

fluctuating, resulted in the removal of some semi-solid matter mingled with blood which, on examination, proved to be a degenerated tissue teeming with the ray fungus. A list of about 140 cases of the disease in man, which had been observed by different physicians, was presented at the meeting, and details of several others mentioned by those present. It was said that probably we should find, on close examination, that actinomycosis was much commoner both in men and cattle than it was at present supposed.

In the *Annals of Surgery* for July (89) four cases of this disease are noted. One that of a cab-driver in whom the disease developed about the mouth and face, soon after he had had a tooth extracted. The second case was that of the betrothed of the first patient. The disease was believed to have been communicated to her by kissing, as she herself first suggested. The third case was that of a woman, too, and the disease commenced with abscess in the inner side of the cheek. These three cases ended in recovery. In the fourth case the disease spread from the mouth to the eye ball and temporal region and eventually appears to have involved the brain, and so proved fatal. In all the cases microscopic examination revealed the actinomycosis fungus.

Dr. Klein, of the College of State Medicine, London, wrote to the *Glasgow Herald* in May last a letter referring to diseased meat and infectious diseases. From this we take the following extract: Though tuberculosis, owing to its wide distribution among cattle, ranks first, there is another disease amongst cattle which presents not less important features of interest; I mean the disease now known as actinomycosis. The more this disease is recognized in its characters, particularly in the presence of the actinomycetes or ray fungus, the more it becomes evident that it has a wide distribution. Cases which formerly would have been put down as tuberculosis are now recognized as being really actinomycosis, since in the nodular deposits or purulent matter the actinomycetes fungus can be demonstrated, whereas the tubercle bacilli

are of course absent. The actinomycetes fungus in this disorder causes nodular new growths, which, as is well known, gradually enlarge, and in many localities have a tendency to suppurate and to break down; their occurrence is common in the tongue, by which this organ becomes greatly enlarged and firm, on the gums and other parts of the mucous membrane of the mouth and throat, and in the lungs.

Now this disease also affects human beings, and here it is a most serious disorder on account of its prolonged and painful character, and because it generally terminates fatally. The more this dire malady is recognized in the human subject—chiefly by microscopic examination—the more it is seen that its distribution is considerable. While a few years ago a few cases only were recorded by Continental observers (Israel and Ponfick), there is now hardly a medical journal in this country or abroad in which in the course of a year we do not find recorded a case of actinomycosis in a human being. I happen to know at the present of two patients affected with actinomycosis of the intestines associated with severe suppurations from the bowels; there is little hope of their recovery, and, judging from other cases, the disease will also here be found to have invaded the organs in the vicinity of the intestines—viz, the liver and the lymphatic glands of the abdominal cavity. Actinomycosis in man is identical with that in cattle in its pathology and in the actinomycetes fungus, and there is no reason to doubt that they are intercommunicable. Do not the cases of actinomycosis of the intestines in man strongly point to the probability that it is contracted by consumption of materials derived from animals affected with actinomycosis?

We regret not being able to give in this number of the *Journal* the history of the cases of supposed actinomycoses in a herd of cattle belonging to Mr. Delmage, of Camden East, which we have been investigating, as intimated in the last number. We have no doubt, however, that before the issue of the next number sufficient will be known of the cases, their history etc, to enable us to give the facts.