

yet it is remarkable, that in the work in which this statement appears, only *one* case of this description is given. The same observation has been made by others also, yet in forty-five cases of diseases of the heart observed by M. Louis at La Charité, during eight years, no instance of this condition was observed. Lannec made a similar general statement with reference to ulcerations of the trachea, which he asserted to be very common in phthisis, but rare in those who were not the subjects of tubercle. The statistical records of this disease, as compiled by M. Louis, shew the reverse to be more correct. Examples might easily be multiplied, but I consider these sufficient for the purpose of illustration. The truth is, that the more glaring such errors are, and the more important and startling the phenomena included, the more clearly do they convince us of the entirely uselessness of mere approximative results.

The question of the individuality of disease, is not the least important or interesting point which arises in the discussion, yet few I presume will be prepared to maintain the impossibility of nosological classification. If indeed every case of disease differed essentially in its characteristics from all others, the science of medicine would in reality be, but the momentary observation of divers and ever-varying phenomena, and the *practice of physic* founded on the scientific theorems established by analogical reasoning would be *altogether useless*. Fortunately for our science, the study of ages and the labours of learned investigators have succeeded in establishing the fact, that in diseases there are certain well-defined characteristics peculiar to the several forms, which enable and justify us in arranging them into separate groups; not only can we classify the diseases according to the general features which they present, but we can recognize in each, one or more distinctive peculiarities which invariably denote the existence of one form of disease. It is scarcely necessary perhaps that I should refer to the ease with which malignant, fatal, or remediable disease can be detected, when without the ken of naked vision, by the microscope, through whose aid we can distinguish the cancer cell, the altered blood globule, or the crystalline deposit whose character is more completely established by chemical science. Nor are the advantages of this mode of numerical investigation confined to the mere arrangement and classification of disease, the improvement of diagnosis, and the correction of prognosis, but it materially assists in enabling us to treat disease by certain general rules, in spite of the minute differences to be discovered in individual cases. Examples of this will readily suggest themselves to the mind of my reader; I will instance nevertheless the effects of quinine in ague, colchicum in gout, and sulphur in itch. The remarkable power exercised by these remedies over the diseases enumerated, in which they certainly attain nearly all the requirements of specifics, is