

1879

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THE YEAST PLANT.

BY A. W. ABBOTT, M. D.

[At the February meeting, 1879, Dr. Abbott read an illustrated paper on the microscopic nature of the Yeast Plant, of which the following is a synopsis.]

That the glycogenic function of the yeast plant resides in the organic and not in the inorganic elements of its fluid, is indicated by the fact, that the salts of copper are decomposed in a hot, alkaline solution, containing a mixture of cane sugar solution and the washings of yeast which have been filtered through paper, while this does not take place, in a like mixture, which has been treated with an excess of animal charcoal.

That this function resides in the minute, living, free, protoplasmic particles of the plant, is also indicated by the fact that a mixture of cane sugar solution and yeast washings, that had been filtered through paper but not through charcoal, and tightly corked, contained after six days a plentiful crop of *Lacharomyces* cells. On the other hand, no cells were developed from washings of yeast, which were placed under the same circumstances, except that they were filtered through animal charcoal.

Is it not probable that minute portions of protoplasm, invisible under the highest powers of the microscope, pass the meshes of the filtering paper, become normally developed, and during their development give rise to, and exercise, the glycogenic function?

This would account, in part, for the difference in the result, when yeast washings, that have been, and those, that have not been, treated with animal charcoal, are used in the above experiment.