vegetable tar, but it differs very materially from the latter in smell, for its odour is extremely disagreeable. It is soluble in alcohol, and turns of a thick brownish white colour when mixed well with water. By evaporating the spirit, the tar again floats on the surface. When ignited it burns like common tar, leaving a smell not unlike that of burnt feathers. The quantity obtained being too small for redistillation, I was obliged to heat a little in a bulb glass to the temperature of ebullition, when a spirit was given off which took fire when brought in contact with a lighted taper.

I hope that my experiments will be repeated, provided the result is yet otherwise unknown; not that I think it of great consequence, but we must always feel interested in seeing the secrets of nature unfolded. Transmitting this account for insertion in your excellent journal, I remain, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

HENRY OSBORN, Chemist.
Southampton, Feb. 16th.

BROWN BREAD.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Allow me, through the medium of your valuable journal, to call the attention of the profession to the uses and effects of brown bread, both as a remedy in habitual costiveness, and also as an article of diet. I am induced to make these observations, in consequence of having myself experienced both its value as a remedy in the above-mentioned state of the bowels, and its injurious effects when used for any length of time as an article of diet. Its medicinal virtues are really surprising. It scarcely ever fails to remove, in a very short time, that habitual costiveness which so generally accompanies a sedentary life. But when its use is continued for some time after the costive state of the bowels has been removed, its effects are most injurious. It then produces all the symptoms of dyspepsia, and irritation of the whole alimentary canal. The laxative effect arises from the particles of bran which it contains, acting as a mechanical stimulant, and increasing the peristaltic action of the intestines. Now the very manner of its action as a laxative, proves its unfitness as an article of diet; as it is necessary for all substances, in order that they may have any mechanical effect upon the bowels, to possess the power of resisting the action of the gastric juice, and all substances that have this power (for instance the rind of vegetables, under which denomination bran comes) also possess the power of producing great derangement of the alimentary canal, and I believe

I have, in some cases, seen inflammation of the mucous membrane produced by the continued use of bread containing bran. Brown bread is very extensively used in this city, and is sold under the name of "Constitutional bread," a name of which it is not deserving. I will at some future period furnish you with cases illustrative of its effects. Believe me, Sir, your obedient servant,

CHARLES WRIGHT.
Harcourt-street, Dublin,
Feb. 13, 1835.

SYPHILIS.

"A gentleman who had been cured of a chancre at a distance from home, called to consult me whether he might consider himself as perfectly free from the disease. Whilst he was taking great pains to explain to me how he had been salivated, and how long he had continued the use of mercury after the chancre was healed, I interrupted him by observing, that if he had continued the use of mercury till now, I could not pretend to say whether he was free from the disease. 'How then,' said the gentleman, 'am I to ascertain my real situation?' 'If,' replied I, 'you find no symptoms in the course of three months, the probability is that you will remain well till you expose yourself to a new source of infection.' In about six weeks he returned, with a sore throat and copper spots. I explained to him that he should not blame his surgeon, who, even if he had known what was to happen, could not have prevented it. The patient went through a necessary course of mercury, till he was cured of every symptom; and then demanded, with some impatience, whether he was secure. 'You are secure,' replied I, 'from every return on the genitals, and on your skin and throat; but, as it is impossible for me to know whether your bones are contaminated, I cannot pretend to say whether you will have nodes in a few weeks' time.' He now began to comprehend the doctrine, and submitted to await the result. In about six weeks he actually had nodes; after the cure of which, by a severe salivation, I made no scruple to assure him, he was perfectly free from the disease."—*Mr. Hunter's last conversation with Dr. Adams.*

The effects of the venereal poison upon the human body, Mr. Hunter describes under the three different states of "contamination," "disposition," and "action." By *contamination*, he implied the entrance of the poison into, and its contact with, some part of the body. By *disposition*, the intermediate state between contamination and the breaking out of the disease, or the state of *action*.