difficulty in raising it; profuse night sweats; bowels regular; urine passed freely; occasionally a pain in the left side, increased by inspiration; voice reduced to a whisper; breathing hurried after any exertion, but he was able to walk to the poor-house, the distance of a mile. The action of the chest confined to the left side, the right being apparently inactive.

On percussion, extensive dulness was found over the whole surface of the chest, rather more strongly marked on the right side; respiration bronchial on both sides; a very slight gurgling towards the apex of the right lung.

The expectoration increased and became more difficult; breathing more laborious; and he died October 9th.

Inspection Twenty-Six Hours after Death.

Body extremely emaciated; abdomen flat and contracted.

Chest narrow, but moderately deep in the antero-posterior direction.

Extremities exceedingly attenuated.

On opening the chest, extensive adhesions existed between the right lung and the pleura costalis on the right side, especially in its upper half.

The lungs did not collapse; their whole surface was covered with black spots about the size of currants, and similar ones were found throughout the whole pulmonary tissue; slightly crepitant, except in the upper portion of the right lung, in which was found a very large cavity, and in a small portion of the left, which was indurated and firmer than the liver. On incising the substance of the lungs a frothy matter exuded; there were no tubercles found.

Besides the small black bodies before mentioned, others were found in various parts of the lungs four or five times as large.

Both kinds were quite black within, and the larger ones of so firm a texture that it was difficult to cut through them, and the scalpel was arrested by a gritty substance. Other bodies, about four times as large as a horse-bean, of a similar character, were found close to the bifurcation of the trachea.

The mucous membrane of trachea was thickened, but no points of ulceration were observed in any part of it.

The air tubes were much dilated, and towards the inferior lobes many were as large as a quill. The most striking lesion was an enormous cavity occupying about one fourth part of the right lung towards its apex; this was a complete sac. No bronchial tubes opened into it. It contained a small portion of the debris of the lungs.

Heart of a natural size; valves healthy; parietes of right ventricle remarkably thin, and it was dilated; aorta excessively pallid.

Nothing peculiar in the abdominal viscera.

This case was one of very considerable interest from the circumstance that the post-mortem inspection of a grinder has been hitherto of most rare occurrence. When they have been admitted into the infirmary, they have very rarely died in the house, as even at the risk of dying on the road home they have almost invariably been removed by their friends—so great has been the prejudice of this class of men against inspection. No reasoning could prevail with them, although

they well know that the nature of their work is such as to lead to a very early death, for they very rarely reach the age of fifty. Cases have of course occasionally occurred, but these have been exceptions to the general rule. The subject has engaged the attention of the medical men of the town, but the want of pathological data has been seriously felt in its investigation. In the "North of England Medical and Surgical Journal," 1830, Sir Arnold Knight published an account of the disease, together with the statistics of the grinders—which appears to be the only treatise on the subject—although, from his account, the same symptoms are produced amongst the leather-dressers of Worcester, according to Dr. Hastings.

ROYAL MEDICO-BOTANICAL SOCIETY.

February 8, 1843.

Earl STANHOPE, President, in the Chair.

ON THE ARTEMESIA ABSINTHIUM.

By Dr. Houlton.

The *artemesia absinthium*, or common wormwood, has been held in estimation as a medicinal plant from the earliest period of medico-botanical history; and although it enters into many official preparations of the continental pharmacopœias, it has no such place in our own, nor has it had since the year 1788; yet it has never been rejected from the *materia medica* of the Royal College of Physicians. It is but little employed at the present time in the regular medical practice of this country. It is a well-known perennial plant, grows in various parts of Europe, the Crimea, Bombay, and Newfoundland. We have several other indigenous species of the same genus; the only one likely to be mistaken for it is the *A. vulgaris*, or mugwort. The stem of this is of a dark purplish color, whilst that of the wormwood has a white, heavy appearance. The mugwort is but slightly bitter; the wormwood is intensely so, with some pungency, and a very strong fragrant odor. The flavor and odor of this plant are very disagreeable to some persons, but not so to others. Dr. Murray, in the "Apparatus Medicaminum," says that, in all cases, the more grateful bitters should be preferred in practice. Other writers have objected to the plant as a medicine, on account of its nauseous flavor, but none have disputed its virtues. It has had numerous medicinal properties attributed to it, the chief of which are antiseptic, anthelmintic, deobstruent, tonic, and stomachic. It has been employed with success in jaundice, dropsy, gout, worms, dyspepsia, intermittent fevers, and various kinds of cachectic diseases. It has been said by some to have a narcotic property; Linnæus asserts he never observed any narcotic effects from its employment. Some have asserted that it will render bitter the flesh and milk of animals that take it, and that infants at the breast have been affected by the milk of the mothers who have taken the extract.

The forms in which this plant has been employed are powder, extract, conserve, tincture, wine, distilled water, and essential oil. The doses ordered in works on *materia medica* appear to be too strong; for instance, half a drachm of the powder, or an ounce and a half or two ounces of an infusion, made with six

drachms of the herb, to twelve ounces of water. An infusion made with half a drachm of the dried herb (freed from the stalk), and ten ounces of boiling water, allowed to stand for an hour, will produce an infusion of sufficient strength; the dose, an ounce and a half, three times a-day. The tincture is superior to any other preparation, and is made in the following manner :—

Take two ounces of the dried herb, free from the stalk, and sixteen ounces of rectified spirit; macerate twelve days, and strain. This has a most beautiful green color, but fades on keeping, and it possesses the full aroma of the plant, and the bitter flavor in a high degree. Ten or fifteen minims of it will impart a strong flavor to two ounces of water, and form a good stomachic draught.

Wormwood is an aromatic tonic, well suited to various cases of chronic disease in which it is desirable to support the tone of the stomach. Where debility of the digestive organs has been the chief feature of the disease, its adaptation has been evident from the happy results that have followed its administration.

ON THE SWEET ACORNS OF PORTUGAL.

By William Lukin, Esq.

The sweet acorns are the fruit of the *aziuheira*, the *quercus ilex* of Linnaeus, a tall forest tree, very frequent in the forests south of the Tagus, but rarely found north of that river. It is extensively planted in the oak woods of the Alentejo, for the hogs, which are driven in large herds into the woods to fatten on the fruit.

There are two other trees, quite distinct in character, producing sweet acorns, which are found, though not so frequently, in the same woods—1, *quercus rotundifolia*, of Lamarck; 2, *quercus ballota*, of Des Fontaines. Brotero, in his "*Flora Lusitania*," considers both these as varieties of the former. They are smaller trees; all these are evergreen, and the acorns so similar, that it is difficult to distinguish between them without seeing the leaves. In Spain and Portugal, these acorns, roasted like chestnuts, are served up with the dessert; they are also much eaten by the peasants. That the custom of eating these is of some antiquity, may be seen by referring to a very humorous letter in "*Don Quixote*," wherein Cervantes represents Theresa Panza as sending a peck of ballots to the duchess, in acknowledgment of the hospitable reception her husband, Sancho, had met with at the castle.

On the table were placed some very fine specimens of the new citrates and compound salts of iron, presented by Mr. Bullock.

At the next meeting of the society, on Wednesday, the 22nd, Mr. Ley will read a paper on the therapeutical effects of the Indian hemp.

ESSEX AND COLCHESTER HOSPITAL.

Dr. Chambers has been appointed to the office of physician to this hospital, vacant by the resignation of Dr. Maclean.

PAROCHIAL MEDICAL RELIEF.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—In reflecting upon the memorial of the council of the Provincial Medical Association, lately addressed to the Right Hon. Sir James Graham, and recorded in your last week's Journal, I cannot refrain from expressing my respectful dissent from that part of their second proposition, which assumes that "it would be impossible for the poor-law commissioners to put forward any one method of payment as equally applicable to all cases and all circumstances." With the greatest deference to their judgment, I think an universal system or method of payment may be devised, in the operation of which the rate of remuneration per case would necessarily vary according to the circumstances of each district; for it must be allowed that attendance upon a case in town should not be estimated so high as one in the country.

This system consists in a modification of the plan I submitted to the poor-law commissioners in a pamphlet published in 1840, in which I argued the necessity of a standing salary and a payment per case. The commissioners, however, appear rather to sanction, and guardians prefer, an annual salary determined beforehand; this is now of less consequence, since, in future, the appointment of union medical officers will be permanent; but it becomes doubly important that the profession should exert themselves to obtain something like an adequate remuneration for their services. It is now my object to show that the safest and most equitable way of estimating this salary is by following the scheme (with the trifling alteration of combining the fixed and fluctuating salaries, and reducing the per centage to 5 per cent., in consideration of the extra fees now allowed by the commissioners) laid down in the pamphlet to which I have alluded, which scheme is based upon the principle of apportioning the remuneration to the labor required.

The following examples, in round numbers, taken from a proposed rearrangement of the medical districts of an extensive union, with which I am well acquainted, will sufficiently serve my purpose and illustrate the peculiar working of the principle :—

Dis- trict.	Popu- lation.	Area in Acres.	Area in Square Miles.	Aver- age Cases per An.	Esti- mated Salary.	Aver- age per Case.
1	7512	12,500	20	400	£ 150	s. d. 7 6
2	2586	12,780	20	150	70	9 4
3	829	12,768	20	50	25	11 7
4	1983	14,310	22	120	58	9 9
5	2210	14,670	23	140	68	9 8
6	1425	14,630	23	100	50	10 0
7	1048	6,300	10	60	25	8 0
Total	17593	87,958	138	1020	446	8 9