

even goes so far as to state that there is no evidence that the stools of enteric fever are of such a virulent type as has been stated. Others, again, of whom Sir Wm GILCHRIST is the leader, think that, as yet, there is *no scientific* theory, but a very good *working* theory, namely, that the disease originates somehow or other in imperfect drainage; that it may very properly be called the filth fever; and that, to get rid of the filth, is to get rid of the fever. The last view of the subject comes nearest to my own conception of what is correct. We do not seem to have reached a philosophical solution of this very vexed question. There is little doubt, however, that, acting upon this idea as to the causes giving rise to typhoid fever, and regulating our sanitary affairs accordingly, we would find at least a marked diminution in the frequency of its occurrence as well as in the severity of its attacks.

The evidence which has been brought to bear upon the view that the disease may be provoked by the poison emanating from defective sewerage; that it may be conveyed by surface drainage into wells, thus infecting the water; and that the miasm rising from filthy accumulations in neglected yards, may impregnate the air and so contaminate whatever it touches, seems to be almost overwhelming. That this poison is specific, and must have had an origin by being imported from one locality to another is the question which does not as yet seem to have been conclusively proved. There seems to be scarcely a doubt that the disease may propagate itself by means of the evacuations from the bowels, although even this much is doubted by many able men. But there are many circumstances pretty conclusive of the fact that the disease may originate without *any specific* cause. Numerous instances are recorded of outbreaks having occurred in localities never before visited by the disease, and for the origin of which no possible explanation could be offered except that of defective drainage or drinking-water contaminated by decaying animal or vegetable matter. Few men of any considerable experience will have failed to come in contact with cases of this kind.

Dr. Flint, in his excellent treatise on the Practice of Medi-