

The later theory, and the one acceptable to the greater number, places it among the acute exanthems. It has, however, some marked differences from these diseases, among which are the following: The short invasion, the indefinite course, the liability to relapse, the definite starting point (usually from that part which happens to present a broken surface), its occasional protracted course, and, further, the first attack, instead of being a protection against subsequent invasions, often renders the patient peculiarly sensitive to the action of the poison for ever after. To these may be added, its occasional apparent tendency to attack certain families, *i.e.*, to be hereditary, though this is not established. On these grounds Trousseau opposed the view of its being an exanthem, and he therefore makes no distinction between idiopathic and traumatic erysipelas, and, in fact, regards every erysipelas as traumatic, believing that, if looked for, a wound in the surface will always be found as a starting point. There can be very little doubt, at any rate, that erysipelas is due to a specific poison, but that it comes fairly under the category of the exanthemata is open to grave question. It would appear, also, that, according to some observers, the varieties of the disease depend in great part upon the mode in which the poison enters the system, all not holding with Trousseau that it invariably enters by a wound; and, in fact, many close observers acknowledge that it may arise spontaneously (that is, not due to a previously existing case.)

More recent investigations into the nature of this poison have discovered a bacterium or a microphore, and it would seem that this growth constitutes the true *materies morbi* of erysipelas.

However produced, when once it attacks the skin it seems to be endowed with great powers of reproduction, and thus the disease is extended by actual contact, and the resulting dermatitis is the effect of the irritation produced by this minute foreign body in countless myriads. They would appear to be endowed with only a brief existence, but, as I said before, having great powers of reproduction, so that by their rapid multiplication the disease is extended from part to part. The experiments of Lukomsky go to shew that the micrococcus is only present