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## ON THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING TEMPERA- MENTS.

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*(Continued from page 233.)*

We are now by this time agreed that the mere administering to temporary troubles, or those which to the patient appear to be seated in one organ or the other, is not the highest aim of medicine; it is essentially born of ignorance. The laws of disease are discoverable by ascertaining the different causes in operation which influence the body for ill, and by ascertaining the different susceptibilities of each particular body. Now the first or exciting causes are better known than the latter, or the predisposing. We are, for example, constantly speaking of the effects of cold, of heat, of vitiated air, of alcohol, but it is very remarkable how variously susceptible are different persons or constitutions to the influence of these agencies. The predisposition to different ailments, that is, the temperament idiosyncrasy must be taken into account, and in attempting to ascertain this we have to meet with a difficulty of a most formidable kind, and for this reason, that we are often by no means assisted by the patient or his friends in the enquiry, but have to judge as well as we can for ourselves. In the case of consumption, I find at my insurance office that hereditary tendency is never allowed by the applicant, for if a member of a family have died of phthisis, it is said to be due to some accidental cause, or exposure to cold, to dissipation, to grief, or any other fanciful reason. The public require instruction in this view of the case, and to be taught that it is to their interests to unfold or expose their peculiarities to themselves and to those of whom they take advice, so that they may guard themselves and their belongings from all those influences which may be