

that the same morphological forms are endowed with facilities so different, it is for us to remember that in chemistry it is sometimes found that substances composed of the same elements in the same proportion are endowed with diverse qualities.

"Turning now from these considerations we must recognize the substantial advances which appear to have been made. Among these I may notice the results of Dr. A. Ogston's experiments, for it seems to me he has shown the relationship of acute suppuration, attended with fever, to micrococci, which occur in two forms called staphylococcus and streptococcus. These growths are found present in a large number of acute abscesses, erysipelas, pyæmia, and gangrene."

Dr. Ogston's experiments were then detailed at some length. He found that a drop of pus containing micrococci when introduced into a fresh egg, caused the development of myriads of these microscopic forms. A drop of albumen from the infected egg injected under the healthy skin occasioned the development of similar abscesses abounding with micrococci.

"Experiments like these seem to go far in showing the dependence of acute abscesses and the other affections referred to upon these vegetable growths; and they prepare us to receive the recent teaching as regards the causation of tubercle. The nature of tubercle, however, is such as to form a nidus in which we might expect that bacteria would readily lodge. It is known that vegetable parasites more frequently infest persons whose constitutions are not robust; the tinea tonsurans is difficult to remove in proportion to the weakness of the individual affected; and when we consider the absence of vessels in tubercle, its tendency to caseation and softening, together with the easy access through bronchial tubes of bacteric forms, it is not surprising that they should flourish in morbid products so far removed from healthy tissue. The appearance of the bacillus even in the early cells

of tubercle may be compared to the presence of micrococci in the superficial epithelium of the mucous membrane of the mouth. These latter cells are in the last stages of life, and we may regard the early cells of tubercle as similar in this respect, for they have feeble vitality and soon pass into decay. At the present stage of the discussion, therefore, we may well hesitate before concluding that the dependence of tubercle upon the bacillus has been fully demonstrated. It is to be noted that since the discovery was first announced many observers have confirmed the results of Koch's investigations as to the presence of a bacillus peculiar to this pathological product. This certainly seems to have been a most important discovery as regards diagnosis, for the question whether a recognized change at the apex of the lung is or is not of a tubercular nature, is often most difficult to answer. That such a causation seems to be opposed to what is well known with reference to the hereditary transmission of this disease, or that we must now regard consumption as contagious, are conclusions we must not be too hasty in drawing, while many difficulties oppose the efforts made to ascertain the influence of lower forms of life in causing disease, their study has resulted in advance in the practice of an art. Although it may not be possible to entirely prevent decomposition in wounds, yet surgery will be successful in proportion to the success of our means to attain this end; and the usefulness of many of the appliances in surgical practice depends upon their action in preventing decomposition. In midwifery it may not be possible to place the lying-in woman in an atmosphere of carbolated watery vapour, yet if we take care to secure the complete contraction of the womb and the expulsion of all clots after labour, to unite by sutures when necessary wounds in the vagina and perineum, and direct attention to the removal of discharges that would form a nidus for decomposing agencies, we are