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CHANGE OF TYPE IN DISEASE.

The question whether the non-employment of general and local bleeding, in the treatment of fevers, and acute diseases generally, as now followed by the majority of practitioners, is due to a change of type in disease, or to a more correct knowledge of the pathological conditions than were possessed by our forefathers, is one which has occasioned not a little discussion. It is now again revived by the address in medicine delivered before the British Medical Association, at its last meeting held in August, by the Regius Professor of Physic, in the University of Dublin, William Stokes, M.D., D.C.L. The very high position occupied by this gentleman, and his vast experience, extending over a period of over forty years, during which time the change of type (if the true cause) occurred, gives to his opinions weight possessed by few living physicians. Dr. Stoker at once strongly asserts his conviction, that disease now is not of the same type as it was thirty years ago, and calls to his assistance Drs. Christison, Watson, Alison, and Graves—the two former being still alive, to give their testimony—the two latter, but recently removed. The address is a very lengthy and able one, and we regret we are only able to give a few extracts, which will, however, give our readers some idea of the stand taken, and the opinions given by its talented author. He says, speaking of the change in the method of practice :

“We can hardly conceive a revolution in practice more complete. Venesection is now, from being the most frequent, the rarest of operations. In place of the loss of blood, we have the exhibition of stimulants; in place of a system of almost starvation, we have the careful use of nutriment.

This change has given rise to the charge against our predecessors and teachers, that they were bad practitioners, ignorant of true pathology, little better than blind followers of traditional error. Not only has their