

THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
HUMAN BODY.

INTRODUCTION.

Nearly seventy years ago (1839) one of the fundamental principles of biology was established by Schleiden and Schwann as the *cell theory*. According to this, all organisms are composed of one or more structural units termed *cells*, each of which, in multicellular organisms, maintains an individual existence and yet contributes with its fellows to the general existence of the individual. Viewed in the light of this theory, the human body is a community, an aggregate of many individual units, each of which leads to a certain extent an independent existence and yet both contributes to and shares in the general welfare of the community.

To the founders of the theory the structural units were vesicles with definite walls, and little attention was paid to their contents. Hence the use of the term "cell" in connection with them. Long before the establishment of the cell theory, however, the existence of organisms composed of a gelatinous substance showing no indications of a definite limiting membrane had been noted, and in 1835 a French naturalist, Dujardin, had described the gelatinous