

## CURRENT MEDICAL LITERATURE

## TESTING THE GERM THEORY ON HUMAN BEINGS.

Editor CANADA LANCET,—

The Germans are largely responsible for two widely accepted theories, viz. :—

1st. That their army is invincible.

2nd. That disease is caused by germs—both theories have been challenged by Canadians. The reasons for questioning the germ theory are mainly three, viz. :—

1st. The divergent views of bacteriologists as to which germ caused the disease.

2nd. The stronger claim of the bio-chemic theory.

3rd. The absence of germs at the onset of disease (as the following sample cases show).

(a) A man crossing a river broke through the ice, was rescued, later became ill, and the doctor, fearing pneumonia, tested for pneumo-cocci—there were none present; when the pneumonia developed they appeared.

(b) After an oyster supper some men had cramps and diarrhoea, followed by typhoid fever—no Eberth bacilli were present in the first stools but were present later.

(c) Hurrying, a girl arrived at her shop sweating; as the shop was cold, she became very chilly; next day complained of a sore throat, but no Klebs-Löffler bacilli were found; later, when a diphtheretic patch appeared, the bacilli were present.

Here in each case the bacilli followed the onset of the disease.

Believing that the above germs were the result and not the cause of the diseases, tests of the germs of diphtheria, typhoid and pneumonia were made.

The first test was whether the Klebs-Löffler bacilli would cause diphtheria, and about 50,000 were swallowed without any result; later 100,000, 500,000 and a million and more were swallowed, and in no case did they cause any ill-effect.

The second series of tests was to decide whether the Eberth bacillus would cause typhoid, but each test was negative; even when millions were swallowed. The third series of tests showed that one could swallow a million (and over) pneumo-cocci without causing pneumonia, or any disturbance.

The investigations covered about two years and forty-five (45) different tests were made giving an average of fifteen tests each. I person-