

More extended and accurate investigation, however, is now leading pathologists to abandon the idea that there is one structural element—a cell—always capable of recognition by the practised eye—which is alone endowed with the fatal gift of malignancy, and to admit that growths composed of other elements, as nuclei, fibres, cartilage cells, and cells quite unlike the so-called “cancer-cells,” may have most, if not all, the attributes of malignancy—such as rapid and enormous growth, tendency to frequent recurrence both locally and remotely, aptness to ulcerate and protrude, exhaustion of the vital powers, etc. Nay, even, that well marked encephaloid tumors may exhibit no cells; but merely nuclei possessed of no special characters. They are now recognising that the term malignant is purely relative,—that there are degrees of malignancy,—that some growths are highly so, others slightly so, and that between these there are all grades of malignancy. Thus there are growths which only occasionally and exceptionally recur after removal; others which habitually and repeatedly recur, though only or chiefly at the original site; others again which recur both locally and remotely; and yet others which not only recur locally and remotely, but infiltrate and absorb into their own mass the tissues in which they occur and the adjoining textures too, whether hard or soft.

Our knowledge is not yet sufficiently accurate and comprehensive to enable us to fix the *relative degrees* of malignancy possessed by the several varieties of tumors; but, if we should attempt to draw up a table of morbid growths, classified and arranged on that principle, perhaps, the following would approach the truth in its general outline, though, of course, it would not be accurate in all its details:—

*Scale of tumors according to their degrees of malignancy.*

Malignant .....	{	Encephaloid Colloid Scirrhus Osteoid Epithelial	} Cancer.
Semi-malignant (they recur locally and remotely) .....	{	Cartilaginous. Myeloid. Malignant-fibrous. Recurring-fibroid. Fibro-plastic.	
Locally malignant (they recur locally) .....	{	Fibro-nucleated. Proliferous cysts containing vascular growths. Glandular tumors.	
Innocent .....	{	Fibro-cellular. Fibrous. Proliferous cysts containing cysts. Barren cysts. Osseous. Fatty.	