

Poles exhibited two other peculiarities in that the rate among males closely approximated the rates among females, whereas among other classes the females were almost double the males. These two nationalities were also distinguished by the very large number of cases of cancer of the stomach and the comparatively small number of cases of cancer of the uterus and breast. Lyon considers that the figures support the idea that the peculiar diet of the Germans is responsible for the high rate amongst them. The statistics show a general increase in the cancer-rate of from 32 to 52 per 100,000 of population. What the peculiar diet of the Germans is is not stated, but we may pretty correctly guess it. This theory is not opposed to the idea that a micro-organism is an exciting cause of cancer; in fact, it requires or presupposes some local irritant. But for this purpose one organism would do as well as another, and none would be actually specific.

The interesting discoveries of Plimmer carry conviction to my mind that a parasite is present in the active growing cells of most cancerous tumors. Mr. H. G. Plimmer found these parasites in 1,130 cases out of 1,220. There were reasons why they were not found in 90 cases, and 58 cases remain in which they could not be found. These parasites, however, may follow the commencing stage of the tumor instead of preceding it. If they precede it, which they must do if they cause it, they ought to be found apart from the disease. Moreover, micro-organisms as the sole cause of cancer do not harmonize with most of the facts about the disease. They would not account for the comparative immunity of Jewesses or for the undoubted fact that prosperity and high living increase the tendency to the disease. These ought to act the other way. If it were a parasite surely the damp, water-logged Isle of Dogs should be a paradise for it, whereas that district is comparatively healthy; while Hampstead, which lies high and dry and is covered with excellent houses standing in their own grounds, has a high mortality.

In conclusion, I do not assert that I have produced absolutely conclusive proof of the truth of the theory advanced. I consider that in its present stage the theory is more a suggestion than anything else—merely a new idea for consideration. At the same time I would ask, Has not nature, and have not some observers, made scientific experiments for us? Have not the good people of Malton and Pickering kindly fed themselves with beef and bacon three times a day for our instruction? and have we not the result before us? This is as scientific an experiment as can be made, and the same applies to most of the other facts. Whilst writing this old woman, aged 42 years, has applied for advice with cancer of the breast. She has bacon for breakfast and