

analogy, and which may explain as fully the various phenomena under consideration.

Of the names made use of by authors to designate the class of diseases produced by the action of the morbid poisons, the term "zymotic" seems the least objectionable, and I shall therefore adopt it. Cullen's order of "exanthemata" includes many of them, but not the whole, so also the term contagious or infectious diseases, though it would include all the diseases in question, yet it would comprehend others, as scabies, porrigo, and such other diseases as from their purely local nature are not generally ranked in the same class with the others.

The division of the subject which I shall adopt will be the following:—

Firstly, I shall consider the seat of the zymotic diseases.

Secondly, The conditions necessary or favourable to their production.

Thirdly, The probable nature of the poisons themselves, and their mode of action, which, together with the preceding divisions, will include the explanation of most of the phenomena of the diseases.

Lastly, I shall conclude by alluding briefly to the indications for treatment, furnished by the consideration of the foregoing divisions of the subject.

I.—*The Seat of the Zymotic Diseases.*

All pathologists seem now to be agreed in considering the blood as the primary seat of these diseases; the local affections being merely the result of the general contamination, and, for the most part, caused by the efforts of nature to expel the offending matter from the circulating fluid, and hence, these local affections are generally found in excreting structures, as the bowels, kidneys, skin, &c.

That such was also the opinion of the ancients, may be seen by referring to their old humoural pathology, by which they were wont to explain these diseases. The solidists have since then attempted to locate them in the solid tissues, but these opinions were grounded on mere speculations, and have yielded entirely before the modern views, based as they are upon actual experiment and observation.

That the blood is the primary seat of the diseases, may be proved in many ways. By the simultaneous appearance of eruptions over the whole body; the symmetrical distribution of some of these eruptions; and by the production of a specific disease by direct inoculation or transfusion of blood, as has been done in measles.

II.—*The Conditions necessary or favourable to the production of the Zymotic Diseases.*

That these diseases depend for their production, in most instances, if not in every case, upon some material introduced from without, seems