

and in another that the earth-worms had covered a bed of marl with their mold in eighty years to an average depth of thirteen inches.

Pasteur's recent researches on the etiology of "charbon" show that this earth mold positively contains the specific germs which propagate the disease, and that the same specific germs are found within the intestines of the worms. The parasitic organism, or bacteridium, which, inoculated from a diseased to a healthy animal, propagates the specific disease, may be destroyed by putrefaction after burial. But before this process has been completed germs or spores may have been formed which will resist the putrefactive process for many years, and lie in a condition of latent life, like a grain of corn, or any flower seed, ready to germinate and communicate the specific disease. In a field in the Jura, where a diseased cow had been buried two years before, at a depth of nearly seven feet, the surface earth not having been disturbed in the interval, Pasteur found that the mold contained germs which, introduced by inoculation into a guinea-pig, produced charbon and death. And further, if a worm be taken from an infected spot, the earth in the alimentary canal of the worm contains these spores or germs of charbon, which, inoculated, propagate the disease. And the mold deposited on the surface by the worms, when dried into dust, is blown over the grass and plants on which the cattle feed, and may thus spread the disease... I have more than once cited a very remarkable case, on the authority of Mr. Wheelhouse, of Leeds, where the seeds of scarlatina germinated after having been buried for thirty years. In a Yorkshire village part of a closed graveyard was taken into the adjoining rectory garden. The earth was dug up and scarlatina soon broke out in the rectory nursery, and from thence spread over the village. It proved to be of the same virulent character as the scarlatina which thirty years before had destroyed the villagers who were buried in the precise part of the church-yard which has been taken into

the garden and dug up. And what is true of plague and of charbon and of scarlet fever seems to be true of yellow fever.

After concluding his lengthy address, for more of which we have not space, Sir Spencer Wells was followed, in discussion, by many other well known physicians, the most notable and interesting part of the discussion being the remarks of Mr. Ernest Hart, editor of the *British Medical Journal*. After referring to the history and progress of cremation, Mr. Hart said: There was one peculiar fact which he had mentioned before, but which he should like to mention again, and that was the number of examples which medical men and officers of health might still collect of the quite unsuspected manner in which cemeteries and burial grounds in populous cities might be and were the cause of evils very little suspected. The story that he had to remind them of was the story of the Aldgate pump. The Aldgate pump happened to be in the parish of Whitechapel, and was the most celebrated pump in the city. It was always supposed to give the most delicious water, and to it people sent for drinking water from far and wide. There was a pensioned officer of the corporation who made a handsome living—it was a sort of post in the gift of the corporation—by pumping this water and receiving gratuities from the people who sent for it. Some of the water from that pump was taken and analyzed, and it was found that that delicious water was intensely contaminated with organic matter, which in fact, gave it rather a pleasant odor. Close by was a cemetery which had been long out of use, and which might have been supposed to be innocuous, but from percolation through the soil there was a decoction of putrefied bodies, and when it got into the water it gave it a very delightful flavor. They had the greatest difficulty in getting it abolished—it was a municipal corporation they had to deal with—but when it was abolished it was said that the people must not be told that the water had been changed, that the gentleman must still be allowed his perquisites, so that he still