

becomes diseased ; or the bile secreted may be so abnormal and irritating as it flows along the intestine, as to set up diseased action especially in the small glands which stud the mucous membrane. It is in this way, and with these characteristics that genuine typhoid fever takes hold of the system ; although other poisons may doubtless give rise to a condition closely resembling true typhoid or enteric fever. That infection may be acquired through the skin is most likely ; but the two portals referred to are so much easier passed that the comparatively impervious skin rarely can be regarded as the door of entrance.

Having considered the modes of access of infection to the human system, we will revert to the subject of the nature of contagion and infection. We stated in our last issue that "contagion might spread by degraded organisms possessing the characteristics of animal life, by invisible vegetable parasites, and by inanimate matter in the form of gases or molecules suspended in the air." The air, like the water, is populated by countless living organisms invisible to the unaided eye. The microscope reveals in a single drop of water a large number and variety of animated beings. In like manner every inch of air is peopled by numbers of living organisms, where they live, grow, develope, decay, propagate, and die. There is also floating in the air unseen, the seeds and vestiges of vegetable life. At the same time there is inanimate matter of various origin, with different gases from time to time suspended in the atmosphere. Here then is a vast world which we see not, in which is enacted the same great struggle for existence which we witness in animated nature on the earth. Now we may safely suppose that each time the lungs expand in the operation of breathing these air germs, and this inanimate matter, and the gases that may be present in the atmosphere, all rush into the air cells, crowding into every available place, and thronging the walls, seeking, as it were, a place for admission to the system. As a general thing these elements of the air are innocous, and pass in and out of the human lungs without harm to the body. Or perhaps the fluid supplied to the mucus membrane is endowed with properties by which all material