

tensive knowledge of the history of practical medicine made him intimately acquainted with the numerous, varied, and often conflicting plans of treatment which had been propounded by various authorities for the same disease before his time, was led to direct his powerful mind to the elucidation of the causes why the same remedies should at certain times be administered more cautiously than at others, and why the same malady should at one period require antiphlogistic and at another period stimulant treatment. After careful research and investigation, he came to the conclusion that all the differences were to be referred to what he termed the *constitutio morborum stationaria*.

Dr. Autenreith, in his "Account of the State of Medicine in Great Britain," as translated by Dr. Graves, gives the following explanation of this *constitution*: "All diseases contagious and non-contagious, acute and chronic, (the latter, however, seldom, except when attended by some degree of general excitement) have been observed to preserve a certain *constitution* or *general character*, which continues for a number of years in succession, with occasional interruptions, until it is displaced by another constitution of a different character. Thus, during one period, diseases are remarkable for being frequently accompanied by a sensation of extreme weariness, sudden sinking of the strength and vital powers, unpreceded by any evident marks of excitement, and attended by a disposition to pass into true typhus. During another period, the tongue is in general loaded with a thick, white, or yellowish coat, and many other symptoms of derangement of the digestive organs, such as a bitter taste, costiveness, or diarrhoea, are observed. During a third period, diseases are characterised by a remarkable degree of vascular excitement, and evident tendency to local determinations, a frequent formation of morbid productions; in a word, by all the symptoms of inflammation. It

is not known whether the transition from one of these periodic constitutions to another takes place suddenly or gradually; but the latter supposition appears more probable, except when the transition is accompanied by unusually great atmospheric changes." From the year 1790 to 1804, in England, acute diseases were marked by great debility, and a tendency to run rapidly into a typhoid condition; consequently a tonic and stimulant treatment was indicated. In 1805 this *constitution* was replaced by one in which venesection and purgation were demanded; acute diseases being attended by great vascular excitement and irregularity of the bowels.

"The gastric constitution had scarcely established itself, or become pretty generally diffused, when a new character, viz., the inflammatory, appeared upon the stage, and has ever since continued, sometimes combining itself with the gastric to form diseases of a mixed character, such as Erysipelas, and sometimes, when favored by the seasons or local circumstances, raising itself to the rank of chief performer." Dr. Graves adds: "It is now twelve years since Dr. Autenreith made the foregoing interesting observations, and to me it appears that the history of the diseases which have since prevailed affords convincing proofs that the then *inflammatory constitution* has again subsided, and is now replaced by a typhous type." Nor has it escaped the notice of other modern writers; for, in Dr. Henry Holland's eminently practical and elegantly written "Medical Notes and Reflections," we find the following recognition of this *constitution* in the chapter on the "Connexion of Certain Diseases." "Or we may find evidence scarcely less serious of an *endemic state of constitution* (be it called adynamic, or by any other name) which, originating with the same causes that produce the symptoms of Influenza, renders the body for a period more prone than usual to certain other disorders."