus, then, we seem to come to the conclusion that the reduction in the prevalence of tuberculosis has been due to improvement in general stamina and advancement in the arts of civilized life.-London Polyclinic.

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Gloves can be stretched while drying by using a new device formed of a single piece of spring wire bent to the shape of the hand and inserted in the glove to distend the interior.

An improved method of preventing the wires of a fence from sagging consists of placing pulleys on the end posts to a roller, which has a weighted lever attached to keep the wires tight on the roller.

In a new soldering iron the handle forms a reservoir for petroleum or other volatile oils, which are fed through a pipe to a burner inside the head, where the oil is changed into gas by the heat and forced against the interior of the tip to heat it.

Baby carriages are changed into cradles by a new device, consisting of a pair of rockers connected by crossbars, with slots cut in the bars in which the wheels of the carriage are placed to prevent them from turning while the carriage is being rocked.

To prevent the tops of curtains from lopping over above when they are pinned to the hooks a plain or waved vertical extension is fixed on the face of the ordinary hook, on which the end of the curtain is fastened, thus holding it up and making a neater appearance.

An improved mucilage bottle has a water compartment surrounding the mucilage holder with a wick running from the water to a perforated collar around the neck, which is filled with an absorbent to keep the interior of the neck moist and prevent the mucliage from drying.

Bamboo rods for the manufacture of furniture, fishing poles, etc., are reduced in size and shaped as desired by a new machine, composed of a tapering metallic die heated to a gray heat, into which the stalks are forced, the heat melting the siliceous coating and fibers into a plastic state.

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