

departure in physical characters from the cells normal and proper to the part, on which the pus-corpuscle is formed, may be due to the operation of one of two causes: either the corpuscle, ab origine, must be produced, constructed in its earliest germ on faulty principles, and from a matrix of morbid quality; or its first production must be in strict accordance with the natural cell-forming process of the part, but that *subsequently*, under the agency of some unhealthy influence, the development of the particle is completed on a perverted, although determinate, plan.

Considerable labor and attention have recently been devoted to the subject of the chemical analysis of purulent fluids by the French chemists M. Darcet and M. Conte. They appear to concur in the conclusion, that these fluids contain but a very small proportion of fibrine, whilst they afford a considerable proportion of albumen. Is it not probable that this circumstance—the paucity, namely, of *organising material* (fibrine)—may afford some explanation of the *slender* inferiorly-organised character of the pus-corpuscle?

MEDICAL RELIEF TO THE POOR.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—Lord Ashley has written to remind me of his intention to bring the subject of medical relief to the poor before Parliament at the commencement of the ensuing session; and I beg your permission to remind the members of the medical profession, through your Journal, that his success in obtaining a committee must depend upon the number and accuracy of the facts he may be able to bring forward in proof of the necessity of a full and fair inquiry into the subject.

I am greatly obliged to those gentlemen who have been so good as to communicate with me during the last twelve months, and will beg of them to write between the 10th and 20th of January, if any change should have taken place in the facts and circumstances they then made me acquainted with.

I need hardly repeat to the members of the profession that this will be, in all probability, the last opportunity they will have of obtaining redress for their own grievances, and those of the unfortunate poor committed to their charge.

I shall be happy to present any of those who are particularly interested in this subject to Lord Ashley, and to give them every opportunity of explaining to him their own views. He has no predilections, and is only desirous of doing that which it may be just and right to do for the poor, and for their medical attendants.

It is exceedingly desirable that all who have influence with members of Parliament should lose no time in interesting them, to the utmost of their ability, in supporting and promoting Lord Ashley's inquiry.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your very obedient servant,

G. J. GUTHRIE.

4, Berkeley-street, Dec. 16, 1843.

CAUSES OF CANCER.

The causes of cancer are twofold. 1st. Perpetual local irritation; hence the origin of cancer of the penis in persons whose prepuce is long, and who are not careful to wash away the irritating secretions of the corona glandis; and of chimney-sweeper's cancer from the irritation of soot. 2ndly. A peculiar cachexy or morbid state of the constitution, which sometimes is congenital and seems nearly allied to scrofula; sometimes appears to be caused by depression of mind and other circumstances that impair the powers of digestion and nutrition.

Whether the disease arises from local irritation, or from constitutional disposition, the cancer cells are not long confined to the part where they are first developed; but their nuclei most probably pervade the entire mass of fluids, and are deposited into other parts. Yet, when the constitutional predisposition is not strong, the disease may be supposed to be for some time confined to the part first affected; and hence, if removed at an early period, the contamination of the system at large may be prevented.—*Mr. Druitt.*

ELECTION OF MR. JOHNSON, AT ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

[From a Correspondent.]

Mr. Henry Charles Johnson has been elected assistant-surgeon at St. George's Hospital, a vacancy having been created by Mr. Babington's resignation of the surgeoncy. Mr. Charles Hawkins, a *protégé* of Sir Benjamin Brodie, and supported by all that gentleman's influence, as well as by that of the medical officers of the hospital, was an unsuccessful opponent of Mr. Johnson's. Although a gentleman of good abilities, and fair surgical acquirements, it is obvious that his claims are not comparable to those of Mr. Johnson, who has for a long time discharged the onerous and unprofitable duty of anatomical teacher in the Kinnerton-street Medical School; whilst Mr. Hawkins's name is unknown beyond his own private circle. *On dit*, that a certain royal duke, famous for thinking aloud, said to himself, rather too audibly, on entering the board-room of the hospital, "Well, here I am, come to vote for Mr. Hawkins; but I know that Johnson is the best man for all that."

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

Members admitted Friday, December 15, 1843.

J. Hales, F. F. Dukes, J. Phillips, G. C. C. Lunn
B. V. Asbury, T. Ballard, H. Terry.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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