

which one chooses is but rarely sought by the other. Their very presumed causes differ most essentially,—one said to be the result of poverty and sanitary defects; the other having no respect for gradations of wealth and station. They differ even in geographical distribution. Notwithstanding all these differences, they are, by tacit understanding and acquiescence identified as the same disease. It would be unjust, however to say that this transition has been effected totally without opposition. Of late the pathological character of tuberculosis has been subjected to various and close investigations. Its identity with pus has been asserted by Cruveilhier. The results of his experiments upon rabbits demonstrate at least this much, that pus is susceptible of undergoing the very same metamorphosis as tubercle, from the semi-fluid condition to perfect innocuous calcification. The strongest advocates of genuine tuberculosis have been forced to admit that there are often pus corpuscles, where the external appearance of the object denotes tubercular substance. Few authors have had better opportunities of studying the pathological anatomy of bone and joint diseases than Gurlt of Berlin, his investigations extending even over the veterinary field. If I correctly interpret his statement, he has met with no tubercle in joints and bones at all. What other authors had pronounced to be tubercular infiltrations and caverns, he recognised as purulent infiltration the result of osteo-myelitis, and as bone abscess the sequence of circumscribed osteitis. And Virchow, one of the most esteemed pathologists of our time, considers himself justified in stating that tubercle is fully compatible with the acknowledged changes of inflammatory products. Again, gentlemen, is there any peculiarity about tuberculosis that could be established and accepted?

You are aware that the so-called tubercular cell has been asserted, but the microscope has failed to prove its reality. If the microscope cannot substantiate any peculiarity, how much less can the naked eye! For there is certainly no difference in appearance between tubercular matter and cheesy pus, and the suspicion of identity must necessarily accrue from such conformity. At any rate our knowledge on the subject is not final and exhaustive; and we may justly look for further disclosures rather detrimental to, than confirmatory of, the genuine character of tuberculosis.

But, to return to the starting point of our discourse, I shall find ample occasion to show, that the strumous theory in its practical application to articular diseases, is worthless and rather injurious than otherwise, as it certainly has long diverted us from a course of investigation that alone could lead to practical results.

Consistently with the received opinions the lower classes of society