

ladies. The same facts applied to other epidemic affections, and particularly to the present reigning disease, which is excited into action by the same causes that before produced former epidemic diseases.

8. Epidemic influences or constitutions recur periodically at different intervals. Influenza recurs at intervals of six or seven years; small-pox, measles, and scarlet fever, reappear at periods of from twelve to fifteen years. The various forms of epidemic gastro-enterites, yellow, remittent, bilious intermittent fevers, and the same diseases with typhoid characters, have manifested periods of from fifteen to seventeen years. These periods are stated not as positively accurate, but as approximations to the truth. More time than is at our disposal, and a reference to numerous works would be requisite to establish the exact intervals and periods of each epidemic. The preceding views are the result of the recollections of general reading and observation, and may be liable to some inexactness, though the principle will be found correct.

## II. *The Prevailing Epidemic.*

The present reigning epidemic having ravaged Asia, and overrun the great portion of the European continent in its desolating march, has reached our shores and threatens to carry its devastations into every portion of our country.

The generic name of Cholera first given to it in Bengal, has been universally adopted, though a variety of special appellations has been bestowed on it. The term has most probably been unhappy. The disease is certainly very distinct from common cholera morbus, though it presents some features analogous to that affection. It bears, however, analogies quite as strong to other diseases. The name too has led most probably to treatment very generally based upon the usual remedial proceedings adapted to common cholera, but the propriety of which may be well questioned.

Many discordant opinions have been advanced, each of which has been more or less earnestly advocated, respecting the proper character and true nature of this formidable and very peculiar disease. They may be approached probably more nearly by an analytical examination of its distinguishing features.

Malignant Cholera, the name that at present may be adopted as the least objectionable, exhibits very distinctly different stadia or periods, each possessing its peculiarities, constituting perfectly distinct, and in some of them dissimilar states, requiring different modes of proceeding in the treatment.

Four or even five periods may be distinguished, and will be best understood by treating of them separately.

### A. *The period of Predisposition originating in the Epidemic Influence or Constitution.*

Every epidemic, it has been seen in our general observations, depends on the agency of some unknown cause, disposing at the