

systematic writers of the present day. We then had a general cause producing a disease that was "neither a diarrhœa or a dysentery symptom, or belonging exclusively to the bowels, but to the whole system."

"There was every degree and species of flux that ever was seen or described,"—there were cases corresponding with the descriptions of Indian cholera;"—"there was every kind and degree of dysentery;"—"there were cases which differed very little from diarrhœa of common casual occurrence, except they were quite intractable to common remedies;—lastly, there were other cases that had no resemblance whatever to either cholera or dysentery, or diarrhœa, or to any disorder that had obtained a name. In the evacuations there appeared nothing that had any sensible quality of fœces, of bile, or blood, or (of what is usually understood by) mucus and slime. But they consisted of a mass, like green or black grapes in a state of fermentation; sometimes of a matter like yeast; sometimes they were in colour and consistency like half slacked lime, when it is beginning to crumble; sometimes like a thin mixture of chalk and water, and always intolerably sour and offensive, and in enormous quantity."

"The probable issue of this disease could not be prognosticated by the kind of flux only;—those with extreme symptoms of dysentery and cholera were as likely to recover as those who had simple diarrhœa, and those latter were as likely to die as the former."

"There was a general complaint of what was called sinking at the stomach. What this sinking is, those only know who have suffered it. All persons spoke of it as the same, but do not describe it further." "It was not only present with the bowel complaint, but many suffered from it alone, long before their bowel complaint arose; and many still suffered from it long after their bowel complaint was gone."

In those who died, dissection discovered various morbid conditions in the course of the intestinal tract. They

were principally of three kinds,—ecchymosis, congestion of the small blood-vessels, and ulceration. Many died of long-continued and uncontrollable bowel complaints, without anything being found but a few patches of ecchymosis or of vascular congestion. In others, there were small ulcers,—apparently a change from ecchymosis or vascular congestion.

"Upon the whole, the disease as traced out by dissection, was far from affording an entire explanation of the disease, as manifested by symptoms during life."

The following is a judicious observation, and one which we wish were more generally borne in mind by those pathologists who trace certain constitutional diseases, as fever and bowel complaints, to a local origin. "But the entire disease does not always consist in its visible marks upon particular organs. If injury be done to a healthy body, then, indeed, it may; and its anatomical character simply may become the best criterion, whether it be of easy or difficult reparation. But where a visible change of structure arises, independent of injury from without, there must be something within the body that preceded and conduced to it. This something, this inceptive movement, whether it be of the part or of the constitution, which governs the actual manifestation of visible disease, will not bear to be spoken of with precision. We talk of cachexies, of constitutional taints, and morbid dispositions, not knowing how to define what we mean. This, however, we know, that the local diseases that follow the conditions we thus designate, upon whatever part of the body they fall, are more difficult of cure than their mere anatomical character would imply."

This disease and its cause created great excitement at the time, and led to the appointment of several committees of enquiry.

The convicts had been kept on insufficient food, and their general state of health had declined for some time before the disease manifested itself.